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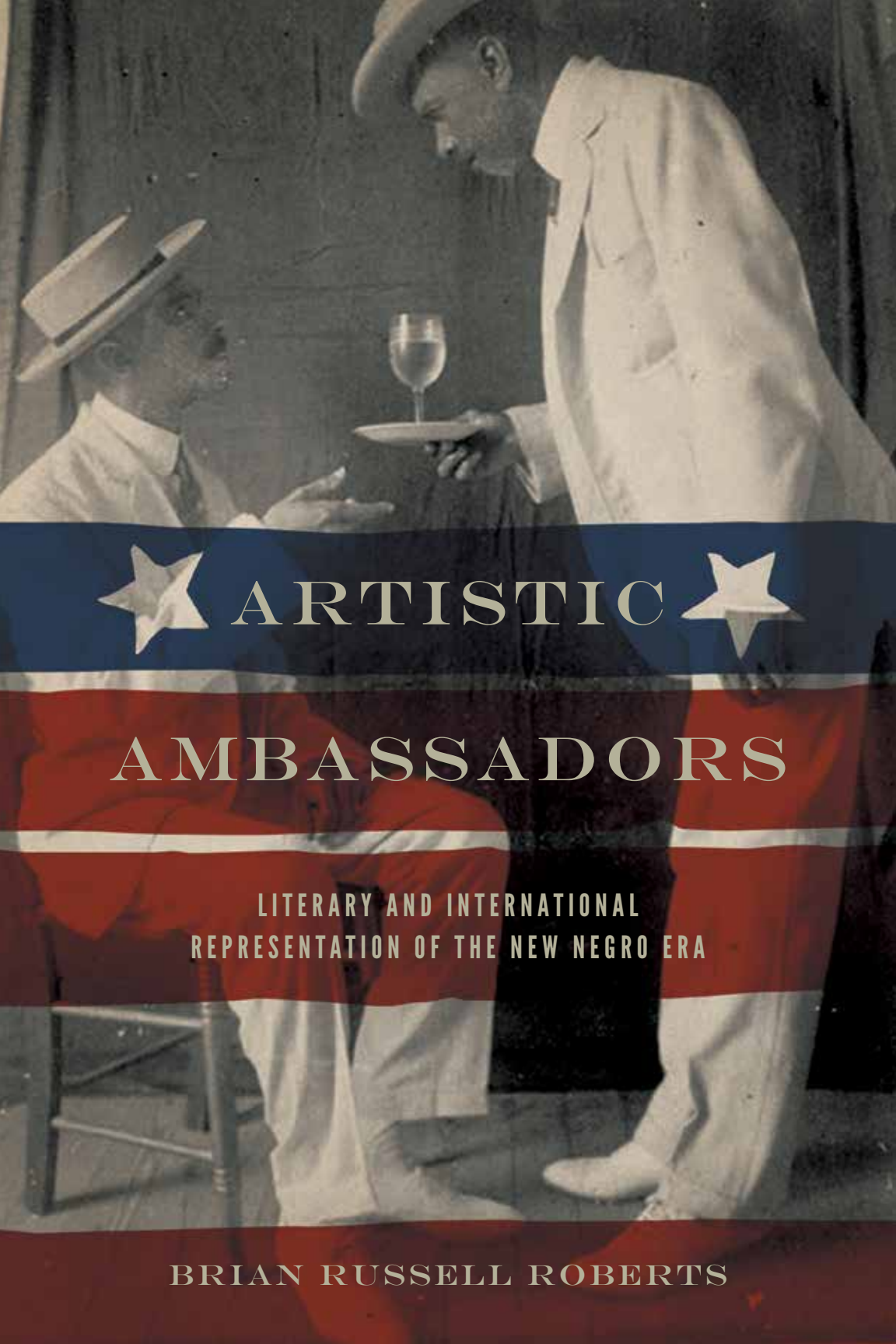

ARTISTIC AMBASSADORS

LITERARY AND INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATION OF THE NEW NEGRO ERA

BRIAN RUSSELL ROBERTS

Artistic Ambassadors

Literary and International Representation of the New Negro Era

BRIAN RUSSELL ROBERTS

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PART III

Hip-to-macy

New Negro Internationalism and American Studies

Continuing to travel and write long after the New Negro era, Langston Hughes emerged during the 1960s as one of the commentators who has most provocatively theorized the integration of diplomatic and African American cultures. In his 1965 collection *Simple's Uncle Sam*, Hughes presents readers with a scene in which Harlem folk character Jesse B. Semple discusses how best to "take up the international situation." "I would call a Summit Meeting," Simple explains, "and get together with all the big heads of state of the world." Simple's interlocutor replies, "I gather you would . . . become a diplomat." But Simple retorts, "A hip-to-mat, . . . minding everybody's business but my own, . . . looking like an Englishman. But what would be different about me is I would be black. . . . [I would say,] 'Gentlemens of the Summit, I want you-all to think of how you can provide everybody in the world with bread and meat. Civil rights comes next. Let everybody have civil rights, white, black, yellow, brown, gray, grizzle, or green. . . . So many leaders is in the game for payola. . . . But me, self-appointed, I am beholden to nobody" (162–63). Continuing his hypothetical Summit address, the hip-to-mat asks, "Do I hear some of you-all say, 'It do not matter what Harlem thinks'?" He gives his reply: "I regret to inform you, gentlemens of the Summit, that IT DO!" (164).

Clearly, Simple's vision for international engagement involves none of the knee-pants, poodlism, or curtsying that Wright deplored in the role of New Negro artistic ambassador. Instead of worrying about protocol or state-generated performance imperatives, Simple is brassily self-appointed and apparently beholden to no one. To describe his status, he coins the term *hip-to-mat*, a neologism splicing the phrase *hip to that* into the term *diplomat* and thereby integrating the hip knowingness of black vernacular culture into official diplomacy's traditionally staid approach to internationalism. "Looking [not quite] like" white diplomats, Simple's model hip-to-mats would be diplomats but ersatz—with their ersatz status introducing a subversive parody to the international stage as the practitioners of hip-to-macy go over world leaders' heads and under their noses.

Hughes, as a black intellectual whose travels often brought him into close quarters with official internationalism,[1] was in an excellent position to imagine a conceptual category through which to theorize the long-established African American practice of signifying on international diplomacy by making use of its tropes and methods in unofficial ways. In fact, to the degree that New Negro consuls and diplomats permitted official diplomacy to inform their unofficial work in racial and literary representation, each of them may be thought of as a hip-to-mat *avant la lettre*. This study's final part, however, is less concerned with black US citizens whose work in diplomacy became an enduring component of their public identities. Rather, part 3 draws attention to figures including W. E. B. Du Bois, Ida Gibbs Hunt, and Richard Wright, whose modes of hip-to-matic internationalism developed in dialogue with a sustained and often strained contact with official internationalism. Du Bois, Hunt, and Wright function as bridges between the New Negro era's corps of official diplomats and the larger group of writers and intellectuals who have contributed to the African American (and indeed black diasporan) internationalist tradition. This larger tradition of black internationalism is constituted by the many self-appointed commentators whose work has critiqued, intersected with, and taken inspiration from a twentieth-century internationalism invested in traditional diplomatic encounters as well as new formations and institutions such as the League of Nations, a burgeoning proletarian internationalism, the United Nations, and the Non-Aligned Movement. Riffing on these modes of internationalism, uncounted African American writers and commentators have, like Simple, taken up the international situation.

In complement to its interpretive consequences for New Negro diplomacy and the larger black internationalist tradition, Hughes's theorization of hip-to-macy has significant heuristic value in relation to the field of American studies. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, the discipline of American studies increasingly has assumed an attitude of critique in reference to the American exceptionalism that frequently characterized Americanist scholarship during the Cold War.[2] Many new Americanist scholars, attempting to distance themselves methodologically from the state-supportive and state-complicit exceptionalism of the past, have routed their literary and cultural analyses through transnational geographies that seek to subvert, on epistemological levels, the circumscribing geography of the nation-state.[3] As a result, several new cultural geographies have animated the postnationalist American studies: cultures of US imperialism, the global South, the borderland, Americanity, the Atlantic world, the Pacific Rim, the hemisphere, and the planet, among others.[4]

Yet even as these proliferating transnational geographies have sought to defetishize the nation-state, prominent voices have expressed a suspicion that the transnationalized American studies still may advance a cultural politics supportive of the US state's political culture. Looking back on the "cold war years [of] American studies" as "practically defined by the field's investment in American exceptionalism" (107), Michael Bérubé has wondered if the postnationalist American studies' current relation to the US state might not "be uncomfortably similar" to that cultivated during the Cold War: might the transnational turn in American studies ultimately be found to be "encouraged by enlightened multinationals, and their supporters in government, who [are] interested in the propaganda value of a critical, anti-imperialist, internationalist American studies?" (110). This is a self-reflexive suspicion that reframes some of the field's most resistant and postnationalist scholarly endeavors as functionally—if not intentionally—supportive of a globalized neoliberal regime whose center of gravity is the United States. Bérubé suggests that many such complicities will remain imperceptible to academics who are inattentive to university funding models (104–05), but American studies scholar Richard P. Horwitz has offered candid and sound commentary on the more overt levels at which transnationalized American studies and the state emerge as mutually reinforcing. Recalling his own experiences as an Americanist Fulbright Scholar whom the state sent abroad neither as "a policy analyst" nor as "an ambassador," Horwitz remarks that "simple decorum and intellectual integrity can

turn a [seemingly autonomous] Fulbrighter into a spin-controller for the powers that be" (466).

