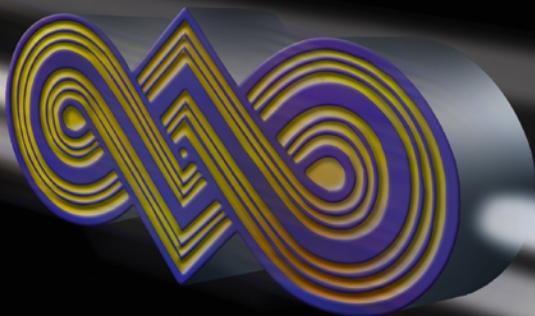


Encyclopedia of
BLACK STUDIES

MOLEFI KETE ASANTE
AMA MAZAMA
EDITORS



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BLACK STUDIES

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BLACK STUDIES

EDITORS

MOLEFI KETE ASANTE

Temple University

AMA MAZAMA

Temple University

A SAGE Reference Publication

 **SAGE Publications**
Thousand Oaks ■ London ■ New Delhi

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For information:



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2455 Teller Road
Thousand Oaks, California 91320
E-mail: order@sagepub.com

Sage Publications Ltd.
1 Oliver's Yard
55 City Road
London EC1Y 1SP
United Kingdom

Sage Publications India Pvt. Ltd.
B-42, Panchsheel Enclave
Post Box 4109
New Delhi 110 017 India

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Encyclopedia of Black studies / edited by Molefi Kete Asante [and] Ama Mazama.
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 0-7619-2762-X (cloth edition)

1. African Americans—Encyclopedias. I. Asante, Molefi K., 1942- II. Mazama, Ama, 1961-
E185.E554 2004
973'.0496073'003—dc22

2004010091

04 05 06 07 08 09 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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 African Cosmology
 African Dance in the United States
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 African Epistemology
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 African Liberation Day
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 African Studies Association
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The Afrocentric Idea
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Amsterdam News
An Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World
 Ancestor Veneration
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 Ausar Auset Society
The Autobiography of Malcolm X
 Axum Empire
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Before the Mayflower
The Birth of a Nation
 Black Anglo-Saxons
 Black Arts Movement
Black Athena
The Black Atlantic
 Black Church
 Black Codes
 Black Consciousness Movement
 Black Existentialism
Black Feminist Thought
The Black Jacobins
 The Black Manifesto
 Black Nationalism
 Black Panther Party for Self-Defense
 Black Philosophy
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 Black Power Conference of Newark, New Jersey
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The Black Scholar
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- Code Noir*
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The Destruction of Black Civilization
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 Fanonian Concept of Violence
 Festivals
 Fisk Jubilee Singers
 Forty Acres and a Mule
 Freedom Songs
 Freedom Summer

 Gabriel Prosser's Revolt
 Ghana Empire

 Haitian Revolution
 Highlander Folk School
 Hip-Hop
- Imperialism
 Indigeniste Movement
 Institute of Positive Education
 Institute of the Black World
Introduction to Black Studies
Invisible Man
 Islam

 Jazz
 Jim Crow
 Johnson Publishing Company
 Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies
Journal of African Civilizations
Journal of Black Studies
Journal of Negro History

 The Karamu House
 Kawaida
Kemet, Afrocentricity and Knowledge
 Kiswahili Movement
 Ku Klux Klan
 Kush
 Kwanzaa

 Last Poets
Letter From the Birmingham Jail
 "Lift Every Voice and Sing"
 Lucumi Tradition
 Lynching

 Maat
 Mali Empire
 March on Washington
 Marie Laveau
 Maroon Societies
 Mdw Ntr
 Melanin Theory
 Messianism
 Middle Passage
The Mis-Education of the Negro
 Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party
 Montgomery Bus Boycott
 Moorish Science Temple of America
- Moynihan Report
 Multicultural Education

Narratives of the Enslaved
 Nat Turner's Rebellion
 Nation of Islam
 National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
 National Black Political Convention, Gary, Indiana
 National Black United Fund
 National Council for Black Studies
 National Negro Congress
 National Urban League
 Négritude
 Negro
 Negro Convention Movement
 Neocolonialism
 New Deal
The New Negro
 Nguzo Saba
 Nommo
North Star
 Nubia

 Obeah
Odu Ifa
Opportunity: A Journal of Negro Life
 Oral Tradition
 Organization of Afro-American Unity
 Oyo Empire

 Patriarchy
The Philadelphia Negro
The Pittsburgh Courier
Plessy v. Ferguson
 Popular Traditional African Religions Everywhere
 Protest Pressure
The Psychopathic Racial Personality
 PUSH

 Rastafarianism
 Reconstruction
 Red Summer

-
- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| Reggae | Spirituals | U.S. Constitution, Fourteenth Amendment |
| Reparations | <i>Stolen Legacy</i> | U.S. Constitution, Fifteenth Amendment |
| Republic of New Afrika | Stono Rebellion | |
| Revolutionary Action Movement | | |
| Ring Shout | Talented Tenth | |
| Root Doctor | Temple Circle | Vesey's Conspiracy |
| | <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i> | Vodu |
| <i>Sankofa</i> | <i>They Came Before Columbus</i> | |
| Santería | Third World Press | Watts Prophets |
| Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture | Two Cradle Theory | Watts Rebellion of 1965 |
| Scottsboro Case | | Westernization |
| Slave Route | Umfundalai | The World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance |
| Songhay Empire | Underground Railroad | <i>The Wretched of the Earth</i> |
| Soul | Universal Negro Improvement Association | |
| <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i> | Us | |
| Southern Christian Leadership Conference | U.S. Constitution, Thirteenth Amendment | Yoruba Tradition |

Reader's Guide

This list is provided to assist readers in locating entries on related topics. It classifies entries into 30 categories: African American Studies Afrocentricity, Annual Conferences, Anti-Racism, Arts, Associations and Organizations, Books, Campus Politics, Civil Rights, Classical Africa, Concepts, Culture, Films,

Institutions, Intellectual Schools, Journals, Legal Issues, Movements, Newspapers, Political Issues, Professional Organizations, Publishers, Racism, Religion, Reparations, Research Centers, Resistance, Theories, United States Constitution. Some entries may appear in more than one category.

AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

African American Studies,
Temple University
African American Studies:
The First Doctoral Program
African American Studies:
Graduate Studies for the
21st Century
African American Studies:
The Indian Perspective

AFROCENTRICITY

Afrocentric Creed
Afrocentric Criticism
Afrocentric Education
The Afrocentric Idea
The Afrocentric Paradigm
The Afrocentric Scholar
Afrocentric Schools
Afrocentric Social Work
Afrocentricity
Afrocultural Theory
Afronography

ANNUAL CONFERENCES

Cheikh Anta Diop International
Conference

Council of Independent Black
Institutions
National Council for Black
Studies

ANTI-RACISM

American Anti-slavery Society
Antilynching Campaign
Antiracist Philosophy
Black Consciousness Movement
Freedom Summer
Highlander Folk School
March on Washington
Protest Pressure

ARTS

African Aesthetic
African American Oratory
African Dance in the
United States
Apollo Theatre
Black Arts Movement
Blaxploitation Films
Blues
Capoeira
Fisk Jubilee Singers
Freedom Songs
Hip-Hop

Jazz
The Karamu House
Last Poets
Oral Tradition
Reggae
Ring Shout
Spirituals
Umfundalai
Watts Prophets

ASSOCIATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

American Colonization Society
American Negro Academy
Association of Black
Psychologists
Ausar Auset Society
Black Panther Party for
Self-Defense
Institute of Positive Education
Institute of the Black World
National Association
for the Advancement
of Colored People
National Black United Fund
National Urban League
Organization of Afro-American
Unity
PUSH

Southern Christian
Leadership Conference
Universal Negro
Improvement Association
Us

BOOKS

The Afrocentric Idea
The Afrocentric Paradigm
Afrocentricity
*An Appeal to the Colored Citizens
of the World*
*The Autobiography of Malcolm X
Before the Mayflower*
Black Athena
The Black Atlantic
Black Feminist Thought
The Black Jacobins
Black Skin, White Masks
Code Noir
*The Crisis of the Negro
Intellectual*
Dark Ghetto
*The Destruction of Black
Civilization*
Introduction to Black Studies
Invisible Man
*Kemet, Afrocentricity and
Knowledge*
Letter From the Birmingham Jail
*The Mis-Education of the
Negro*
The New Negro
Odu Ifa
The Philadelphia Negro
*The Psychopathic Racial
Personality*
The Souls of Black Folk
Stolen Legacy
Their Eyes Were Watching God
They Came Before Columbus
The Wretched of the Earth

CAMPUS POLITICS

African American Studies,
Temple University
Black Studies, City College
of New York

Black Studies, Kent State
University
Black Studies, Names
Controversy
Black Studies, Wellesley
College

CIVIL RIGHTS

Congress of Racial Equality
Congressional Black Caucus
National Association
for the Advancement
of Colored People
National Negro Congress
National Urban League

CLASSICAL AFRICA

Diopian Historiography
Ghana
Kush
Mdw Ntr
Two Cradle Theory

CONCEPTS

Affirmative Action
African Americans
and American Communism
African Cosmology
African Epistemology
African Philosophy
Africological Enterprise
Class and Caste
Consciousness
Creolization
Diaspora
Dislocation
Ethiopianism
Eurocentrism
Fanonian Concept of Violence
Imperialism
Maat
Messianism
Multicultural Education
Nommo
Protest Pressure
Rastafarianism
Soul

Talented Tenth
Westernization

CULTURE

African Americans
African Burial Ground Project
Ancestor Veneration
Ebonics
Festivals
Fisk Jubilee Singers
Freedom Songs
Hip-Hop
Jazz
Kwanzaa
Last Poets
Nommo
Nguzo Saba
“Lift Every Voice and Sing”
Reggae
Spirituals
Watts Prophets

FILMS

The Birth of a Nation
Ethnic Notions
Sankofa

INSTITUTIONS

Black Church
Family
Kwanzaa
Patriarchy

INTELLECTUAL SCHOOLS

Accommodationism
Dream Team
Elder Scholars
Kawaida
Temple Circle

JOURNALS

The Black Scholar
The Crisis
Journal of African Civilizations
Journal of Black Studies
Journal of Negro History
Opportunity

LEGAL ISSUES

Black Codes
Brown v. Board of Education
 Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen,
 and Abandoned Lands
 Forty Acres and a Mule
Plessy v. Ferguson
 Scottsboro Case

MOVEMENTS

African Liberation Day
 All African People's
 Revolutionary Party
 Ancient Egyptian Studies
 Movement
 Back-to-Africa Movement
 Black Consciousness Movement
 Black Power Conference of
 Newark, New Jersey
 Black Power Movement
 Congress of African Peoples
 Haitian Revolution
 Indigeniste Movement
 Kiswahili Movement
 Mississippi Freedom
 Democratic Party
 Negro Convention Movement
 Organization of
 Afro-American Unity
 Republic of New Afrika
 Revolutionary Action Movement

NEWSPAPERS

Amsterdam News
North Star
The Pittsburgh Courier

POLITICAL ISSUES

American Civil War
 Compromise of 1850
 Emancipation Proclamation
 Neocolonialism
 New Deal

POPULATIONS

African Americans
 African Demographics

African Ethnic Groups
 Axum Empire
 Black Anglo-Saxons
 Caribbean
 Creole
 Diaspora
 Ghana Empire
 Kush
 Mali Empire
 Maroon Societies
 Negro
 Nubia
 Oyo Empire
 Songhay Empire

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

African Studies Association
 National Council for
 Black Studies

PUBLISHERS

Africa World Press
 Associated Publishers
 Broadside Press
 Johnson Publishing Company
 Third World Press

RACISM

Code Noir
 Cultural Genocide
 Freedom Summer
 Jim Crow
 Ku Klux Klan
 Lynching
 Red Summer
 World Conference
 Against Racism, Racial
 Discrimination, Xenophobia
 and Related Intolerance

RELIGION

Ausar Auset Society
 Christianity
 Islam
 Lucumi Tradition

Marie Laveau
 Moorish Science Temple
 of America
 Nation of Islam
 Obeah
 Popular Traditional African
 Religion Everywhere
 Root Doctor
 Santería
 Vodun
 Yoruba Tradition

REPARATIONS

Black Manifesto
 European Slave Trade
 Middle Passage
 Reconstruction
 Reparations
 Slave Route

