

**“For a few days we would be residents in Africa”:  
Jessie Redmon Fauset’s “*Dark Algiers the White*”**

**Claire Garcia  
Colorado College**

“The battle ground of the race is no longer bounded by America’s shores. To-day, It is the world.”

from “The American Negro and Foreign Opinion”, William S. Nelson  
*The Crisis*, August 1923

American scholarship on the Harlem Renaissance has, until recently, been strongly U.S.-centric, but the work of many of the important writers of the New Negro-era has an international dimension, as writers attempted to place the African American struggle for political and civil rights and cultural authority in larger, often global, contexts. Recent scholarship has revealed that the term, “Harlem Renaissance,” used as a rubric to characterize the flowering of black culture-building and political activism in the first years of the 20th century is something of a misnomer.

While Harlem was certainly a central site of political and creative activity during the period between the wars, and carried great symbolic weight as “the Mecca of the New Negro,” it was by no means the only American site: Washington, D.C., Chicago, Illinois, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, also provided settings for vibrant black political and intellectual life. Moreover, although conventional scholarship has tended to emphasize the centrality of the United States and the Great Migration in the New Negro movement, London and Paris, as imperial metropolises, also drew black intellectuals and political activists from across the black diaspora. Many of the figures commonly anthologized under the rubric, “Harlem Renaissance,” were not based in New York (Georgia Douglas Johnson, Jean Toomer, Marita Bonner and others) and several, such as Claude McKay, were not even American.

Many of the major writers and artists of the Renaissance period were widely traveled in Europe and Africa. Alain Locke, for example, lived and worked in Washington, D.C., but regularly visited not only Harlem but France, Germany, and Italy. Langston Hughes wandered and worked through West Africa, France, and Italy before settling in Harlem, and Claude McKay wrote his famous novel, *Home to Harlem* while sojourning in London. The most widely taught Harlem Renaissance novel, Nella Larsen’s *Quicksand*, is informed by the years Larsen lived as a girl in Denmark, and complicates the Great Migration motif with a comparison of Harlem to Copenhagen and the novel’s close in the rural South. W.E.B. DuBois, of course, was profoundly aware that the civil rights struggle of people of color in the United States was linked to the struggles for liberation of “the darker races” around the world.

Black intellectuals who were not as well-known on the national stage— faculty of the major African American universities, schoolteachers and aspiring artists— often used their summers to travel to France, Italy, and other European countries<sup>1</sup> and black performing artists regularly toured the major cities of Europe during this era. While many New Negro-era artists and writers looked directly to Africa as a way of understanding and talking about African American identity, history, and culture, many of their ideas of Africa were mediated through their personal travels in Europe as well as their awareness of colonial struggles<sup>2</sup> in Latin America as well as the African continent. It might be more accurate to think of Harlem as a major nodal point through which black international discourses flowed, and to look at the work of canonical Harlem Renaissance writers as engaged in transnational conversations about the nature of black identity and culture in an arena characterized by transatlantic as well as north-south American migrations and sojourns.

Jessie Redmon Fauset was one of the most widely traveled and prolific writers of the New Negro-era. Although her four novels—*There is Confusion* (1924), *Plum Bun: A Novel without a Moral* (1929), *The Chinaberry Tree* (1931) and *Comedy: American Style* (1934)—have received much critical attention in the last twenty years, thanks to feminist scholars who challenged earlier characterizations and dismissals of Fauset as a chronicler of the trivialities of black bourgeois life, there has been little conversation about the transnational dimensions of Fauset’s work. Fluent in French, an avid traveler, and widely read in both classical and contemporary literature (she served for many years as the literary editor for the NAACP’s magazine, *The Crisis: A Record of the Darker Races*), Fauset was a black cosmopolitan, and her fiction, poetry, essays and reviews were often informed by her interest in black global issues. In his autobiography, *The Big Sea*, Langston Hughes notes that Fauset’s parties involved “enjoying conversations in French” among “serious people who liked books and the British Museum, and perhaps had been to Florence. (Italy, not Alabama)”<sup>3</sup>. The references to Europe (particularly France), Africa, and the United States in her fiction and non-fiction writing serve to radically re-map global power from a black woman’s perspective as she, like other New Negro writers, seeks to reconfigure and politically deploy the idea of “blackness” in the modern world.