In light of Horwitz's and Bérubé's commentary, the putatively autonomous figure of the hip-to-mat emerges as a potentially crucial exemplum for a field whose disciplinary history suggests the urgency of contemplating the gradations of complicity that can arise in scholarly and teaching activities that at first glance seem unbeholden to the state. If, as Shelley Fisher Fishkin has pointed out, "the experiences of black U.S. . . . diplomats . . . provide a promising avenue of research" for the transnational American studies (49), then I would argue that the histories of New Negro diplomacy and black hip-to-macy come together to create a story that at some moments might be taken as a prehistory—and at some moments should be taken as a parable—of American studies' variegated state complicities as the field has transitioned from the Cold War era into an era of globalized neoliberalism. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari have described a world in which transnational commerce and international class stratification precipitate the state's escalating detachment from physical territory. In this environment, write Deleuze and Guattari, "The State . . . must invent specific codes for flows that are increasingly deterritorialized" (218). If two of the planet's major deterritorialized flows have been a black diaspora (preconditioned largely by Atlantic world slavery) and a planetary community of scholars (created through borderless intellectual exchange), then two of the US state's corresponding transnational inventions have been New Negro work in US diplomacy and an American studies that emerged during the Cold War as an ideological apparatus. As a conceptual mediator between these two political-cultural inventions, Hughes's figure of the hip-to-mat does not offer easy answers to the problematics of complicity and autonomy that become major factors in African Americanist scholarship and American studies. However, advancing hip-to-macy as a conceptual category promises to help map the terrain that links both the New Negro era and the field of American studies to the official diplomatic performances of some of the most prominent international representatives of the early twenty-first century.

5 / Diplomats but Ersatz: The Hip-to-matic Pan-Africanism of W. E. B. Du Bois and Ida Gibbs Hunt

Because Langston Hughes's archetypal hip-to-mat is the organizer of a "Summit Meeting," hip-to-macy emerges as an apt trope through which to interrogate the international and representational questions surrounding a series of landmark summits—the meetings held by the Pan-African Congress (PAC) in 1919 and the 1920s. Within the context of these watershed moments of black internationalism, the lens of hip-to-macy becomes especially crucial to assessing the activities and writings of two of the PAC's founding African American organizers, W. E. B. Du Bois and Ida Gibbs Hunt. Cofounder of the NAACP and longtime editor of the *Crisis*, Du Bois was the most famous Pan-Africanist of the twentieth century. He spoke at the Pan-African Conference of 1900, and in 1919, he was the founder and secretary of the First Pan-African Congress, which took place in Paris on 19, 20, and 21 February.[1] Indicating his sense of centrality to the movement and revealing the degree to which official internationalism undergirded that sense of centrality, Du Bois at one point described himself as "a sort of ambassador of Pan-Africa," self-consciously redeploying the official representative character he attained through his one-month stint as Calvin Coolidge's minister plenipotentiary to Liberia.[2] If Du Bois, as the PAC's founding secretary, has found pride of place within discussions of the organization's activities, quite the opposite can be said of the Congress's founding assistant secretary, Ida Gibbs Hunt. Nearly anonymous alongside her famous PAC collaborator, Gibbs Hunt hailed from a family that was long intertwined with the State Department. Her father, Mifflin Wistar Gibbs, had been consul

in Madagascar from 1898 to 1901, and he was succeeded by another African American consul, William Henry Hunt, who gained a position at the consulate largely through the efforts of his romantic interest (and Consul Gibbs's daughter), Ida Gibbs.[3] William Hunt's ensuing diplomatic career was long and varied, and after Ida married him in 1904, she accompanied him to his posts in Madagascar (through 1907), France (1907–27), Guadeloupe (1927–29), the Azores (1929–31), and Liberia (1931–32).[4]

Though the State Department's sexist employment practices would have prevented Gibbs Hunt from representing the United States abroad, her position on the margins of official diplomacy did not preclude her from—and actually aided her in—her work with Du Bois as "a sort of ambassador of Pan-Africa." Du Bois and Gibbs Hunt enjoyed a close and abiding friendship. They likely met while Ida (before her marriage to William) taught at Washington, DC's M Street High School, and they afterward exchanged a cycle of letters lasting decades. Acknowledging the significance of this relationship, David Levering Lewis has speculated that Gibbs Hunt "may have served as a model for Carolyn Wynn" in Du Bois's novel *The Quest of the Silver Fleece* (*W. E. B. Du Bois: Biography* 568). In any case, when the *Crisis* editor arrived in Paris to organize the Pan-African Congress of 1919, Gibbs Hunt left her husband at his consulate in Saint-Étienne and "dashed off to work for several months in Paris with Du Bois" (Alexander 175). Claude McKay once represented Consul Hunt's work in official diplomacy as stymying inclinations toward racial solidarity (253), but Gibbs Hunt was unfettered by consular regulations and State Department protocol. And ironically, even as the State Department denied passports to African Americans seeking to attend the 1919 Congress, it was "the tireless Ida Hunt," wife of a US consul, who collaborated with Du Bois to arrange the "ingenious publicity campaign" that led to the conference's fruition.[5] Serving as assistant secretary of the Congress of 1919, Gibbs Hunt also had a strong presence at the Congress of 1921 and was a chief speaker and one of three signatory committee members at the Congress of 1923.[6]

Historicizing the representational questions brought to a head during this landmark moment of black internationalism, and recovering Gibbs Hunt's quasi-diplomatic work as an instance of what chapter 4 calls a metonymy of presence, this chapter draws attention to the ways in which Du Bois's novel *Dark Princess* and Gibbs Hunt's poetry exist as literary theorizations of the PAC's efforts on the international stage. Bringing Hughes's notion of hip-to-macy to bear on the PAC organizers' literary endeavors directs important focus toward black internationalism's

parallels with official diplomacy, its rationalizations of self-appointment, and its investments in the trope of messianism as a means of fulfilling its aspirations.

Rationalizing Pan-African Self-Appointment

When Langston Hughes's Simple highlights his status as "self-appointed . . . [and] beholden to nobody," his description is meant to convey the hip-to-mat's ability to speak in ways unfettered by governmental purse strings and state-generated performance imperatives. As Simple imagines it, self-appointment leads to an honest directness that distinguishes the hip-to-mat from the traditional diplomat, whom Sir Henry Wotton memorably described as a "man sent to lie abroad for the commonwealth" ("Casual Comment" 9). In contrast to the traditionally disingenuous diplomat, the self-appointed hip-to-mat seems appealingly authentic. In theory, self-appointment offers an ethical alternative to the strategic indirection employed by characters such as Shiny, Booker T. Washington, the Ex-Colored Man, and James Weldon Johnson himself in *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*. In practice, however, self-appointment poses its own set of ethical difficulties. A view of these difficulties—and their stopgap solutions—emerges quite clearly from an examination of Du Bois's *Dark Princess*, Gibbs Hunt's poem "To France," and both writers' commentary on their roles in the Pan-African Congress.

When Du Bois sailed for Europe to organize the 1919 Congress with Gibbs Hunt, he took passage on the *Orizaba*, a ship sharing a name with the vessel aboard which Matthew Towns, protagonist of *Dark Princess*, flees the United States.[7] The opening page of *Dark Princess* finds Matthew standing on "the deck of the *Orizaba*" in a fury over the color discrimination that has driven him out of medical school in New York City (3). He knows the *Orizaba* will deliver him to Belgium, from whence he anticipates traveling extensively throughout Europe and perhaps Asia (5). However, after landing, he is sidetracked in a Berlin café, where he meets "Princess Kautilya of Bwodpur, India" (17). The princess invites him to a dinner with some associates and repeatedly interrupts herself while issuing the invitation: "We represent—indeed I may say frankly, we are—a part of a great committee of the darker peoples; of those who suffer under the arrogance and tyranny of the white world." She continues: "We have among us spokesmen of nearly all these groups—of them or for them—except American Negroes" (16). During dinner the

following evening (in the presence of a committee composed of persons from Japan, China, India, Egypt, and the Middle East), Kautilya turns to Matthew and offers an explanation similar to the one she gave earlier. This time, however, she delivers the explanation without interrupting herself: "You will note, Mr. Towns, that we represent here much of the Darker World. Indeed, when all our circle is present, we represent all of it, save your world of Black Folk" (19). Matthew has been invited to help the committee decide whether people of African descent are worthy of representation within this august assembly.