RESEARCH CENTERS

Amistad Research Center
 Charles L. Blockson
 Afro-American Collection
 Joint Center for Political and
 Economic Studies
 Schomburg Center for Research
 in Black Culture

RESISTANCE

Class Struggle
 Curse of the Door of No Return
 Enslavement Resistance
 Exodusters
 Gabriel Prosser's Revolt
 Nat Turner's Rebellion
 Stono Rebellion
 Underground Railroad
 Vesey's Conspiracy
 Watts Rebellion of 1965

THEORIES

African Worldview Theory
 Africana Womanism
 Africology
 Black Existentialism

Black Nationalism
Black Philosophy
Black Politics
Black Studies
Black Theology
Consciencism
Education and Black Studies

Kawaida
Melanin Theory

U.S. CONSTITUTION

U.S. Constitution, Thirteenth
Amendment

U.S. Constitution, Fourteenth
Amendment
U.S. Constitution, Fifteenth
Amendment

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Preface

Black Studies emerged as both an intellectual field and a critical ideology during the 1960s. It has remained close to its roots and also made a broad and deep impact on scholarship in general by creating a fundamental shift in the way scholars pursue research and view human societies: Black Studies has made possible an awareness of the great contributions that Africans and those of African descent have made to the discourse of knowledge.

THE DIMENSIONS IN BLACK STUDIES

There are three dimensions in the evolution of Black Studies during the last few decades: (1) the organization of departments and programs, (2) the academic and administrative instruments dealing with the nature of the discipline, and (3) the preparation of scholars in graduate programs. Those who sought to create Black Studies were concerned with the obstacles that would be advanced to prevent the self-definition, self-determination, and intellectual liberation of those of African descent living in the Americas. This was a substantive issue because the history of American education had been against the extension of certain intellectual freedoms for Africans. Furthermore, before 1865 people of African descent living in the United States were not citizens and consequently were not African Americans but Africans. Since the 1990s, many people of African descent have used *African* to designate their cultural origin. This use of the term is not a reference to citizenship. The term *African* is being used here in a special sense to mean those who were enslaved and their descendants. Carter G. Woodson referred to this difficulty in his 1933 book *The Mis-Education of the Negro*. It was Woodson's idea that where the black person had been afforded the right to education, the process was often meant to further isolate the person from his or her cultural and historical background. The idea was to make the black

person a white person in thought, attitude, and behavior, to leave the person nothing but a black shell. Therefore, the creators of Black Studies understood that one of their key demands had to be control over the process of education.

Within a university structure, all power resides in departments and faculty members, not in programs and adjuncts or research assistants. The first objective of the movement was to secure departments of Black Studies. This was a major task because there had not been any such departments at major or minor universities. The best to emerge from decades of education, even in the black colleges and universities, were departments of history where individual historians—such as Chancellor Williams, Carter G. Woodson, William Leo Hansberry, John Henrik Clarke, John Jackson, Benjamin Quarles, and others—sought to demonstrate the role of Africans in world history. But some of them were often under severe pressure, criticized, ostracized, and hounded out of colleges seeking to express themselves as enclaves of whiteness in a sea of black students.

All of this history was available to the students of the sixties who understood that to avoid the mistakes of the black colleges they had to demand a Black Studies department where the courses would be taught from a *black perspective*. This was the operative term at the very beginning of the movement. It was translated erroneously by some to mean that only blacks could teach in the departments, but the initial impetus was not racist or racial but ideological. Those who taught in the departments of Black Studies had to understand and appreciate the black perspective.

Black Studies departments were established in several major colleges and universities, such as Ohio State, Louisville, San Jose State, Temple, Cornell, Pittsburgh, Wisconsin, San Francisco State, Harvard, SUNY Buffalo, and UC Berkeley. Other schools, such as UCLA, the University of Pennsylvania, Princeton,

Yale, Michigan, Wayne State, Michigan State, Michigan, and Illinois, chose the weaker program model and did not create such departments. Consequently, there has been a long debate over the field in these institutions that did not immediately move to organize Black Studies as a department. They have remained on the periphery of the discipline, often attracting high-powered intellectuals in the traditional disciplines and suggesting that they are Black Studies professors. Occasionally these professors repudiate both Black Studies and those who suggest that they are anything other than sociologists, historians, or literary critics. Immersed in their old disciplines and wedded to their old career paths, these professors have often used Black Studies departments as means for advancement in their original disciplines but not as professional arenas for their own work.

The academic and administrative instruments meant to secure the field include the establishment of research centers, journals, seminars, conferences, and a professional organization. Over the years, these instruments of the discipline have been articulated in more discreet ways. For example, instead of the *Journal of Black Studies*, *Black Scholar*, and *Western Journal of Black Studies*, the three most prominent journals that emerged out of the sixties and early seventies, scores of departments and centers have their own journals and newsletters. Black Studies is no longer a small affair in the American academy. The field is implicated in many national and international issues, and scholars from every corner of the globe publish in the journals. The *Journal of Black Studies*, a refereed journal that has set the standard for scholarship in the field, has more than 3,000 subscribers. More than half of the professors who have received tenure in the field of Black Studies have published in the *Journal of Black Studies*. In addition, over 75% of all Black Studies professors who are tenured have published in at least one of the three journals established concurrently with the field—the *Journal of Black Studies*, *Black Scholar*, and *Western Journal of Black Studies*.

Major research centers have been established at Columbia, the University of Michigan, and UCLA, as well as at other universities, with the aim of contributing to the evolution of scholarship in Black Studies. Grants have been made to scholars for the exploration of public policy, education, social welfare, and economic aspects of the lives of Africans living in

the Americas. In recent years, the tendency to define some areas of research as Diaspora Studies has gained momentum. The idea in the centers and some departments where this term is employed is that such studies must explore and expose the character of the experiences of African people in the Caribbean and South America. One could comfortably say, however, that there has never been a time in Black Studies when there was a prohibition of this sort of transcontinental understanding of the African experience. The field was at its very origin a pan-African enterprise.