An active member of W.E.B. Du Bois’s American delegation to the Second Pan African Congress in 1921, whose reports on the multi-city conference appeared in several installments in *The Crisis*<sup>4</sup>, Fauset wrote extensively on transnational racial issues in other *Crisis* articles such as “Nationalism in Egypt” in 1920 and “The Emancipation of Brazil” in 1921. Several of her book reviews and translations also focused on anti-imperialist struggles by people of color around the world. Like other New Negro-era writers, Fauset raised and confronted questions of racial identity across national borders and cultural boundaries.

While Erica Griffin argues that Fauset explores the world outside the United States as an “invisible woman” writing from a position within the “veil” to “unit[e] black American women with European and North African women through their shared status as invisible members of patriarchal culture”<sup>5</sup>, I argue that Fauset’s focus on Europe, Africa, and Latin

America in both her fiction and non-fiction writing is part of a broader and more complex critique of and self-conscious participation in western modernity which involves both deploying her multilayered subjectivity (a black woman, an American, a bilingual person, a writer, a tourist, a warrior in the civil rights struggle, to name but a few of the identities she constructs in her writing) and re-mapping the relationship between the United States, Europe, and the colonized world from the perspective of a woman of color. Her writing evokes, rather than avoids, the complexities and contradictions inherent in trying to both posit and exploit the idea of a common consciousness uniting people, especially women, of color.

A sense of black internationalism allowed New Negro-era writers to question and destabilize the American understanding of race that supported discrimination and oppression in all areas of American life. Fauset, like several other writers in black publications drew comparisons and contrasts between the conditions and struggles of people of color around the world as part of a rhetorical arsenal in the American civil-rights struggle. Indeed, many of the claims for black Americans' rights to citizenship, economic and educational opportunity, and cultural authority were informed by the repositioning of America's "Negro problem" on a global, not just national, stage: the Pan-African Congresses of 1919 and 1921, the experiences of African American soldiers in Europe during the Great War, and Marcus Garvey's calls for a reverse diaspora all contributed to black writers' seeing the black condition—politically as well as culturally—in a context that extended well beyond the borders of the United States. The transnational dimension of New Negro-era writing cleared new space for critiquing the apparent intractability of the American color-line and created a broad and complex diasporic understanding of the intersections of race, power, economics, and culture. However, attempts to construct and politically deploy a black identity across national, cultural, and sometimes religious lines posed both rhetorical and political challenges.

Brent Hayes Edwards, in *The Practice of Diaspora*, proposes the concept of "décalage" as a tool for understanding the impulses toward and rhetoric of black internationalism and its inevitable misreadings and mistranslations. Problematizing Léopold Senghor's assertion that the differences between "Negro Americans" and "Negro Africans" is a matter of "a simple décalage—in time and in space," Edwards asserts that the fundamental relationship among members of the black diaspora is always "haunted" by that which can't be translated or understood, and that articulations of racial unity (such as Senghor's concept of Négritude or DuBois's of Pan Africanism) are always rhetorical artifices predicated upon difference and disarticulation: "Articulation is always a strange and ambivalent gesture, because, finally, in the body it is *only* difference—the separation between bones or members—that allows movement"<sup>6</sup>.

This concept of décalage and its attendant rhetorical and political challenges are dramatically illustrated in Jessie Redmon Fauset's account of her visit to the French colonized city of Algiers in 1925. "Dark Algiers the White," published in *The Crisis* in April and May 1925, and illustrated by her traveling companion and fellow *Crisis* contributor, Laura Wheeler, richly presents the questions and cross-currents of "décalage" from a

perspective which self-consciously explores the inflections of national identity, race, and class on the notion of a common bond between people of African descent. Alain Locke claimed that the “growing group consciousness” of the “darker peoples of the world. . . is making the Negro international”<sup>7</sup>. How, this essay asks, are the similarities and differences among “the darker peoples of the world,” articulated and how may they be mobilized to battle the white world’s persecution of the non-white world? Fauset also inquires how gender inflects the experiences of people of color across national borders and cultural practices. How does a black, American, educated woman “see” and represent Algiers, and how does she use the story of her experiences of her experiences there to support *The Crisis* magazine’s cultural and political commitments? In “Dark Algiers the White,” Fauset attempts to construct, authorize, and deploy a feminist writer’s subjectivity to address these questions results in a text décalagé.