The question of whether to include black folk is the committee's overtly expressed concern, but the significant differences between Kautilya's two descriptions of the committee's mission suggest that the princess is preoccupied with more fundamental questions regarding international representation and self-appointment. Kautilya's second description flows as if it followed an implicit script approved by the committee, but her first description (offered in private) is riddled with self-interruptions indicative of a discomfort with the committee's official representational claims. During the committee meeting, the princess unequivocally states that except for "Black Folk," the members of the committee "represent all" of the Darker World. However, during her initial explanation, Kautilya's assiduous efforts at specification betray an intense confusion. She begins, "We represent—indeed I may say frankly, we are—." As Kautilya replaces representation ("We represent") with ontological status ("we are"), she calls into question the adequacy of the mediated presence offered by representation, and she grasps for the seeming authenticity of original presence. Thus, Du Bois situates the erudite princess within a tradition harking back to Socrates, who worried that an object can be straight when seen directly but nonetheless "look crooked" when viewed through the insidiously refracting "water" of representation (Plato 323).[8] Wary of such refractions, the princess drives toward authentic presence with the phrase "we are."

But if the committee offers direct presence rather than representation, what is that presence? Kautilya was about to assert that the committee members *represent* the Darker World, but she knows she cannot credibly claim that the committee members *are* the Darker World. Instead, as she treads carefully forward, she can only assert that she and her coterie *are* a "committee of the darker world," a description that necessarily reinserts representation into her explanation by implying that the committee is entitled to speak *for* the darker races because its members are *of* the darker races. This is an attempt to insert roots-based ontological

status into the committee's representational work. In the princess's next breath, however, she reveals the unevenness of roots-based representation within the committee. She claims the committee has "spokesmen of nearly all these groups—," but she then interrupts herself by specifying, "—of them or for them." Her deliberative choice of prepositions concedes that some of the spokespersons do not hail from the groups for which they speak. At best, then, the committee members validate their self-proclaimed representative status by recourse to racial roots, but they often speak for groups of which they admittedly *are not* (certainly a thorn in the side of someone anxious to replace "we represent" with "we are").

The differences between Kautilya's committee and Du Bois and Gibbs Hunt's Pan-African Congress are readily apparent. Yet *Dark Princess* emerged from the heyday of Du Bois's work with the Pan-African Congress, and Kautilya's concerns over the validity of self-appointed representative status were shared by Du Bois and Gibbs Hunt as they contemplated their own roles as ambassadors of Pan-Africa. Indeed, with the apparent confidence of Kautilya before the committee, Du Bois at the Second Congress read a resolution listing demands made by "the Negro race through its thinking intelligentsia" ("To the World" 8). However, he admitted one month later in the pages of the *New Republic* that while attending the Congress, he had been nonplussed by the Congress's representational claims. Calling the question of representation the Congress's "subtler and more fundamental problem," he recalled that "Europe asked, What do these hundred, more or less, persons of . . . Negroid ancestry really represent? Is this a real Pan-Negro movement or the work of individuals . . . enthusiastic with an idea but representing little?" Du Bois remembered the delegates' insecurity: "And we ourselves could not answer. Of the hundred and fifty millions of African Negroes, few were conscious of our meeting." Then, undercutting the language he had earlier used to assert the Congress's capacity to represent, he described the Pan-African delegates as "an intelligentzia [*sic*]" but wondered, "how far did we really represent and voice" the concerns of the black world "and how far were we merely floating in the air of our dreams and ambitions?" ("Second Journey" 42).

On occasion, Du Bois himself was willing to let "dreams" stand in for "really represent[ing]." This was the case when he reported on the Third Pan-African Congress and evidently dreamed into existence a group of Pan-African delegates. Before the Congress convened in London, Isaac Béton of the Congress's French Committee wrote to Du Bois

and told him that his committee refused to send any delegates to the session. Du Bois, however, reported in the *Crisis* that the French Committee "sent . . . delegates" to the London session. He even implied that "propositions were offered" by some of these imaginary French delegates ("Third Pan-African Congress" 122). When Ida Gibbs Hunt read Du Bois's summary in the *Crisis*, she was perturbed by the liberties Du Bois had taken in asserting the presence of French delegates at the meeting. Gibbs Hunt and Rayford Logan had traveled from Paris to the London session and had served with Du Bois on the Third Congress's three-person executive committee, and Gibbs Hunt now intimated that she recognized some of her own words (as well as those of Logan) in Du Bois's description of the "delegates to London from France." With evident pique, she wrote to Du Bois, "Certainly Mr. Logan and I went independently and paid our own expenses. We represented no one but ourselves."[9] It may be that Gibbs Hunt and Logan, as longtime African American residents of France, took it upon themselves to informally represent the French Committee's position to Du Bois. Or it may be that Du Bois, wishing the Pan-African Congress to make good on its stated purpose of "unit[ing] . . . representatives of the main groups of peoples of African descent,"[10] simply used his summary to ascribe to them this representative capacity. In either case, Gibbs Hunt was not pleased with Du Bois's public implication that she represented French people of African descent, and in reaction she disavowed representing anyone besides herself at the recent meeting. In privately claiming to represent only herself, Gibbs Hunt was arriving at what Du Bois later wrote into *Dark Princess* as Kautilya's ideal, which was to replace representation with ontological status, or to have what one represents become coextensive with what one is, at which point representation seemingly collapses into original and authentic presence. In claiming to represent only herself, Gibbs Hunt implicitly acknowledged the representational tautology of the PAC's project, calling into question the significance of her signature (with those of Du Bois and Logan) "for the Third Pan-African Congress" on the meeting's resolutions (Du Bois, "Third Pan-African Congress" 122). This signature, appended to a public document, had implied a confidence that she represented a Pan-African constituency, but her letter to Du Bois voiced a private discomfort with the self-appointment that ostensibly forged a representational link between herself and the African-descended world.

Du Bois and Gibbs Hunt had real doubts about the validity of their status as self-appointed representatives, but the fact that they continued

in this capacity suggests they found some provisional answers. A literary representation of one such answer surfaces in *Dark Princess* at the committee meeting. As Matthew listens, he finds among the delegates a bias toward "royal blood" (23) and a prejudice against the world's "rabble" (24). Believing people of sub-Saharan African descent to be part of this rabble, the committee members question the "real possibilities of the black race" (21). At first, Matthew sits silently, but eventually he indignantly begins to tell his audience of the "high-born blood" among African Americans. He wants to explain, "We've had our kings, presidents, and judges—," but then he stops. Distancing himself from the committee's fetishization of high-born blood, he speaks the words of "some great voice, crying and reverberating within his soul." This voice, as the narrator tells it, "spoke for him and yet was him." With this new voice, Matthew calmly acknowledges, "we American blacks are very common people" (23). Matthew's unabashed emphasis on "common people" produces silence, but eventually the committee members again begin casting aspersions on people of African descent as "canaille" (25). At this return to insult, Matthew at first turns inward but then suddenly finds himself powerfully singing (in the same unbeckoned voice that spoke for him and yet was him) the Negro spiritual "Go Down Moses" (25–26). A "chorus of approval" erupts from the committee, and Matthew says triumphantly, "That . . . came out of the black rabble of America." He continues: "America is teaching the world . . . that ability and capacity for culture is not the hereditary monopoly of a few, but the widespread possibility for the majority of mankind if they only have a decent chance in life" (26). Eventually, Kautilya and the committee draw on Matthew's commentary to arrive at a vision of "democracy" (225): "Only Talent served from the great Reservoir of All Men of All Races, of All Classes, of All Ages, of Both Sexes—this is . . . real Democracy" (285). As the international committee arrives at what is widely familiar as the notion of the talented tenth, *Dark Princess* internationalizes Du Bois's long-term project of arguing "that the Talented Tenth . . . [are] worthy of leadership" ("Talented" 34), or worthy of self-appointedly representing others.

Because the rubric of the talented tenth depends on the cultural framing of the exceptional as the representative, *Dark Princess* must work to naturalize talent as the most important credentialing attribute of a representative. This naturalization takes place during the committee meeting. The committee's prejudice against black folk prompts Matthew to speak on behalf of the folk constituencies associated with his genealogy—his slave grandfather, his washerwoman mother, and his

father who died in jail (23). But the narrator mystifies the scene by framing Matthew's voice as one that "spoke for him and yet was him." This phrase denies that Matthew is self-appointedly speaking for the folk and instead implies that the unbidden voice is a folk voice that speaks for Matthew. Even when the narrator claims that the voice "was" Matthew, this is not an acknowledgment that Matthew has appointed himself to speak for the folk but instead an assertion that the folk voice has a right to represent Matthew because Matthew has folk heritage. In muddying the water regarding Matthew's speech on behalf of the folk, *Dark Princess* enacts what Kautilya and Socrates fear—that representation distorts rather than reveals, that the refracting waters of representation can make a straight stick look crooked. But in deploying a vernacular voice, Du Bois's novel—which is invested in blurring the line between what "is really Truth—Fact or Fancy" (312)—seeks to take this crooked stick (of self-appointed international representation by the talented) and hit a straight lick with it. Matthew's mystical speech on behalf of the folk becomes a prophecy resulting in an egalitarian selection of representatives from all races, all classes, all ages, and both sexes. Similar to the term *hip-to-mat*'s evocation of the international representative as invested in a hip black vernacular tradition, *Dark Princess* seeks to validate the talented tenth's self-appointment by finessing a mystical yet allegedly authentic black folk voice into a putatively natural logic for self-appointed race representation in the international arena.