The creation of the doctoral program at Temple University in 1988 was a defining experience for Black Studies. For the first time since the emergence of the field 20 years earlier there would be the possibility of Black Studies conferring the terminal degree on a candidate. The doctoral program was greeted with tremendous anticipation by the scores of young scholars who would benefit from it in ways that could not even be imagined. The first master's and Ph.D. class at Temple University, during the autumn of 1988, was comprised of 37 students. At this time, there have been more than 125 doctoral graduates at Temple University. They occupy positions in departments and programs in the United States as well as in other nations. The first student to receive the doctorate in African American Studies was a Nigerian, Adeniyi Coker; the first African American student to receive the doctorate in African American Studies was Mark Hyman; the first white student to receive a doctorate in African American Studies was Cynthia Lehman; the first Chinese student to receive a doctorate in African American Studies was Yuan Ji; and the first Japanese student to receive a doctorate in African American Studies was Suzuko Morikawa. These Black Studies scholars and those who follow them will be building on the work of those of us who had to train in other disciplines because Black Studies did not yet exist. Therefore, the objective of each graduate program in Black Studies must be to prepare its students to apply their greater conceptual and disciplinary education to enriching the discipline. At the present time, there are departmental doctoral programs at Temple, UC Berkeley, and the University of Massachusetts Amherst; there are interdepartmental doctoral degree programs at Harvard and Michigan State.

The *Encyclopedia of Black Studies* has brought together the work of nearly 200 scholars with the

objective of securing a baseline for the establishment of a canon of the field. Our intention has been to convey a sense of the research activity, conceptualization, and pedagogy of Black Studies scholars. Thus, we have created an encyclopedia that is conceptually driven rather than personality driven; that is, the ideas and concepts of the field are thrust into the forefront and create the context within which individuals' contributions are acknowledged.

The *Encyclopedia of Black Studies* fills a serious need for professionals in the field, but it also has value for those who are interested in the cultural production of the black community apart from the general public output in popular journals and magazines. The intent of the encyclopedia is to provide more than a state-of-the-art account of the field—it is to give the reader substantial information that might be used to develop state-of-the-art accounts in the field. Thus, we were eager to make sure that scholars, researchers, and students could refer to the encyclopedia for trustworthy accounts, common definitions in the field, and disciplinary protocols. Students in many fields, including but not limited to African American Studies, history, sociology, and anthropology, will find the encyclopedia of use in their researches. Serving as a source for the most used ideas and concepts in the field of Black Studies is a principal goal of this encyclopedia. Often individuals have used concepts such as *Afrocentricity*, *Africology*, *double consciousness*, *patriarchy*, and *Kawaida* without knowing what the average user of such terms in Black Studies means by them. We hope that the *Encyclopedia of Black Studies* will be a guide from which to have meaningful discourse.

THE VIEW OF BLACK STUDIES

We take a broad view of Black Studies. This is only natural because the originators of the field took a broad view. More important, however, is the fact that the position the early scholars took is absolutely correct in terms of how most people in the field view the work that we do as professionals. Black Studies implies in its name the idea that the study is concerned with people who are identified as or define themselves as black people. This identification transcends national and continental boundaries. African American Studies reduced the reach of the term *Black Studies* and made it more American. This was the trend during the 1980s. However, by the early 1990s the trend was once again

reversed so that many departments claimed that the name African American or Afro-American was too limiting. Some sought to use the term *Africana* to represent black people in the Americas, Africa, and the Caribbean. The term has gained acceptability through its use by the Cornell University Institute for Africana Studies and the *International Journal of Africana Studies*, which is published under the auspices of the National Council for Black Studies. The term *Africana* was also taken up by the *Encarta Africana* encyclopedia of African culture.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ENCYCLOPEDIA

The entries in this encyclopedia are organized alphabetically. They are cross-referenced to aid the reader in making associations between entries. Furthermore, we have prepared a Reader's Guide in which the entries are grouped according to a series of key topics, allowing the reader to read all of the entries on a particular theme, such as Organizations, Culture, or Resistance.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to acknowledge the people who have worked hard to help us bring this encyclopedia to fruition. Rolf Janke and Vince Burns were our first contacts at Sage on this project. Throughout everything, even the departure of the senior development editor, Vince Burns, Rolf Janke has been consistent and on target. We greatly appreciate his confidence in our work and in our project. Claudia Hoffman came aboard at the right time, just as the work was intensifying, and the fact that this encyclopedia is being read by scholars the world over is due to her diligence in working with us. We are grateful to her for the work that she did in guiding this project.

We could not have achieved this monumental project without the thinking of our colleagues and our graduate students. Many of them helped us with entry development and gave us much encouragement when academic and organizational obstacles seemed insurmountable. We never underestimated the amount of work that would be needed to secure contributors who were knowledgeable on the subjects of the entries we thought it necessary to include. We probably underestimated the amount of time it would take to pull all of the entries together on time. Nevertheless, we are

happy to say that the *Encyclopedia of Black Studies* was produced within the time frame given by the publishers. This was due in large part to our able assistant, Sekhmet McCallister. She was extraordinary in her ability to use all electronic means to assist us. We could not have done this job without her steadfastness. She is a remarkable person and we are very grateful for her assistance.

We especially want to recognize the members of the editorial board who lent their names and reputations to this project and gave their input generously when necessary. Some of them worried that we would not be able to pull this project off because we did not

have external or university funding. Yet the editorial board members gave us their support, believing that if this project could be done, we could do it. So for us they are the real keepers of the field of Black Studies and we greatly appreciate them.

Both of us thank our families profusely for their understanding, generosity, and patience. We therefore express our gratitude to Dr. Garvey Lundy and Ana Yenenga, the most important people in the world to us, for their ability to listen to our complaints about deadlines and difficulties. They endured and we endured.

—*Molefi Kete Asante and Ama Mazama*

About the Editors

Molefi Kete Asante is considered one of the most distinguished contemporary scholars in Black Studies. He is the author of 55 books and more than 300 articles in 25 different journals.

Dr. Asante was the first director of UCLA's Center for Afro-American Studies, from 1969 to 1973, where he was responsible for developing the research and curriculum programs. During the past 30 years, he has edited the *Journal of Black Studies*, making it one of the most prestigious journals in the field of Black Studies.

Dr. Asante has been recognized as one of the 10 most widely cited African Americans. He has taught at several universities, including UCLA, Purdue, Florida State, Howard, SUNY Buffalo, and Temple. At Temple University he created the first Ph.D. program in African American Studies. He has directed more than 100 doctoral dissertations. In 2001, *Transition Magazine* said, "Asante may be the most important professor in Black America." Dr. Asante has received scores of awards and recognitions, including the distinguished Douglas Ehninger Award for Rhetorical Scholarship from the National Communication Association in 2002.