It is significant that the launching-pad for Fauset’s African excursion is Paris, a city which could lay claim to being at least as important a black cultural center as Harlem was during the period after the end of the Great War. French colonial citizens and subjects came from West Africa or the Antilles to the metropole to complete their education or provide low-skilled labor. Hundreds of thousands of American, Caribbean and African veterans fought in the Great War and then lingered. Members of the growing black American bourgeoisie, in their constant quest for education and self-improvement, came to drink at the “sacred fount” of European culture. Black American artists and writers, supported by Guggenheim and other grants as well as vagabond writers supported by their wits and willingness to work menial jobs crossed paths with jazz musicians and singers. All encountered each other in the City of Light. As Franck L. Stovall writes in, “La Renaissance Noire aux Etats-Unis,” “It is in the quartier of Pigalle and in the cafes of Montmartre and even in the cafés of Montpamasse that the first encounters between Harlemites and Dahomeans were formed” (quoted in Edwards)<sup>8</sup>. Their conversations and interactions took place in a city which has particular imaginative and symbolic power as the epitome of European culture: historically a self-proclaimed intellectual and artistic center, Paris was also the metropole of a powerful empire confronting modernity. Regarded since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century as the most modern of cities, for blacks from throughout the diaspora Paris represented both the promises and perils of Western modernity.

Fauset, who has often been portrayed as a Francophile whose interest in things French is merely another elitist class marker, actually wrote about France and French culture in a more nuanced and ambivalent way than she has been given credit for by contemporary critics<sup>9</sup>. She was well aware of the paradoxes of France’s identity as the font and preserver of Enlightenment ideals as well as an oppressive and often ruthless colonial power. In her novels, *Plum Bun*, and *There is Confusion*, France is portrayed a site of temporary but unsatisfactory refuge for African Americans, and *Comedy: American Style*’s plot cruelly punishes its heroine for her illusions that she could escape American racism and find freedom in marriage to a Frenchman and expatriation to France.

Fauset, unlike later black American writers, never considered expatriation, and was a proud and committed U.S. citizen<sup>10</sup>. It was during one of her regular visits to Paris that Fauset felt a sudden yearning to escape the “sunless” city. Intending to visit Marseille, known (and portrayed by several black writers of that era, such as Claude McKay and Langston Hughes) as the French gateway to Africa, she describes herself as feeling drawn to pass beyond the French frontier to Africa itself; Africa’s proximity to Marseille proves an irresistible lure for Fauset: “Marseille, which from Paris beckoned, proved on our arrival to be pointing the other way. For across the Mediterranean which stretched careless and blue at the foot of the Rue Cannebière loomed Africa. Perhaps that dream-land would never lie so near us again. Algiers was twenty-eight hours away. . . . curtained and lighted at night by stars and constellations which we had never seen. . . .” (255).

At the time Fauset wrote “Dark Algiers the White”, the North African city had been under French colonial rule for more than a century, and Fauset was well aware that her encounter with “Africa” was mediated by French colonial power. The first installment of this illustrated personal memoir appeared between E Franklin Frazier’s account of a visit with a humiliating Jim Crow experience in a white southern eye doctor’s office<sup>11</sup> and a biographical sketch by Maud Cuney Hare about an Arabian slave poet and dramatist born thirteen centuries ago<sup>12</sup>. The placement of the essay implicitly links the black Americans suffering under Jim Crow to the long and noble though neglected history of “African” culture. The title of Fauset’s piece alludes to the French nickname for the city, “Algiers la blanche,” which refers to the fabled tiers of white buildings around the artificial harbor (depicted in Wheeler’s pen and ink view which illustrates the first page of the article) but Fauset’s single-word addition to the moniker—placed on a separate line above the words, “Algiers the White,” draws the reader’s attention to the North African inhabitants of the city and Fauset’s own “colored” subjectivity. Although French writers have referred to North African colonized lands as “France in Africa,” Fauset’s Algiers is emphatically an African city, not a French outpost: “For a few days we would be residents of Algiers,” she writes enthusiastically, “dwellers in Africa.” She delights in the prospect of being part of “a moving picture of brown and black faces” (255).