Dark Princess reveals a Du Bois who was concerned with validating the self-appointment of leaders purporting to represent a preexisting entity (the black world) on the international stage, but Ida Gibbs Hunt's literary work showcases a PAC organizer who sought to bring a new entity and constituency into existence via the interactions of self-appointment and the conventions of diplomatic representation. Keenly interested in literary writing, Gibbs Hunt received a BA and MA in English from Oberlin College. Afterward, she taught English at the M Street High School in Washington, DC, where she was also a member of the original and influential Booklovers Club.[11] By the turn of the century, she was instructing talented New Negro associates and students to "read broadly for culture and [then] enter upon the field already settled by Dunbar, Grimke, [and] Chestnut [*sic*]" (Gibbs Hunt, "Reading" 25). She herself was well read, and during her life in the United States and abroad, she likely submitted and published poetry under a pseudonym.[12] Currently, however, our access to her poetry is quite limited, with her two positively identified poems titled "To France" and "To Belgium." These two poems—preserved as

signed, unpublished manuscripts among the Kendrick-Brooks Family Papers—likely found their way into the Brooks family collection via Antoinette Brooks Mitchell, who lived with her husband (jazz musician Louis A. Mitchell) in Paris during the era of the Pan-African Congresses. Gibbs Hunt's biographer, Adele Logan Alexander, suggests that the PAC organizer wrote her poetry during the months that she and Du Bois collaborated to organize the Congress's first meeting, and if such is the case, then Gibbs Hunt in all probability shared her poems with Du Bois and perhaps passed them around among friends and associates attending the Congress.[13] In any case, the poems are consistent with the PAC's tendency to address and evaluate nation-states, and like *Dark Princess*, they offer important insight into the ways in which one of the Congress's principal organizers conceived of the relation between self-appointment and black international representation. Particularly relevant to this question, "To France" is worth quoting in full.

TO FRANCE

O land of right and justice!
O land of people true!
Here is a hearty handshake,
And homage due to you.
You that some thought feeble,
You that some thought vain,
Have crowned the world with glory,
And caused the truth to reign.

Type of sublimest courage,
Through woe and sacrifice,
Fainting yet undaunted,
You rushed to pay the price;
Your life for home and country,
Your life for Freedom's cause,
Against a foe relentless,
Bent to make you pause.

Beacon of Liberty,
You alone was brave,
Brave in that highest courage,
All men's rights to save.
All men were your brothers,
Black and white and brown,

You scorned to bow to others
Who'd crush a fellow down.

In form and tone, "To France" is conservative compared to the poetry produced by more famous US expatriate writers of the day. But dwelling on Gibbs Hunt's poetic relation to the Anglo-American modernist zeitgeist is less interesting than interrogating her poetry's relevance to plotting a poetics of the PAC's efforts at validating speech on behalf of millions of African-descended people throughout the world. In light of her familial ties to official diplomacy and her status as an organizer of a Congress seeking to insert itself into negotiations at the Paris Peace Conference and the League of Nations,[14] we do well to consider the poem's overarching trope—that of apostrophe—as operating according to a logic of international diplomatic address. Certainly, the poem's assertion that France "alone was brave" in saving "all men's rights" is a prewriting of the PAC's official declaration that "France alone . . . has sought to place her . . . black citizens on a plane of . . . equality with her white" citizens (Du Bois, "To the World" 8). I would further suggest that a close analysis of this poetic representation of an international diplomatic address can reveal a great deal regarding certain facets of the PAC's rationalization of self-appointment.

Beginning with an apostrophic "O," the poem's first stanza addresses France as if the nation were a person, calling France "you" and granting the nation a human corporality by offering it "a hearty handshake." The presence of a handshake asks readers to conceive of the speaker as engaged in a peer relationship with a nation. Hence, with a handshake that simultaneously personifies a nation and nationalizes a persona, "To France" causes the interpersonal and international to intersect in a way that finds its best analogy in the event called a diplomatic encounter, or a meeting during which nations personified by diplomats (or persons nationalized by the states for which they are envoy) come together to speak for symbolic or practical reasons. This handshake is especially important to the project of the poem (and indeed the PAC) because, as an international gesture implying amity between two nations, it seeks to remove the black speaker from a realm of nationless international vagabondage by evoking a sense that the speaker is an envoy from what is indeed an emergent national entity.[15]

"To France" does not name the new nation on behalf of which the persona speaks; instead, the second and third stanzas triangulate the new nation's identity by naming its interests in relation to other

nations—creating a sense of national content, as it were, for the national form evoked by the handshake. The speaker frames the nation for which she speaks as France's ally when she cites common enemies. In the second stanza, when the poet-diplomat praises France's work "in Freedom's cause, / Against a foe relentless," readers assume with relative certainty that the "foe relentless" is Germany, France's primary rival during the First World War. But the ambiguity of the phrase "foe relentless" permits the third stanza to broaden the poem's conceptualization of the enemy of Freedom's cause. Here again, the poem praises France for its commitment to Freedom: "Beacon of Liberty, / You alone was brave, / Brave in that highest courage, / All men's rights to save." Now, the foe emerges as a nation rejecting the conviction that "All men [are] . . . brothers, / Black and white and brown." Hence, rather than focusing on Germany as the enemy, the third stanza creates the "foe relentless" in the image of the United States, which, even as it sent African American soldiers to fight for the Allies, "sought desperately to reproduce in . . . France the racial restrictions of America, on the theory that any new freedom would 'spoil' the blacks" (Du Bois, "Essay" 79).

The animosity that the speaker's nation feels toward the United States is further reflected in the grammatical aberration that surfaces when she tells France, "You alone was brave." The presence of the third-person "was" rather than the second-person "were" suggests that in earlier drafts of "To France," Gibbs Hunt likely included the line as "France alone was brave" but that she finally decided to be true to the poem's overarching form of apostrophe by changing the subject to "You." In replacing "France" with "You," I would suggest, she may have forgotten to replace the third-person "was" with the second-person "were." Hence we are left with the grammatically hybrid phrase "You alone was brave." The subjective tension between the line's second-person subject and third-person verb conjugation is a symptom of two competing impulses within "To France": the impulse to be true to the apostrophic form by speaking *to* France and the impulse to cast aspersions on the United States by speaking glowingly *of* France to an international community that includes the United States. This impulse to address a larger audience while claiming through the title to be making an address specifically "To France" resonates with Henry Louis Gates, Jr.'s discussion of loud-talking: "One successfully loud-talks by speaking to a second person remarks in fact directed to a third person. . . . A sign of the success of this practice is an indignant 'What?' from the third person, to which the speaker responds, 'I wasn't talking to you.' Of course, the speaker was, yet simultaneously

was not" (*Signifying* 82). The erratum constituted by the presence of "was" reflects the poem's internationally loud-talking impulse. It is a trace mistakenly carried over from an earlier draft, analogous to an inadvertent glance shot at the loud-talker's implicit third-person audience—in this case Pan-Africa's most powerful foe, the United States. By positioning the United States and Germany as the common enemies of France and Pan-Africa, "To France" suggests that US race prejudice and German military aggression are cut from the same cloth—a banner flown in opposition to "Freedom's cause."

Classically, R. W. B. Lewis has described Walt Whitman as poetically speaking a nation into being via the process of naming or cataloging its component parts (51–52). Gibbs Hunt's poem also aspires to national creation but relies instead on international diplomatic conventions. As "To France" speaks to and about other nations in the voice of a peer entity, the speaker's performance on behalf of African-descended peoples drives toward national sovereignty, which is commonly held to be constituted in part by an entity's "capacity to enter into relations with other States."[16] This notion of national realization through international representation has significant implications for the questions that vexed Du Bois and Gibbs Hunt regarding self-appointment. If the national status of an entity does not antedate its international representation (and indeed if international representation can be seen as an act of constituting a nation), then the protonational entity's initial international representatives cannot be appointed by a national constituency and instead, like Simple's hip-to-mat, must be in some way self-appointed. Rather than making a romantically racialist argument that relies on supposedly natural representative capacity (as showcased in *Dark Princess*'s justification of the talented tenth), Gibbs Hunt's poem approaches the representative character of the PAC's delegates as constructed and contingent, with a representation-effect emerging from recognition by other national entities. We might take Gibbs Hunt's "To France" (and by extension the quasi-official proclamations produced by the PAC and published in the *Crisis*)[17] as forerunners of Hughes's hip-to-mat, who appoints himself to represent Harlem and then certifies his representative status not by an appeal to his constituency but by implying that the "big heads of state" at the Summit Meeting recognize that he does indeed speak for Harlem (Hughes, *Simple's* 163–64).