Ama Mazama is one of the leading theorists of the Afrocentric school. With a doctorate from La Sorbonne in Paris, Dr. Mazama is one of the most

important professors in Black Studies. She is the author of five books, including *L'Imperatif Afrocentrique* and *The Afrocentric Paradigm*. Her articles and essays have appeared in many scholarly journals nationally and internationally, and she has been cited by African American Studies professional organizations for scholarship and intellectual activism. As a prominent consultant for educational institutions, she has pioneered in the area of making scholarship relevant to the African community.

Dr. Mazama has taught at the University of Texas at Austin, Pennsylvania State University, and Temple University. She has trained outstanding graduate students and has been the most prolific teacher of undergraduates in African American Studies at Temple. A teacher of remarkable talent, Dr. Mazama has also been an academic leader in Black Studies. Her work has focused on language, linguistics, and theory. She has been particularly skillful in defending the Afrocentric paradigm as a legitimate framework for analyzing events and texts. Her work has been published in both French and English. Cited by the Cheikh Anta Diop Conference's committee for outstanding research and academic excellence, Dr. Mazama has won both the Ankh Award and the Diop Award, becoming the only person ever to win both of these distinguished awards.

Introduction

THE ORIGINS OF BLACK STUDIES

Nearly 40 years ago, African American students at San Francisco State College engaged in protests that led to the creation of the first bachelor's degree-granting departments of Black Studies in the United States. Nathan Hare was made the first chairperson of the department. This was 1967. A year later, Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee, leading to the most widespread demonstrations and urban disturbances in the history of the United States. However, with the death of King came a renewed commitment on the part of the American nation to bring about educational reform, and Black Studies was one of the beneficiaries of this new mood.

Since that time, scholars have undertaken the task of fleshing out Black Studies with theoretical works, research studies, methodological discourses, social responsibilities, and institution building. The success of these efforts, against the enduring intransigence of the academy toward Black Studies, has been phenomenal and sustaining. The fact that the *Encyclopedia of Black Studies* can now be written attests to the maturity of the field.

THE FIELD AND THE ENCYCLOPEDIA

This is not merely an encyclopedia of black culture or an encyclopedia of black people—it is a specific, precise encyclopedia dealing with the emergence and maturity of an intellectual field that was begun as a corrective to generations of hegemonic curricula meant to support the theories and practices of white racial domination. Increasingly there are encyclopedias dealing with many topics and themes, including distinguished African scholars, the African world, African nations, and African culture.

Few disciplines or areas of study have needed an encyclopedia as much as Black Studies does. This is

not because the field should be codified or concretized but because scholars and students should have some clear conception of the evolutionary processes that created and maintain the discipline. Black Studies has limited the wanton spread of imperialistic curricula to the degree that it has presented an exceptionally brilliant collection of articles and books demonstrating the validity of a multiplicity of perspectives on facts. Education is no longer, as it was, lily-white. One only has to consider the linguistic and symbolic transformations that have occurred in the academy to see the impact of the discipline of Black Studies on sociology, history, social work, psychology, and political science. Those fields that have not been influenced by the innovations in Black Studies remain intractable but also remain outside of the new thinking about race, culture, gender, and ethnicity.

No longer are most academicians comfortable using terms and phrases such as *African slaves*, *Columbus's discovery of America*, *African primitives*, *Universal Man*, and *Black Africa*, without appending some explanation to them. The ideas these words represent call for studied reflection on the nature of historical and cultural reality. Clearly, Europe is no longer the standard nor the model by which Africa, Africans, and those of African descent must be judged. Numerous arguments for white exclusivity have been shown to be myths maintained by a racist educational system. Thus, the names of ancient African philosophers such as Ptahhotep, Imhotep, Akhenaten, Amenemhat, Amenemope, Duauf, and Amenhotep, son of Hapu, have been heard in the classrooms of America's most prestigious universities because of the transformation brought about by Black Studies. Indeed, it is not simply that the names have been heard but that the philosophies have been translated, read, and discussed in many venues. Maulana Karenga's monumental work *Maat: The Ethics of Social Justice* (2004, Routledge) is just the latest in a long line of outstanding publications in Black Studies

scholarship on ancient Africa. It has taken Black Studies scholars to rescue the study of ancient African ethics and culture from the static archaeological works of many Egyptologists.

Our aim in this encyclopedia is to extend the discourse on intellectual ideas, not merely to enumerate the cultural artifacts that exist in the black world. Indeed, culture is important and we see our work as adding to the serious treatment of the concepts and ideas that are employed in Black Studies. In effect, in order to approach the study of Africans in the Americas and Caribbean, it was necessary for the African and African American scholars who practiced Black Studies to see it as more than politics, and more than the enumeration of artifacts; they had to understand the field in its own right as disciplinary arena. This was the first task of achieving an academic fullness in the field. Without this type of framework, all else dangled in the air and often appeared irrational, bizarre, or strange. For example, it was impossible to properly study the funeral behaviors of African Americans in the South, Jamaicans, or Haitians without some appreciation of the context in which these behaviors developed. Catherine Godboldt (2002) addressed this issue in a telling way when she noted that although it is well known that black people in the South have always enjoyed the porch as an extension of the family dwelling, it is necessary to have a broad view of village life in Africa to see the connection between enslaved Africans building porches on Southern homes and the public spaces for socializing in Africa. European houses did not have porches, and it was not until Africans introduced porches that this new idea was born. What has happened too often in education is that the white, Western European perspective has been taken as universal, and therefore people have no idea of what constitutes continuities or correspondences from one culture to the next. This perspective collapses almost everything into its sphere and what is actually an African achievement is seen as European. Thus one of the central tendencies of Black Studies is to consciously cultivate a discourse on identity that speaks to the diversity and commonalities found in the pan-African world.