Fauset’s opening lines also serve to re-orient the reader from a European perspective on the city. Her north-south migration from bleak Paris is confronted by a dynamic African presence predicated on a south-north movement which originates in the African interior: “All the strangeness and difference of that life which, starting far, far in the interior of Africa, yet breaks off so abruptly at the southern edge of the Mediterranean, rose instantly to meet us” (255).

Although it first appears that the narrator has imbibed the Orientalist, exotic language and images commonly used, in European texts, to describe North Africa, of mystery and impenetrability—(“Algiers the White!” she apostrophizes at one point), “gateway to the deepest mysteries of Africa and the East” (19)—Fauset is also highly conscious of how her perceptions of this culture have been shaped, if not corrupted, by Western ideology: “And on

all sides swarm white-clad patriarchal figures, superb in burnous and swathing turban. Staff in hand, they make one think according to his training of pictures in Sunday school of film-shown ‘Scenes from an Eastern Village’” (256).

A few pages later, Fauset’s indictment of the pernicious effect of Hollywood’s perception of what she sees in real life for the first time is less subtle: “Men magnificently bronzed, lean and regal, a red cloak streaming behind them, thunder by on—obviously—Arabian steeds. It is too bad that movie-dom has spoiled the integrity of this scene; our sophisticated eyes find in it a touch of artificiality” (Dark Algiers 258). Likewise, Fauset feels betrayed and disappointed when she finds that the main shopping district has “ranks of counters covered with jewels, bric-a-brac, pictures, gloves, materials such as one encounters any day in the Boulevard des Italiens or Forty-Second Street” (Dark Algiers 257).

A lot of Algiers’s charm of the foreign is, for Fauset, rooted not in absolute differences but in its melding of cultures, races and religions in one arena: “. . . the grave and regal bearing of the better type of Arab compensated for the shocking anomaly of his dress. This anomaly showed everywhere, in the jostling of the streets bearing now Arabic, now French names; in the issuing of French sounds from bearded Arab lips; there were boulevards vaulted and arcaded like the Rue de Rivoli in Paris and just off them tier on tier of worn, crumbling steps which led to the dark and tortuous ‘native’ quarters” (257). To our ears, Fauset’s phrase “the better type of Arab” is jarring, but in the context of Fauset’s idea of the keynote of Algiers consisting of irregularity, deviation, and inconsistency it is part of the text’s larger concern with destabilizing Western hierarchies of both race and gender, for finally what Fauset focuses on during her sojourn in Algiers is the lives of the Algerian women and how the relationship between her—the African American, middle-class tourist—and the “hidden” (veiled and immured) Algerian women is mediated by the French colonial presence, represented by the French women who serve as mediators between the American and Arab women. A Frenchwoman, by chance mounting a set of stairs at the same time as Fauset, points out to her the Kasbah, where “[i]f you really want to see the natives—how they live—they are there” and later a French policeman’s wife offers her husband’s (and the next day, by default, her own) services as an “escort” into “the real Algiers” where tourists should not dare go unescorted.

In the early stages of the narrative, Fauset portrays the French presence as incongruous and disruptive. She notes the statue of the Duc d’Orleans, which, amidst a teeming and vibrant cityscape “show [s] flat like cardboard against the sky” (256). As she wanders through a quarter where she wonders at the absence of Arabs, she speculates, “Perhaps the French drove them [to the hills] when they took the city a century ago” (16). A French soldier, who, encountering her walking in a neighborhood which might be dangerous to foreigners “looks at her curiously” (17) but does not break his stride. The French presence in each of these examples is remote, disconnected, and implicitly or explicitly hostile. Even her relationship with the well-meaning escort and her little girl is awkward and uneasy: the young woman, clearly of a lower-class than Fauset and her traveling companions, returns

toward the end of the narrative to seek compensation for the services she rendered to the “rich Americans” earlier. That the woman reluctantly demands money at what Fauset speculates is the behest of her law-enforcing husband reinscribes the complexities of the similarities and differences between the two women: both are at the mercy of patriarchal power in the domestic and public spheres, yet Fauset’s position as a rich American tourist challenges any simple idea of sisterly bonds.