Testing Diplomacy's Messianic Potential

Hughes's hip-to-mat is not merely self-appointed; he is also a type of internationally oriented black messiah. This hip-to-matic messianism comes to the fore as Simple imagines himself standing at the Summit, seeking to save the world from race prejudice by declaring (in resonance with the famous declaration "Let there be light"), "Let everybody have civil rights." Presently, Simple admits that he himself "cannot do much" but predicts that "some sweet day" he may have to "wham the world so far up into orbit until [all the white folks] will be shaken off the surface of the earth" (*Simple's* 163). Racially oriented messianic imagery is far from unique to Hughes's figure of the hip-to-mat. The image of a racially liberating black messiah has deep roots and frequent flowerings in African American cultural and literary traditions. Du Bois has been discussed as both a participant in and shaper of this messianism through works such as "Jesus Christ in Texas" and "Of the Coming of John," yet none of his works relies more extensively on messianic tropes than *Dark Princess*, a novel whose prominent "messianic vision" has been recognized as mixing with thematic elements including "proletarianism, Eastern mysticism, [and] aristocratic notions" (Moses, *Black* 154).[18] Indeed, the topic of *Dark Princess*'s messianism is well-trod critical terrain, but reading this messianism through the internationally oriented trope of hip-to-macy, and in conjunction with Gibbs Hunt's poem "To Belgium," brings new focus to significant though generally overlooked moments during which the novel fuses the messianic with questions of darker peoples' official international representation.

Dark Princess culminates in a final messianic spectacle. The finale finds Kautilya and Matthew in the Virginia countryside with their newborn son, Madhu, who is called the "Messenger and Messiah to all the Darker Worlds" (311). The infant's birth has galvanized a meeting of the "Great Central Committee of Yellow, Brown, and Black" (296). And in what Claudia Tate describes as a scene "reminiscent of the Magi's adoration of the Christ child" (*Psychoanalysis* 63), Madhu is greeted into the world by "a pageant" of twenty men who walk slowly out of the nearby woods. From among this group emerge "three old men: one black . . . and magnificent in raiment; one yellow and turbaned . . . ; and the last naked save for a scarf about his loins" (Du Bois, *Dark* 310). Such preternatural pageantry may seem incongruous within a novel that frequently aspires to literary realism, but Madhu's moment of messianic arrival has been anticipated throughout *Dark Princess*, first presaged during Kautilya's

initial encounter with Matthew. During this encounter, the princess feels that her meeting with Matthew holds providential significance for the prospect of black representation within the Committee of Darker Races. She explains to Matthew that today she has been at the Palace of Art, where she gazed at an exhibition of paintings while "thinking absently of Black America." Then, suddenly, "one picture there intensified and stirred [her] thoughts—a weird massing of black shepherds and a star" (17). Primed by this "allusion to biblical events before Christ's birth" (Blum 169), Kautilya now tells Matthew that she feels their present meeting demonstrates "that the Powers of Heaven [have] bent to give [her] the knowledge which [she] was groping for" in her earlier thoughts on Black America's potential for representation within the committee (Du Bois, *Dark* 17). *Dark Princess*, then, not only concludes by mixing messianism and black international representation; it begins with this mixture.

Several critics have sought to flesh out the geopolitical implications of the novel's messianic finale,[19] but less attention has been directed toward Kautilya's early report that her thoughts on black international representation have been stirred by a painting alluding to Christ's birth. In referencing this painting of the "black shepherds and a star," Du Bois may have meant to allude to a specific work on display at Berlin's Palace of Art.[20] But as he created a scene in which Matthew, after disembarking from the *Orizaba*, meets a woman linking a piece of messianic artwork to black international representation, it is also likely that Du Bois drew on his own experience in 1918, when he himself disembarked from the *Orizaba* and met with a woman who, as she coordinated the Pan-African Congress, took political inspiration from a piece of art alluding to the birth of the Christ child. Notably, Ida Gibbs Hunt's poem "To Belgium" prefaces itself with an acknowledgment that it is modeled "after the picture of Lucien Jonas, The Three Wise Men of Our Day." Jonas was at the time a popular French painter who had illustrated many scenes inspired by the First World War. His illustration "Les Nouveaux Rois Mages" (fig. 3) foregrounded people of color within a messianic scene, and this representation stirred Gibbs Hunt's thoughts to the point that she responded in an instance of poetic ekphrasis. Jonas's "Les Nouveaux Rois Mages" takes as its subject matter Germany's August 1914 invasion of Belgium and the Allies' successful efforts to bring the German occupation to an end. The illustration allegorizes this situation by depicting Belgium as the Christ child surrounded by the Allies' colonial soldiers ("le Sénégalais, l'Indien, l'Arabe," as noted by the caption), whose gift-bearing presence creates the colonial soldiers as "Les Nouveaux Rois Mages" or (in

FIGURE 3. Lucien Jonas's "Les Nouveaux Rois Mages." (*L'Illustration* 26 Dec. 1914)

Gibbs Hunt's translation) "The Three Wise Men of Our Day." In light of Gibbs Hunt and Du Bois's shared interests and common project during their months in Paris, it would be surprising if the Congress secretary and assistant secretary failed to discuss "To Belgium" and the political inspiration Gibbs Hunt took from Jonas's illustration. If such was the case, then Gibbs Hunt's fascination with "Les Nouveaux Rois Mages" would seem a likely inspiration for Kautilya's interest in the painting of the "shepherds and the star." Yet even if Gibbs Hunt refrained from telling her friend of the inspiration she took from Jonas's illustration, her poem "To Belgium" buoys up an examination of *Dark Princess*'s messianism because it reveals the ways in which one of Du Bois's major Pan-Africanist collaborators conceived of the messianic in relation to the project of securing international representation for the darker races.

TO BELGIUM (AFTER THE PICTURE OF LUCIEN JONAS, THE THREE WISE MEN OF OUR DAY.—"L'ILLUSTRATION," 1914).

O little babe of Flander's [*sic*] farm,
Hid in a stable poor,

The Wise Men come from every clime
To keep this Christmas Day
And bring to thee their gifts sublime
From near and far away.

Above thee, robbed of hearth and home,
The star of Freedom hangs,
And guides men to the battle's edge.
Allied in common fealty,
Allied in hope and faith, they pledge
Their strength of arms to thee.

The dusky sons of Afric's soil
And India's mosque-clad hills,
And Asia's incense laden crests,
From mountain, plain and sea,
In mingled ranks with Europe's best,
Offer their all to thee.

In commenting on Germany's invasion of Belgium, "To Belgium" meticulously masks Gibbs Hunt's personal feelings, expressed during the war, that "poor Belgium is reaping what [King] Leopold sowed. . . . How many Congo natives had their hands cut off . . . ?" (qtd. in Alexander 164). Rather than framing Belgium's invasion as retribution for its depraved actions in the Congo, "To Belgium" utilizes a diplomatic voice that imitates the decorum and indirection typical of international negotiations. Fittingly, given what Gibbs Hunt recalled as the hand's role in Belgium's colonial activities, Belgium (unlike France) receives no offer of a handclasp. But the poem decorously follows the generous precedent set by Jonas's illustration by inserting Belgium into the messianic position conventionally occupied by the Christ child. And having acquiesced to Belgium's messianic *position*, the poem takes, in return, the opportunity to subtly undercut Belgium's messianic *function*. Traditionally, the Magi are drawn toward the star because it signifies the Christ child's presence. Yet within "To Belgium," as "the Star of Freedom," the star becomes a sign unto itself by bringing with it its own signified in the notion of Freedom. In other words, it is the ideal of Freedom, not a messianic Belgium, that motivates and "guides men to the battle's edge." In fact, if any figures in the poem can be said to have a messianic *function* (rather than merely a hollowed-out messianic *position*), they are the colonial soldiers, the "dusky sons," who arrive with the "sublime" gift of salvation

for an otherwise helpless Belgium. The dusky sons, furthermore, have an ambassadorial function in that they have traveled from African and Asian climes to stand iconically within the poem for all peoples of African and Asian descent. In their commitment of "strength of arms" (if not of hands) to Belgium's cause, these ambassadorial figures create for Belgium and the Allies an obligation toward the dusky sons' African and Asian constituencies.