What we have discovered in the course of editing this encyclopedia is the extent to which Black Studies has revolutionized the information pool. Just the fact that the field has brought many new professors into the arena for thinking and acting has affected information in both quantity and quality. We now have

much more capability and much more enlightenment about African American and African realities than we had in the past. The reason for this is researchers' intense search for as much information as possible to be able to write the whole black story. This search led scholars to Ahmad Baba, the last chancellor of the University at Sankore in Mali, who may have been the most published African writer of his generation. During the 15th century, he wrote more than 42 books on various subjects, including law, ethics, mathematics, and religion. Another writer, Amadou Bamba, the early 19th-century cleric of Senegal, authored more than 1500 treatises on many subjects during his time as spiritual and cultural leader of the Mourrides of Touba. Without the aggressive research of African American Studies scholars, however, information such as this probably would not have been brought to the attention of students and the lay audience.

The fact that we know so much about the condition of the African diaspora in Brazil, Venezuela, Colombia, Belize, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Martinique, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay, and many other countries is directly related to the scholarly interest in comparative African societies, religions, and acts of resistance to oppression. Much of this information was available before Black Studies, without registering as serious points of interest in the academy until Black Studies scholars began to refer to new categories of information.

Black Studies as a discipline also has a political aspect because it was born of the desire to see a more equitable world. It is a subject that introduces the student and scholar to the fact of Africa's betrayal. The question is not "Has Africa been betrayed?" but "By whom and for what reasons has Africa been betrayed?" Set in motion by enslavement, colonialism, and globalization, the betrayal of Africa sought to disinherit Africans in the Americas as well as throughout the world. The ultimate function of this is to dislocate Africans in the context of human history.

Dislocation is at the root of many of the theoretical problems in studying African phenomena. It is the quality of being outside of one's own psychological or cultural reality, which has been the experience of Africans worldwide. The fact that Africans have often taken as their reality the experiences of Europeans and have participated in the general Eurocentric understanding of history has further distanced many people from their own historical realities. Thus, the intent of the Afrocentric revolution, including its cultural and

political forms, is to relocate Africans everywhere within their own centered context for analysis and interpretation, enabling them to produce more authentic and genuine responses to phenomena.

The Afrocentric Point of Departure

Afrocentricity, therefore, was posited not as an anti-European view but as a way for Africans the world over to proactively seek to explain phenomena from their own points of view. This perspective created, *inter alia*, difficulties with the many scholars who hold imperializing and hegemonizing attitudes and have insisted on a dominating ideological perspective where only Europe is correct, only European ideas are valid, and Europe becomes the universal model for all thought and behavior.

The transformation brought about by Afrocentricity had been presaged in the writings and actions of numerous scholars. Perhaps, as both Daryl Zizwe Poe (2004) and Kwame Botwe-Asamoah (2004) have claimed, Kwame Nkrumah was the first African to call for an Afrocentric response to the political, economic, and cultural realities of Africa. As Ghana's first president and the spiritual leader of the modern pan-African movement, Nkrumah propounded the view that Africa had to examine the world with an eye to its interests as determined by its culture rather than Europe's culture. Ghana was to be the prime model of African *conscientism*, which is what Nkrumah named his philosophical perspective.

Various seeds of an Afrocentric orientation can be found in the works of Willie Abraham, Frantz Fanon, and others, but their works are often compromised by their training in the West (Abraham, 1966; Fanon, 1968). While this is not the time for a discourse on the misorientations that exist in their works, let it suffice to say that the incipient ideas in their intellectual contributions were useful to the maturity of the concept of Afrocentricity.

A Call to Change Scholars' Views of Africans

It was the dramatic walkout of the 1969 African Studies Association Convention in Montreal by African American scholars that led directly to a call for renewal in the way Africans were approached by scholars from the West. This may have been the event that made John Henrik Clarke, leader of the walkout, a household name in the pan-African community and

assured him a place in history. Clarke articulated the views of many African American scholars that Africanists, who were usually white, were disinterested in the quality of African development and were in many ways merely arms of the colonizing impulse in the Western world. Although Clarke would later criticize the Afrocentric theory, in 1974 he published an article in the *The Afrocentric World Review* in which he strongly affirmed the need to reshape the study of history.

The experience in Montreal had been a watershed. When the African American scholars walked out of the conference, they were joined by a group of revolutionary African scholars who vowed to work for the creation of an African Heritage Studies Association. This movement and the association it created predated the National Council of Black Studies, which was founded in 1974. Since that time, the two organizations have worked in tandem to examine, investigate, interpret, and promote African culture transcontinentally and transgenerationally.

The publication of *Afrocentricity* in 1980 by Molefi Kete Asante, 8 years before the creation of the first Ph.D. program in African American Studies, and 6 years after the founding of the National Council of Black Studies, had an energizing effect on African American Studies scholarship. Among the first dissertations to be written using Afrocentric ideas was that of Francis Dorsey, who received a doctorate from Kent State University's Department of Communication in 1983. Dorsey had received a master's degree in communication from the State University of New York in Buffalo under the direction of Molefi Asante in 1979. He had been among the first students to be exposed to the new thinking regarding African agency. Thus, his dissertation on Marcus Garvey at Kent State was a revolutionary turn in the communication field and it anticipated many dissertations that were to be written in African American Studies.

A Disciplinary or Multidisciplinary Field?

Various scholars, such as Linda James Myers, Marimba Ani, and Wade Nobles, emerged in the 1980s and 1990s to add to the discourse on the nature of Black Studies. One of the earliest to undertake a discussion of the scope of the field was James Stewart (1997), who pioneered work on the philosophical side of the discipline. He was committed to a multidimensional, multidisciplinary view of the field and in several

highly useful essays laid out an intellectual idea that generated debate and discussion. Maulana Karenga (1993) at first reinforced Stewart's multidisciplinary view of the field. Later, however, he stated that the Afrocentrists had made an important distinction between discipline and interests: There is only one discipline, and there are many interests, not many disciplines (Karenga, 1993). Nevertheless, this issue has continued to be debated in the National Council for Black Studies conferences, as befits any serious discourse around concepts grounded in the search for theoretical and professional advancement.

On the other hand, the Temple Circle, a group of Temple University professors and graduate students led by Ama Mazama and Molefi Asante, took a radically different perspective by arguing that Black Studies was a discipline that could be applied to several different thematic and subject interests. Thus, one could have an interest in social institutions, music, human experiences in chronological time, or the psychic states of humans, and study these interests from an Afrocentric perspective. This became the most dominant perspective among students seeking the highest degree since it freed them from being locked into defending a multidisciplinary field that could not be put back in the box. Black Studies had come of age because now there were not just competing paradigms but different ways to view reality.