Curiosity about the nature of the cross-cultural bonds between women is what drives much of Fauset’s experience in Algiers. She is fascinated by hidden women of Algiers. She immediately notices the absence of women in the streets: “This street and all the streets in Algiers swarm with people—children, boys, and men, men, men!” (257). Fauset is entranced by the “mysterious figures of women clothed in white and numerous garments, a white face veil covering mouth and nose, cheeks and hair, all but two dark impenetrable eyes and a triangle of creamy forehead” (Dark Algiers 256), and disturbed by “the misshapen bodies, broken and distorted by neglect, abuse and much bearing of children” that she perceives beneath the burkas and veils. One young woman on a bus particularly captures Fauset’s attention: she sits silently beside her husband “like an automaton beside her lord—there was no conversation” (Dark Algiers 256). However, when the young woman dismounts the trolley and Fauset catches a glimpse of her “dainty” ankles in pink-colored stocking and russet shoes beneath the burka, Fauset is reassured by what seems a sign of the young woman’s feminine impulse to self expression.

An idea of common femininity is also reinforced during Fauset’s visit to the Frenchwoman’s “Moorish friend,” Fatmah. Fauset marvels that the encounter with the Moorish women, following a journey through labyrinthine streets and embedded interiors, is so familiar: they talk, “after the fashion of ladies calling the world over,” of children, pets, food (18), she writes. Yet this commonality is subverted by the very scenario: the Frenchwoman has offered her “friend” as an exhibit to the American tourist, and the American tourist responds as if she is presented with a rare object for appreciation and consumption: “Her hair is dyed a dark henna is perfection with her mat skin. I stare at her with such complete absorption that her glorious eyes finally question me and I blurt out: ‘You are so beautiful, Madame; I wish my artist friend could see you’” (18). Afterwards, Fauset thanks the Frenchwoman for “a rare afternoon that such as [she] could never have procured from a guide” (Dark Algiers 18)—the rareness and authenticity of the experience is enhanced by the fact that it was not purchased from a professional, but offered by a woman who originally stepped in to warn Fauset about a sexual threat (always the threat for a woman wandering alone in a strange space). The Frenchwoman politely rejects the equivalent of a tip—Fauset’s offer of a present for her little girl—and the two women part “with the glance of people whose lives for an hour have touched deeply at their only possible tangent” (18). But when the policeman’s wife shows up the next day—following what Fauset imagines are her husband’s orders: “‘She was an American and you showed her about all afternoon and didn’t get a penny from her!’” (18) – it is clear that Fauset’s experience has been as much a

commodity as the rugs and bangles the salespeople in the bazaar has offered to her and the other tourists. The “only possible tangent” is not a felicitous chance encounter, but a meeting made possible by deep structures of nation, class, and gender. “The little idyll,” writes Fauset, “has a tarnished ending” (19). As an American in Algiers for a few days, what more could she have? What could she really see?

The question of whether an American, despite her racial identity, education, and political allegiances, could ever perceive “the real Algiers” invokes the questions and paradoxes of “décavage.” Laura Wheeler’s final black-and-white illustration for the article consists of the largest picture—it takes up more than a quarter of the page. It depicts Fauset, suitcase in hand, in a light and dark patterned dress and stylish pumps, extending an open hand to the Frenchwoman, who is clad head to toe, from the large hat which obscures almost her entire head to her voluminous coat and clunky boots, in black. The latter woman seems better dressed for sunless Paris than Algiers, as they awkwardly “once more exchange adieu (sic) (19).” Even the American’s last meal in Algiers is a disappointment: finally getting a taste of the native dish of couscous, Fauset notes sadly that “[i]t is not as new and different as bouillabaisse, the fish soup we get in Marseille” (19). On some level, Fauset seems to suggest that the Algiers of her imagination—the African frontier, the “gateway to the deepest mysteries of Africa and the East” (19), “the real Algiers,” the unmediated perception or the experience which occurs outside the relationship of tourist/consumer and native/commodity—is not accessible to her, indeed, has eluded her.