We see a proposal for the fulfillment of this war-generated obligation in the Pan-African Congress's various demands of Belgium and other European nations. The PAC asked that Belgium give African-descended people "a voice in [the Belgian Congo's] government."[21] The PAC also requested that African natives "shall have equitable representation in all the international institutions of the League of Nations" and that the League "appoint direct diplomatic representatives in the Mandated territories [seized by the Allies from Germany's colonial possessions]," with "representatives of the NEGRO race on the [League's] Mandates Commission."[22] In these requests, the legacy of Gibbs Hunt's "dusky sons" persists past the "battle's edge," promoting a vision of African-descended peoples mingling with "Europe's best" in the arena of postwar diplomacy. We have a gesture toward this vision in Gibbs Hunt's translation of Jonas's title, which rewrites "Les Nouveaux Rois Mages" as "The Three Wise Men of Our Day." Standing in for a more literal translation of *nouveaux* as *new*, the phrase *of our day* communicates *nouveaux*'s sense of currency while making use of a possessive pronoun that lays claim to a voice for the darker races in the new day of official internationalism arising out of the war's ashes. This translation seeks to move people of color from the realm of geopolitical outsiders by resituating them as diplomatic insiders. The poem's tack is unsurprising in light of a letter that Gibbs Hunt wrote to Du Bois less than five months before he sailed on the *Orizaba*. She explained, "Observation and experience have taught me that one can fight more effectively from within than from without."[23]

If "To Belgium" seems subtle in its aesthetic reworkings of geopolitical power relations, this is all the more reason to consider the poem in relation to the PAC, especially during the Belgium session of its second meeting. Jessie Fauset's description of this session cannot help but resonate with the poem's diplomatic willingness to forgo voicing Gibbs Hunt's grievances against Belgium. As Fauset reported, "Belgian officialdom was well represented" at the session, and under "the careful Belgian eye," the PAC speakers presented "three days [of] . . . pleasant generalities." They neither referenced "the atrocities of the Leopold regime" nor

offered "a word of criticism of Colonial Governments." Fauset, feeling that she herself was also subject to Belgium's "shadow of Colonial dominion" ("Impressions" 14), joined other PAC attendees in silently reflecting on the "smothering power which made it impossible for men even in a scientific Congress to be frank and to express their inmost desires" (15). Like Fauset, Gibbs Hunt also came to see the dangers of working from within the international world's diplomatic matrices. After her husband's 1932 retirement from the Foreign Service, she spoke publicly of diplomacy itself as productive of a racist geopolitical culture. She described the League of Nations (which had been unresponsive to the PAC's overtures) as "a mighty union . . . to uphold Nordic supremacy" and condemned "diplomats [for] . . . barter[ing] away the rights of the weaker nations." She ranked "diplomacy" with "imperialism and exploitation" as a few of the international world's "old worn-out methods" ("Price" 80). Evidently, she came to see diplomacy as a means of maintaining the European-descended world's international status quo: rather than permitting nations of color to speak as peer entities (as Gibbs Hunt attempted in "To France" and the PAC attempted in its efforts to engage the proceedings of the Paris Peace Conference and the League of Nations), diplomacy produced an international hierarchy that systematically precluded peer relationships between European nations and peoples of color. Rereading "To Belgium" through Gibbs Hunt's later perspective requires a recognition of the dusky sons as envoys to a world of European internationalism that systematically precludes them from emerging as saviors of the African-, Asian-, and Arab-descended peoples they ostensibly represent.

Like Gibbs Hunt and Fauset, Du Bois approached black participation in twentieth-century internationalism with questions regarding the relative empowerments afforded by positions both *inside* and *outside* of international diplomacy. And, similar to Gibbs Hunt's move from diplomacy as messianism to diplomacy as white supremacy, *Dark Princess* abandons diplomatic messianism for a new skepticism regarding diplomacy's potential to save the darker races. In doing so, the novel theorizes the improbability that a person will emerge as a messiah when he or she operates in a mode that is inside rather than outside—immanent rather than exterior to—the world of official internationalism.

This question finds its major episodes of literary contemplation in Du Bois's representation of the events immediately following Matthew's attendance at the committee meeting. After the meeting, Kautilya has a private interview with Matthew during which she explains her interest in gaining further knowledge regarding African Americans' readiness

for representation within the committee. She tells Matthew of a black nationalist organization in the United States and asks him to find its leader. Matthew is to "report to her [his] impressions and recommendations" (*Dark* 29). He returns to New York City and finds the leader, a West Indian named Perigua, living in Harlem. Matthew enters a room rife with "bad air, voices, and gesticulations" (43) and gains an audience with the leader. When Matthew tells Perigua that he has brought a "message . . . from—abroad," the leader leaps to his feet with a sense of urgency regarding his "State business" (44). Perigua turns to his acolytes and says, "*Le jour de gloire est arrivé!* . . . Men, I have news—great news—the greatest! Salute this Ambassador from the World—who brings salvation." Perigua explains, "Now all is well. We are recognized—recognized by the great leaders of Asia and Africa. Pan-Africa stands at last beside Pan-Asia, and Europe trembles" (45). The leader's baroque nationalist pretensions amid the "stale smells of food and tobacco" create the scene as decidedly bathetic. Matthew can see that Perigua is "no leader, he [is] too theatrical" (45).

Perigua's pronouncement regarding Matthew—that he is an "Ambassador" bringing "salvation"—represents an overt conflation of the messianic and diplomatic themes earlier condensed into Kautilya's reading of the painting. And significantly, Du Bois places this articulation into the mouth of a figure he represents as a charlatan. If, as has often been argued, Perigua is a thinly veiled reference to Marcus Garvey,[24] then Du Bois's representation of Perigua's enthusiasm for the "Ambassador" might well be taken as a critique of Garvey's assessment of the role of official international diplomacy in black racial liberation. Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association sent "ambassadors" to the League of Nations, Cuba, Abyssinia, France, and other nations.[25] And Garvey was a great believer in diplomacy, explaining that the "Negro must learn . . . diplomacy": "We must learn to give and take. If we want Africa, as we surely do, we must . . . yield some things and make concessions in America and other white countries by sane and proper arrangements" (6: 220). He told his followers that "the white man" was presently "on top," and he asked, if the white man "has to use keen diplomacy to keep him on top, how much more has the fellow down below to lift himself to the position of the white man by kee[n]er diplomacy [?]" (5: 527). Du Bois and Garvey had long been engaged in a bitter feud by the year of *Dark Princess*'s publication, and the novel's bathetic portrayal of Perigua undoubtedly parodies Garvey's tendency to look to diplomacy (in both its geopolitical and methodological senses) for salvation. Yet *Dark Princess*'s portrayal

of Perigua's equation of ambassadorship with salvation also may have permitted Du Bois to transfer ownership of the PAC's own naive position regarding international diplomacy's saving potential. Interestingly, to Perigua's way of thinking, an "Ambassador" brings "salvation" because the ambassador's arrival implies that Perigua's "State" is now recognized internationally: "Now all is well. We are recognized." Certainly, the PAC's addresses to the League of Nations and individual European nations also relied on a logic seeking black national legitimization by way of international recognition. Both Perigua and the PAC attempt to answer European diplomacy with a "keener diplomacy," a position that counterproductively creates them as immanent to the international logic that prewrites the oppression of nations of color into its script.

Matthew's initial interactions with Perigua set in motion events that permit the novel to further consider the messianic avenues opened and closed by assuming positions that are immanent and exterior to international diplomacy. Matthew sends reports to Kautilya but does not receive any response from the princess. Despondent, he becomes part of Perigua's plot to avenge a recent lynching by dynamiting the Klan Special, a train carrying passengers to Chicago for a large meeting of the Ku Klux Klan. This is a suicide mission: Perigua plans on blowing up a railroad trestle and dying in the explosion, and Matthew volunteers to be a porter on the Special as it speeds toward the demolished section of track. The plan is foiled, however, when Matthew discovers that Kautilya is a passenger on the Special. She is traveling at the invitation of the Klan, which has asked her to deliver an address at the convention. Unable to bear the thought of killing Kautilya, Matthew pulls the brake. He saves the day, and the passengers come "forward with a big purse to reward him for his services" (98). However, Matthew refuses the Klan's gesture and is put on trial for conspiring to kill hundreds of people. Kautilya, meanwhile, is loath to see Matthew go to jail. She attempts to transfer the appearance of complicity from Matthew to herself, telling the court that Matthew had no knowledge of the plot until she made him aware of it just minutes before he stopped the train. Significantly, it is Kautilya's "diplomatic immunity" that provides her with a "refuge," as it would permit her to implicate herself in the conspiracy (and thereby to spare Matthew) without fear of legal consequences. One character explains Kautilya's diplomatic immunity this way: "The English Embassy, which represents her country abroad, backs her reputation, vouches for her integrity, and promises her immediate withdrawal from the country" (97). Matthew, however, refuses what Kautilya calls the "little sacrifice

that [would have] cost [her] nothing and meant everything to [him]." He replies that Kautilya's little sacrifice might cost "the whole future of the darker world" (103). Going to prison, he tells her, is "the only effective . . . atonement that I can [make] to the Great Cause which is ours" (104).

This sequence of events—culminating in a discussion of who will play the role of savior—places Kautilya on the inside and Matthew on the outside of diplomacy, which here is represented as both a realm of geopolitics and strategic compromise. Kautilya has decided to engage in a dialogue with the Klan;[26] Matthew, in contrast, is attempting to destroy the Klan Special and refuses the Klan members' money even when it might be used for his defense during the trial. Matthew and Kautilya also differ in their relation to the international community. Whereas Kautilya feels it would "cost . . . nothing" to take advantage of the diplomatic conventions that free one nation's leaders and diplomats from the laws of other nations, Matthew sees a nearly incalculable cost. He sees that relying on the princess's diplomatic immunity (routed through the British embassy, which "represents her country abroad") would reaffirm the international status quo, which attempts to naturalize white nations' domination and representation of darker peoples throughout the world. Matthew sees, in other words, that Kautilya's attempt to save him is grounded in an acquiescence to the West's determination that darker peoples "cannot represent themselves; they must be represented."[27] On this point, the aim of *Dark Princess*'s analogical work is clear: by portraying Kautilya and Matthew as differing in their willingness to make tactical compromises with both the Klan and postwar internationalism, the novel suggests that these two institutions—one domestic and the other international—share the common mission of (in Gibbs Hunt's words) "uphold[ing] Nordic supremacy." (This is hardly a revelation regarding the Klan but is nonetheless an important critique of an early twentieth-century official internationalism that almost uniformly refused international representation of darker peoples except via white proxy.) In Matthew's divorcing himself from tactical and geopolitical diplomacy while claiming to make an "effective . . . atonement . . . to the Great Cause which is ours," his actions reach toward a contradiction of Perigua, Kautilya, and the PAC's conflation of Ambassador and Savior. Yet Matthew's atonement, even as it strives to remain exterior to the international world's diplomatic matrices, is still unwittingly imbricated in those matrices. His atonement sends him to prison, leaving Kautilya, who has demonstrated a willingness to make tactical compromises with the Klan and the international

world, to carry on without him in the great cause. If Matthew is a test case in acting as an international outsider, then his case would suggest that there is no point outside of diplomacy's circle that is not structured by and complicit in what is inside the circle.