Faculty at other departments joined the fray on one side or the other. At Harvard, Yale, Brown, and Cornell, four key Ivy League institutions, Black Studies was seen literally as the study of black people from many different disciplines. There was only one boundary—you had to be studying black people. This meant that there was almost no boundary, because African people had been studied for hundreds of years; yet it would have been too much of a stretch to claim that this activity was Black Studies. What the Temple Circle understood was that the mere study of black people was not Black Studies.

The Theoretical Evolution and Development of Black Studies

Cecil Gray (2001) wrote an interesting and controversial book on the evolution of Afrocentricity. In his book, he points out the inadequacy of a system that must rely on definitions from outside the group. Therefore, to discuss Afrocentricity one must always return to the intellectual source, that is, the books and

research articles that constitute foundational work in the discipline.

One cannot simply write the history of Black Studies as a history of Temple University's department of African American Studies, although many of the intellectual battles for the discipline have been fought at Temple. A plethora of issues have confronted the field at other universities and have been met by equally committed scholars. One of the first issues that scholars had to deal with was the relationship of African American Studies to African Studies. A second issue was the role of Marxist analyses in the construction of responses to the continuing crisis in the lives of African Americans. A third issue was the cultural war debate that was generated by the strong Afrocentric thrust in the early 1980s. Finally, the idea of gender and its relationship to culture had to be configured in the evolving discourse around the collective African experience. Each issue had its corollaries, subthemes, and extenuations; each had its arguments, and some were accompanied by conclusions before arguments were made, but all the issues have been addressed in the general development of Black Studies.

Black Studies and African Studies

African Studies developed during the late 1950s and early 1960s in the United States as a response to the rising tide of independent nations on the continent of Africa. Most of the early support came from the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations. Their interests and those of the United States government coincided inasmuch as they both sought ways to influence the newly independent nations. Furthermore, the American government wanted to have a highly trained cadre of civil servants who had knowledge of the languages and cultures of Africa. This was particularly useful to the information agencies.

Consequently, many of the early Africanists were also government employees and consultants. There has always been a close association between the Africanist tradition and the information services. American officials interested in diplomacy and commerce in Africa frequently turned to the new Africanists for advice and assistance. Many of them were scholars who had limited appreciation of America's own role in the enslavement of Africans and therefore disconnected their research and work from the ongoing problems of the Africans in the diaspora.

Thus, when the Black Studies movement began in the late 1960s, nearly 10 years after the Africanist movement, there was little contact between the two interests. Indeed, Africanists tended to be largely white, and Black Studies scholars were largely African Americans. However, the fact that African Americans cast their research interests in pan-African terms meant that they would have a different perspective than that of the Africanists. Bridging the gulf between the continents became a new desire in the academy.

Black Studies and Marxist Sociologists

Most of the leading sociologists in Black Studies departments viewed themselves as political sociologists and always framed their discussions in terms of what it was that they had to offer to the vision of autonomy. It was clear that the African American condition was one that demonstrated the class question in its strictest sense. It was not clear whether there was a Marxist solution to the condition of Africans in the United States. Many of the leading scholars in this tradition—Gerald McWorter (aka Abdul Alkalimat), Ronald Bailey, and William Sales, for example—believed strongly in the necessity of a general analysis of African American history based on the conflict model (Alkalimat, 1986). The fact of the matter is that when one looks at the Southern experience of African Americans, Africans were workers and whites were capitalists in the classic caste sense. One could argue, as some have, that this was only an aberration because white workers were also being crushed by the capitalist state. With radical democratic and socialist thinkers, such as William Sales, Manning Marable, and Cornel West, one often sees the duality of class and race in their Black Studies writings. Manning Marable, who teaches political sociology at Columbia University, is the author of many books, including *How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America* (1983) and *Black Liberation in a Conservative America* (1997). Cornel West, who teaches religion at Princeton University, is best known for the popular work *Race Matters* (1992). William Sales, who teaches Black Studies at Seton Hall University, is the author of *From Civil Rights to Black Liberation: Malcolm X and the Organization of Afro-American Unity* (1994).

The question of which factor is most responsible for the economic and cultural condition of people of

African descent in the industrial, heterogeneous societies of the West has not been adequately answered by the Marxists; it remains one of the continuing issues in Black Studies. Nevertheless, a socialist ethic seems to underlie much of the literature in the field, although it could be argued that it is not a consciously socialist attitude that governs the writings of African American Studies professors. It is as though the humanist element in the analysis and synthesis of political energies is directed toward creating societies where domination is critiqued as a matter of course and where human oppression based on race, culture, class, or gender is obliterated.

Black Studies and the Cultural Wars

The cultural wars of the 1990s were initiated not by Black Studies scholars but by white Eurocentric scholars in response to some of their black protégées' Afrocentric contention that it was necessary to develop a paradigm that spoke to the specific and particular condition of African people in the world. This was a thrust for agency, a movement to reinterpret reality from the standpoint of African people and for the interest of African people. This was seen, *inter alia*, as an attack on white people, which it was not, and as an assault on Europe's hegemony, which it was. Black Studies, in using the Afrocentric paradigm (Mazama, 2003), was expressing its commitment to demonstrating that African phenomena can be studied from the perspective of African people. The goal was for Africans the world over to be centered, that is, to be placed in an active role as agents with the possibility of seeing, conceiving, and acting in their own best interest. Thus, scholars rushed to show that one can examine anything from an Afrocentric point of view and arrive at conclusions different from those of Eurocentrists. The difference was that Eurocentrists had identified their particularity as universal and could not see that others had different views and perspectives that were valid for them. The Eurocentrists were so used to universalizing their experiences that they believed that Black Studies scholars were, indeed, committing the highest academic crime—they were assaulting the taboo of Eurocentric hegemony itself. This is the origin of what white scholars describe as cultural wars and what Black Studies scholars, such as Perry Hall and Terry Kershaw, describe as the necessary reexamination of the protocols of researching African phenomena.

Afrocentrists claimed that it was not legitimate for white scholars to attack other cultures or peoples and then to claim that Europe was protected from criticism because it was a chosen, special, unique culture above the rest. Creating and researching from a centered perspective, Afrocentrists rejected the idea that Europe was a model for humanity, because everywhere Europe seemed to be separating itself from the rest of humanity (Chinweizu, 1975). Indeed, geographer J. M. Blaut (1999) argued from a position similar to that of the Afrocentrists by claiming that the major European historians were racists.