The narrator’s visit to Algiers also challenges her hopes for the commonalities of color as well as gender. A pair of East Indian shopkeepers insist upon treating Fauset and her companion as “friends,” after it is clear that they are not going to be customers, as most tourists are. The brothers welcome African American women into their private quarters with great hospitality, and treat Fauset’s party as if there were some bond between them, yet Fauset reflects with a wistful wonder: “I notice a curious phenomenon: “the brothers are brown, we are brown, but there is a difference in our brownness, so much that clad all of us in Western dress each would shortly be able to discriminate” (258). This encounter simultaneously raises the prospect of a bond between non-white people but also acknowledges the difficulty of constructing alliances across culture, gender, and national boundaries, especially those that lay some claim to transcending economic (in this case, commercial) relationships.

Fauset closes the scene, and the first installment of her memoir, with a comparison of one of the brothers to Dr. Aziz, the East Indian protagonist of E.M. Forster’s 1923 novel, “A Passage to India.” This novel, written during the turbulent waning of the British Empire, asks if true friendship could exist between people of different cultures, especially if one belongs to the colonizers and the other to the colonized. The crisis of Forster’s novel occurs around a racially charged accusation of rape, and this allusion evokes the question of woman’s position in structures of empire and capital, and anticipates Fauset’s solo journey

through the dangerous “otherness” of the real Algiers in the subsequent installment of her travelogue.

Fauset uses the word “friend” often in this narrative: her traveling companions are nameless, described only as “my artist friend” and “my student friend.” The brothers insist that the two African American visitors are their “friends.” The French policeman’s wife, also nameless, is repeatedly referred to as “my little French friend,” and had delighted in being introduced to the Frenchwoman’s “Moorish friend.” Yet these friendships are by necessity fleeting, superficial, and structured by preconceived ideas of culture, race, and nation on all sides. The participants in these “friendships” can finally only perceive each other as types, not individual human beings.

Though Fauset’s narrative voice is self-assured in this text, as a black “Westerner” and a woman, the narrator’s identity and point of view are fluid and open to interpretation in Algiers. Both observing (as a tourist) and being observed (as a stranger), Fauset is aware of how her presence in Algiers opens up and confuses questions of national identity, class, privilege, and power. Though Fauset from the outset positions herself as a Westerner seeking alliances with the black and brown Algerines, the French colonizers see her as completely different from the North Africans, though what she is they are not quite sure. The misreadings and disarticulations of race and gender that Fauset’s presence as an educated, apparently wealthy African American woman provokes is dramatized when Fauset asks a local French woman if it is safe for her to walk around unaccompanied in a certain quarter. The woman responds, ““You may go anywhere, anywhere, Mademoiselle, and then besides one sees you are from Martinique (Martiniquaise) and there is no danger here for a French woman!”” (16). This comment contains many layers of irony.

At the time, Antilleans were legally French citizens, while the North and West Africans in French colonies were French subjects. This was a source of friction among Francophone blacks, even as they were attempting to formulate the political and cultural basis for the Négritude movement. And of course, Fauset herself is neither French nor Antillean, but the local woman seems to have no other category for the well-mannered black woman who spoke fluent French. The authority which Fauset, as narrator, claims for herself subverts the categories imposed upon her. Fauset’s identity is a modern identity—fractured, ambiguous, elusive. Yet any notion of common bonds of consciousness must by necessity rely upon 19<sup>th</sup> century concepts of race and identity still bearing the aroma of racial essentialism, a problem which Senghor and other proponents of Négritude encountered as they began to try to articulate its ideology and aesthetic.

What is the nature of the bond that connects what Du Bois referred to as “the darker peoples of the world?” Does the nature of the bond rest only on the common condition of those who are economically, politically, and culturally oppressed by Western European powers? What are the differences, what are the similarities, Fauset asks in “Dark Algiers the White” asks, between the modern American “race” woman and the black and brown Algerines? What are the differences, what are the similarities, among the “shrouded” Arab

women, the young white Frenchwoman who warns Fauset that it is dangerous for a “lady” to walk alone in the Arab quarter, and the African American woman who wandered, with the freedom of a tourist or a Martiniquaise, through that very same quarter the day before the warning?

All of these questions lead up to the most important one confronting Fauset as a writer: How can a black woman writer in 1925 frame her first experiences in an African country for the readers of the NAACP’s monthly magazine in a way that creates a political relationship between the readers in Harlem, Oklahoma City, and New Orleans? As “Dark Algiers the White” makes clear, it is all a matter, as Senghor says, of “*décalage*”—though certainly not a simple one, as he had hoped. This text exposes and explores the fissures as well as the possibilities of a transnational racial consciousness which doesn’t shirk from the ambiguities and complications of gender, class, and assumptions about national identity on the part of both beholder and beheld. “Dark Algiers the White,” with its disappointed idealism, vignettes of Fauset’s misreading as well as being misread, and deft evocation and debunking of stereotypes reminds us of the difficulties and hopes of the black internationalist project.