The events growing out of Matthew's interactions with Perigua permit *Dark Princess* to explore the differences and functional overlaps between positions that are immanent and exterior to the West's postwar internationalism, but the novel's messianic finale reminds us that exteriority is only one of immanence's binaries. Another is transcendence. As *Dark Princess* concludes, the African, Asian, and Indian wise men of "To Belgium" reappear, emerging now from the Virginia woods. But the dusky sons no longer seek to play the role of savior to Belgium. They now have seen that the West has created an internationalism that systematically precludes evenhandedness in white nations' interactions with darker peoples. Hence, rather than attempting to create an obligation that Europe is diplomatically prescripted to dishonor, they approach the infant Madhu. Du Bois's literary creation of Madhu releases the trope of black messianism from its perpetual tension, which Wilson Jeremiah Moses notes involves a simultaneous "rejection of white" culture and "a participation in one of its most sacred traditions" (*Black* 14). Within the novel, Madhu's presence brings an end to the conflict over messianism's immanence or exteriority to white-supremacist culture; the child reminds readers that the trope of messianism transcends cultural specificity. Madhu is a Christ figure at the same time as he is "King of the Snows of Gaurisankar," "Protector of Ganga the Holy," "Incarnate Son of the Buddha," and "Grand Mughal of Utter India." He is, finally, the "Messenger and Messiah" (Du Bois, *Dark* 311). His messianism is transcendent, situated above and comprehending regional and sectarian messianic traditions. And his status as "Messenger" transcends the traditional compromising role of diplomatic envoy. Madhu's birth is a sign assuring that the "Dark World" will be liberated and that this liberation—whether via "Peace and Reason" or "Blood and Storm"—will be incontingent on negotiations with "the Pale Masters of today" (297). At the novel's conclusion, this liberation has not taken place (it is, in fact, still twenty-five years distant), but the incontingency of liberation is affirmed as Kautilya discusses it not in future tense but in present tense: "In 1952, the Dark World goes free" (297). This new logic of international relations is neither inside nor outside of diplomacy's circle: it is a dimensional shift, transcendent and transfigurative of the current geopolitical plane.

Interestingly, *Dark Princess*'s narrator concludes with an "Envoy," a device that acknowledges the novel's preoccupations with—and efforts at intervention in—the arena of international representation. In this literary sending forth, the narrator summons "all the sprites who . . . have clustered around [his] hands and helped [him] weave this story" and sends them as his envoys to "the Queen of Faërie," who has aided him in writing his story by lending him the "gossamer of dream." The narrator instructs the sprites to return this dreamy gossamer and to relay to the Queen of Faërie his "fond obeisance" (312). That the author uses the Envoy to send forth envoys to the Faërie Queen ought to direct our attention to the novel's enigmatic dedication, "To Her High Loveliness TITANIA XXVII . . . QUEEN OF FAERIE." Just as *Dark Princess*'s "Envoy" self-consciously deploys bivalently literary and diplomatic language, we might also read the phrase "To Her High Loveliness . . . QUEEN OF FAERIE" as not merely a dedication but also a salutation marking the novel as a long address that itself is envoy to an otherworldly queen. This reading of *Dark Princess* is evocative of the literary and diplomatic fusions of Gibbs Hunt's "To France" and "To Belgium," but *Dark Princess*'s fusion attempts to imagine not just a keener diplomacy but a new diplomacy, a diplomacy that has undergone a sea change as it has been touched by forces transcendently messianic. Within certain messianic traditions, such radical changes in content have been reflected in subtle yet diacritical alterations in nomenclature: Abram's transformation to Abr*ah*am, Sarai's emergence as Sara*h*, or Saul's conversion to *P*aul. In *Dark Princess*'s vision, we see a messianic rewriting of diplomacy as *hip-to*-macy.

Hip-to-macy and the New Negro Era's End

In July 1928, Ida Gibbs Hunt sent Du Bois a letter from her husband's new consular post in Guadeloupe. "I'm writing," she told her erstwhile co-conspirator, "to order your book, 'Dark Princess' for Mr. Hunt's birthday. We are both anxious to read it." In response, Du Bois had his new novel "sent right off."[28] It would be interesting to know if Gibbs Hunt thought of "To Belgium" and Jonas's "Les Nouveaux Rois Mages" when she read Kautilya's account of seeing the messianic painting, or if she remembered Du Bois's fanciful creation of her as a French delegate when she read the Envoy's question "Which is really Truth—Fact or Fancy?" But her subsequent preserved correspondence with Du Bois does not return to the topic of *Dark Princess*. One also wonders what

Consul Hunt—who was quite proud of his "more than thirty years in the harness" of the State Department (1)—might have thought upon reading *Dark Princess*'s vision for a new hip-to-matic internationalism. Apparently, it did not make an impression he wanted to share. In spite of his wife's Pan-Africanist collaborations with Du Bois and Du Bois's publicized visit to the Hunts' home in Saint-Étienne,[29] William Hunt's detailed autobiography mentions Du Bois only once in passing (56) and completely ignores the Pan-African Congress and the deficiencies the PAC revealed in the racial logic of the twentieth century's official internationalism. Of course, it is easy to see how *Dark Princess*'s preternatural vision for transforming the international world could leave a realist and career diplomatist feeling uninspired or even defensive. Hip-to-macy's drive toward integrating racial grievance into international diplomacy could prove an embarrassment to certain black US diplomats, who often strove internationally to draw attention away from the discrimination they received at the hands of their fellow citizens in the United States. Such was the case of William Henry Hunt's colleague black US consul William James Yerby, who in 1929 became angry upon learning that a copy of *Dark Princess* was being passed among staff at his consulate in Oporto, Portugal.[30]

Hunt and Yerby were two of the last remaining officials of black US diplomacy's first generation. African American monadnocks within the diplomatic landscape, they weathered the Wilson administration's racialized purging of the State Department and maintained their consular positions as the following decades further eroded the small remaining group of New Negro diplomats. By the time they retired in the 1930s, the first generation had effectively come to an end. And by the end of this first generation, the hip-to-matic legacy of the New Negro writer-diplomats had long since outgrown a State Department that functioned both to promote and to stymie New Negro cultural figures' engagement with the international world. When the New Negro writer-diplomats had practiced hip-to-macy, it took place anonymously (as in the case of James Weldon Johnson) or after official diplomatic service had concluded (as with John Stephens Durham, George Washington Ellis, and Henry Francis Downing). But through Ida Gibbs Hunt's collaborative work with Du Bois during the late 1910s and early 1920s, hip-to-macy departed radically from the State Department's strictures. The first Pan-African Congresses, pivotally co-organized by the wife of a black US consul in France, stood as prominent models for the twentieth century's subsequent African American hip-to-mats and paved the way for

the international conceptualizations of figures such as George Schuyler, Nella Larsen, Langston Hughes, and Zora Neale Hurston. Hip-to-macy, in conjunction with a wider swath of antiracist and anti-imperialist movements, was destined to play a role in restructuring white privilege within the world of official internationalism.

30. Archibald Grimké to Home Ones, 22 Jan. 1895, FGP, Box 40-3, Folder 119.

31. Archibald Grimké to Home Ones, 22 Jan. 1895, FGP, Box 40-3, Folder 119.

32. In another letter, Archibald continued peering through the dark glass of modern eyes to see the reality beyond. He wrote of attending a Catholic mass, during which he "saw some young girls kneeling in the . . . striking manner of Holbein, that singular blending which that old Master lived to depict." Archibald Grimké to Home Ones, 1 Feb. 1895, FGP, Box 40-3, Folder 111.

33. Of course, *Rachel* is not the originator of this tradition. The previously mentioned African American spirituals operate according to a similar logic.

34. See John Henry Newman's "Mary Is the 'Rosa Mystica,' the Mystical Rose" in his *Prayers, Verses, and Devotions* (168–69).

35. Archibald Grimké to Home Ones, 14 Apr. 1895, FGP, Box 40-3, Folder 113.

36. Archibald Grimké to Angelina Grimké, 10 May 1898, AnGP, Box 38-4, Folder 68.

37. James Weldon Johnson to Grace Nail Johnson, 8 May 1912, JWJP, Series III, Box 41, Folder 21; and James Weldon Johnson to Grace Nail Johnson, 26 June 1912, JWJP, Series III, Box 41, Folder 22.

38. Here I draw on Joseph Roach's notion of *surrogation*, described as a performative "substitution" that generates anxiety and subsequent "failures of memory" (6).

39. Archibald Grimké to Angelina Grimké, 6 Oct. 1897, AnGP, Box 38-4, Folder 67; and Archibald Grimké to Angelina Grimké, 21 Feb. 1898, AnGP, Box 38-4, Folder 68.

40. For more on Hubbard, see "Lady Vice-Consul."

Part III: Hip-to-macy

1. For Hughes's involvement in a diplomatic conflict between the United States and Soviet Union, see McDowell, "Conversations" 292–93. For Hughes's account of speaking at the same event with the wife of a US consul in Japan, see his *I Wonder as I Wander* 242–43. For Hughes's address at the opening of the US Information Agency Library in Accra, Ghana, see his "American Interest in African Culture."

2. See Pease; Rowe et al.; and Kaplan, "Left."

3. For a useful discussion of the move from national to transnational geography, see Dimock, "Planet" 3.

4. On US imperialism, see Kaplan, *Anarchy*; on the global South, see for instance Stecopoulos; on the borderland, see Anzaldúa; on Americanity, see Saldívar; on the Atlantic world, see Gilroy, *Black*; on the Pacific Rim, see Wilson; on the hemisphere, see Levander and Levine; on the planet, see Dimock, *Through*.

5 / Diplomats but Ersatz

1. On Du Bois at the Pan-African Conference of 1900, see D. Lewis, *W. E. B. Du Bois: Biography* 248–51. For Du Bois as founder and secretary and Gibbs Hunt as assistant secretary, see Du Bois's "The Pan-African Congress" 271–72.

2. Du Bois used this phrase in his essay "Pan-Africa in Portugal." Here, he recounts his activities during the PAC sessions and remarks, "The American Minister [to Portugal] . . . wish[ed] to see me and I called and had a pleasant meeting." Then, preparing readers for future accounts of his postsession travels to Liberia, Du Bois states, "And now as a sort of ambassador of Pan-Africa I turn my face toward Africa." Skinner recounts that Du Bois was turning to Africa because he had arranged to be appointed

(for the span of a month) Calvin Coolidge's "Special Envoy" with the rank of "Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary" in attendance at the Liberian president's inauguration (491–98). In fact, his meeting with the US minister in Portugal was "a courtesy call" as "one senior official representing the United States to another" (D. Lewis, *W. E. B. Du Bois: The Fight* 116).

3. In William Hunt's unpublished autobiography, "From Cabin to Consulate," he explains how Ida Gibbs's advocacy helped him receive his consular appointment (64).

4. For biographical information on the Hunts, see Alexander, as well as Blakely's "Hunt, Ida Alexander Gibbs" and "Hunt, William H[enry]."

5. Quote taken from D. Lewis, *W. E. B. Du Bois: Biography* 575.

6. See Du Bois's "The Pan African Congress" 271 and his "The Third Pan-African Congress."

7. See D. Lewis, *W. E. B. Du Bois: Biography* 561.

8. In other editions of *The Republic*, see Book 10, 601d. The development of Kautilya's character (as well as Matthew's) is informed by dialogues in *The Republic*. This becomes clear as Matthew and Kautilya debate the merits of "democracy" and "oligarchy" (Du Bois, *Dark* 283–87), continuing the dialogue in *The Republic*, Book 8.

9. Ida Gibbs Hunt to W. E. B. Du Bois, 11 Feb. 1924, *DBP*, Reel 13, Frames 835–36.

10. Quote taken from the PAC's 1923 meeting program, "The Pan-African Congress: Third Biennial Sessions," WHHP, Box 55-3, Folder 56.

11. For Gibbs Hunt and the Booklovers Club, see Crowder 172.

12. In Gibbs Hunt's speech titled "Reading," she spoke of writing poetry and of manuscripts' rejection and acceptance as if she had personal experience (25–27). She is known to have used at least one pseudonym, "Iola Gibson." In concluding an apparently unpublished piece titled "The New Sphere of Woman," she signed her name "Iola Gibson" and noted that this is "a pen name sometimes used by Ida Gibbs Hunt" (8). She also used this pen name to sign "After the Rhinelander Case," a letter to the editor of the European edition of the *New York Herald*. In 1931, she submitted work to Du Bois that she said was "signed [with] a 'nom de plume' which I have used sometimes." Ida Gibbs Hunt to W. E. B. Du Bois, 24 Jan. 1931, *DBP*, Reel 34, Frame 1184. However, the *Crisis* never includes any work by "Iola Gibson," which may suggest that Du Bois consistently declined her work or perhaps that she sometimes used a pseudonym besides "Iola Gibson." Du Bois published Gibbs Hunt's article "The Hurricane" under her own name.

13. For the narrative of how copies of Gibbs Hunt's poems found their way into the Kendrick-Brooks Family Papers, I draw on conversations with Adele Logan Alexander. Alexander's *Parallel Worlds* discusses "To France" as written during the months of preparing for the 1919 PAC meetings (175). Given the two poems' similar rhetorical strategies, my assumption is that Gibbs Hunt wrote "To Belgium" during the same time period that she wrote "To France."

14. For instance, Du Bois's "The Pan-African Congress" reproduces the PAC's resolutions to be presented at the Paris Peace Conference (273). His "The Second Pan-African Congress" references a "Special Committee to visit the Assembly of the League of Nations" (119).

15. This international formation runs counter to what Edwards describes as vagabond internationalism (198).

16. This phrasing (qtd. in Malanczuk 75) was first included in the 1933 Montevideo

Convention on the Rights and Duties of States, but diplomatic recognition has long played an important role in the legitimization of states, as seen in *The Education of Henry Adams*, when Adams (recounting the scene of his father's ambassadorship to England) describes the national validation that the Southern States gained when the British foreign secretary "received the rebel emissaries," which implied a "recognition of [the Confederacy's] independence" (115). This international commonplace is not far from Kautilya's mind when she acknowledges that Bwodpur lacks sovereignty as long as it "sent no [diplomatic] ministers to foreign lands" (Du Bois, *Dark* 229).

17. Such proclamations include Du Bois's "To the World" and his "Manifesto to the League of Nations," published in the *Crisis* in 1921.

18. On "Jesus Christ in Texas" and "The Coming of John," see Moses, *Black* 142–43.

19. See for instance Mullen 20–21; and Ahmad, *Landscapes* 165–66.

20. Monica L. Miller suggests that the scene is designed to bring the novel into "engagement with actual pieces of art" (155).

21. See Du Bois's "Third Pan-African Congress" (121).

22. See Du Bois's "Pan-African Congress" (274) and his "Third Pan-African Congress" (121–22).

23. Ida Gibbs Hunt to W. E. B. Du Bois, 12 July 1918, *DBP*, Reel 6, Frames 579–81.

24. See Ahmad, "More" 778; Moses, *Black* 148; and Mullen 14.

25. For reference to the UNIA's ambassadors, see Garvey 2: 295–96; and 5: liv and 568.

26. Garvey in 1922 used the notion of diplomacy to rationalize his own dialogue with the Klan: "The Universal Negro Improvement Association . . . must be led by diplomacy; . . . it does not pay us in America to offend any organized group of whi[te] men" (4: 725).

27. I allude to Karl Marx's quotation, famously borrowed by Edward Said as an epigraph for *Orientalism*. Years after publishing *Dark Princess*, Du Bois overtly expressed this concern, observing that at an upcoming United Nations meeting, "colonial peoples will, for the most part, be represented either by the nations owning or governing them or at best by representatives chosen by these master nations." He resented that "not a single person of Negro descent will have any voice save in the case of Ethiopia and Liberia, which are free nations" (qtd. in Krenn 11).

28. See Ida Gibbs Hunt to W. E. B. Du Bois, 5 July 1928, and W. E. B. Du Bois to Ida Gibbs Hunt, 3 Aug. 1928, *DBP*, Reel 25, Frames 742–43.

29. After the London session of the Third Pan-African Congress, Du Bois visited the Hunts in Saint-Étienne. Du Bois wrote of this event at least three times in the *Crisis*. See Du Bois's "Sketches," "Journey," and "Pan-Africa in Portugal."

30. Lillie Mae Hubbard to Du Bois, 17 Feb. 1929, *DBP*, Reel 28, Frames 716–18; Lillie Mae Hubbard to Du Bois, 2 May 1929, *DBP*, Reel 28, Frames 720–22.

6 / The Practice of Hip-to-macy

1. On this diplomatic milieu, see W. Roberts 37.

2. On the definition and origins of public diplomacy, see Tuch 3–38; and W. Roberts 44. On soft power, see especially Nye 44–55.

3. See Dudziak 6–17.

4. On jazz diplomacy, see Von Eschen, *Satchmo*. On radio distribution and jazz programs, see Von Eschen, *Satchmo* 15–16. Borstelmann offers an enlightening