As we re-evaluate the Harlem Renaissance in a transnational context, we should also expand our discussion of Fauset’s work beyond her novels to her travelogues, reviews, and translations. An examination of her entire varied—in terms of both subject matter and genre—corpus of her work reveals a writer who was deeply engaged with the questions of modernity and its global and political implications.

---

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> See Walker.

<sup>2</sup> This is clear in both New Negro era texts such as Countee Cullen’s “Heritage” as well as contemporary analyses of black art in this era, as in Leininger-Miller’s analysis of Augusta Savage’s sculptures of African women which she created while in Paris. See Leininger-Miller.

<sup>3</sup> See Hughes.

<sup>4</sup> Fauset, Jessie. “Impressions of the Second Pan-African Congress.” *The Crisis*, 12. Vol. 22, 1. November, 1921; “What Europe Thought of the Pan-African Congress.” *The Crisis*, 60. Volume 23, 2. December, 1921.

<sup>5</sup> See Griffin.

<sup>6</sup> See Edwards.

<sup>7</sup> See Locke.

<sup>8</sup> See Edwards.

<sup>9</sup> See Ako, Sato, and others.

<sup>10</sup> In an interview with Pierre Loving in the *Paris Tribune*, Fauset declared: “I like Paris because I find something here, something of integrity, which I seem to have strangely lost in my own country. It is the simplest of all to say that I like to live among people and surroundings where I am not always conscious of ‘thou shalt not.’ I am colored and wish to be known as colored, but sometimes I have felt that my growth as a writer has been hampered in my own country. And so—but only

## Garcia — Dark Algiers the White

temporarily—I have fled from it. I adore my own people and I like to be among them of them, despite the race issue in America.” See Ford.

<sup>11</sup> See Frazier.

<sup>11</sup> See Hare in *The Crisis*, p. 258. The same issue includes an account of the President of Liberia and his wife’s official visit to Sierra Leone.

Works Cited

- Ako, Edward. "France in Afro-American Literature: A Study in Literary Mirages" *Neohelicon: Acta Comparationis Litterarum Universarum*, 1989; 16 (2): 97-104
- Edwards, Brent Hayes. The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England. Harvard University Press. 2003.
- Fauset, Jessie. "Impressions of the Second Pan-African Congress." *The Crisis*, 22. November, 1921. 12.  
— "What Europe Thought of the Pan-African Congress." *The Crisis*,. Volume 23. December, 1921. 60.
- Ford, Hugh, ed. *The Left Bank Revisited: Selections from the Paris Tribune 1917-1934.* University Park and London: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Griffin, Erica. "The 'Invisible Woman' Abroad: Jessie Fauset's New Horizon." Hubbard, Dolan (ed.), *Recovered Writers/Recovered Texts.* Knoxville, TN: U of Tennessee P 1997. 76.
- Hare, Maud Cuney. "Mabed Ibn Ouhab." *The Crisis*, 258. Volume 29, (6). April 1925.
- Hughes, Langston. *The Big Sea, an Autobiography.* New York: Hill and Wang, [1963, c1940]. 247.
- Leininger-Miller, Theresa. "Modern Dancers and African Amazons: Augusta Savage's Sculptures of Women, 1929-1930" in Chadwick, Whitney and Latimer, Tirza True. *The modern woman revisited : Paris between the Wars.* New Brunswick, N.J. : Rutgers University Press, 2003.
- Locke, Alan. "The New Negro" in *The Portable Harlem Renaissance Reader.* Levering Lewis, David, ed. New York, 1994. Viking Penguin.
- Sato, Hiroko. "Under the Harlem Shadow: A Study of Jessie Fauset" *Harlem Renaissance.* New York, NY: Garland; 1996.
- Walker, Corey D.B. "'Of the Coming of John [and Jane]': African American Intellectuals in Europe, 1988-1938. *Amerikastudien/American Studies*, 2002; 47 (1): 7-22.