This new Afrocentric approach led scholars such as Innocent Onyewuenyi (1993), Miriam Monges (1997), Katherine Bankole (1996), and others to advance novel ideas about different eras of African history. Onyewuenyi claimed a legacy that had been left by Cheikh Anta Diop and continued researching the African origin of Greek philosophy in order to demonstrate the antiquity of Nile Valley philosophical concepts. Monges undertook a new look at the civilization of Kush and established the plinth that would later yield her work on the “shebanization” of knowledge, which is the critical recentering of ancient knowledge on the activities and achievements of women. Bankole demonstrated that the medical care of the enslaved Africans in Louisiana was not only brutally crude but also based on a Eurocentric notion of the inferiority of Africans and the superiority of Europeans.

Perhaps the most provocative element in the cultural wars was the Afrocentrists’ objective of carrying out the work of Cheikh Anta Diop, the late Senegalese historian, Egyptologist, and linguist. Diop had contended that the ancient Egyptians who built the pyramids and the Pharaonic civilization were black-skinned Africans. This had upset much of the common lore among whites that the ancient Egyptians were whites and had established the great civilization in North Africa without any African influence. Diop’s arguments in *The African Origin of Civilization* (1974) were intended to answer all of the questions raised by European scholars about the cultures and civilizations of Africa as well as to show emphatically that ancient Egypt was the creation of black people.

Thus, Diop took the lead in defending Africa’s own agency as a continent of cultural expression apart from European influence. Pharaonic Egypt, or Kemet, as it was called by the early Africans, was the most monumental civilization of antiquity. The creative

productions of the society are more impressive than Greece and Rome combined. This meant, in Diop’s conception, that Europe, in its racist attitude, would have to find ways to disinherit Africans of their classical civilization. He wrote many books, mainly in French, but some of them were published in English, including the majestic work, *Civilization or Barbarism*. In each work Diop sought to advance his idea that the African was the mother of human civilization. A devoted researcher, Diop studied linguistics, physics, architecture, history, art, mathematics, and did melanin experiments on mummies, in order to prove his point that the ancient Egyptians were black Africans. In response to Diop, numerous Black Studies scholars took up the call to link the study of African people to the classical African structures of the past to advance a more meaningful interpretation of philosophy, ethics, religion, and culture.

Detractors sought to minimize the achievements of science, whether biological, archaeological, linguistic, or physical, when such achievements turned up as evidence against the position of a white Egypt or the position that Greece learned nothing from Africa. Of course, this could not be supported in the end, because the overwhelming evidence to the contrary silenced everyone except the most foolhardy. Mary Lefkowitz, a classicist, wrote a book called *Not Out of Africa* (1996) to answer what she deemed the most significant arguments of the Afrocentrists. She singled out Martin Bernal, author of *Black Athena* (1987), who had created quite a stir with his thesis that ancient Athens owed a lot to the African and Asian civilizations that predated it, and attacked him with a vengeance, believing that he had somehow undermined the dominant position of Greece in the ancient world. But Bernal’s position was supported by enormous evidence as well as plausible theories of African contributions to Greece. Indeed, in the 1950s George G. M. James had written in *Stolen Legacy* (1956/2002) that there was no Greek philosophy, only stolen African philosophy. Bernal outdistanced both James and Diop in his massive *Black Athena* project. What was clear in the cultural war discussions was that the hegemonists were outclassed by scholarship. Afrocentric scholars, many of them with knowledge of Greek, Hebrew, Latin, and the ancient Pharaonic language Mdw Nṯr, delved into the works of Plutarch, Herodotus, and Aristotle, among others, to ferret out the distinction between the ancient record and the modern Aryan record. It was necessary for Black

Studies scholars, particularly the Afrocentrists, to reformulate historical periods based on a new reading of the texts. This was done, and it was published in and disseminated through articles in the *Journal of Black Studies*, the *Journal of Negro History*, *Western Journal of Black Studies*, and *Black Scholar*.

Black Studies and Gender

The issue of gender in the context of Black Studies has always been a complicated one. There had been an early movement to separate female-centered interests from Afrocentric ideas, thus creating two perspectives, one female and the other African. This separatist idea was rejected by the major leaders of the field because it overlooked the idea that Afrocentricity was a theoretical perspective, indeed, a paradigm, that was initiated without regard to gender. The idea of a separate female-centered paradigm would essentially leave Afrocentricity as a male-centered paradigm. It was neither conceived as a male-centered idea nor sustained in any active way as a one-gender concept. The Afrocentric idea was to view both females and males of African heritage as benefiting from a general orientation to phenomena, reality, concepts, and events that were African centered.

One cannot divest oneself of one's cultural perspective. When a person is making an analysis, it must be from one cultural perspective or another. This was the fundamental issue facing those who wanted to construct a gender-based analysis of African phenomena. It was in this light that Clenora Hudson-Weems (1998) established the idea of "Africana womanism." Hudson-Weems meant to disengage the study of African womanism from feminism. The discourse around feminism was, to her, a discourse originated by white women who had limited understanding of the place African women had played in American or African life. Indeed, she contended that white women could get their liberation and still remain essentially racist against black women.

Thus, race always trumped gender in the discussion of transformation. Furthermore, Hudson-Weems led the charge to disengage the struggle for women's rights from the antimale discourse of many feminists. This became a leading ideological position for many women in Black Studies. It was by no measure the only position taken by women and men in the field, but there were few who could assert successfully a position in opposition to the one held by Hudson-Weems (1998),

Patricia Dixon (2001), Nah Dove (1997), and others. Gender is necessarily a factor to be raised in any critical, political, economic, behavioral, or cultural discussion, but it is not the core of Black Studies. Definitionally, Black Studies must deal with black people, with no regard to gender.

Yet it is understood that in the context of Black Studies as elsewhere men and women cannot be seen as being the same. Indeed, Patricia Dixon (2001) has boldly argued that it might be necessary for black women in the United States, given the large numbers of single women, to reconsider the Western opposition to polygamy. Of course such a proposal is provocative, but it is one idea found in an analysis of the economic and social plight of African American families. Gendered understandings of different phenomena are definitely possible within the purview of Black Studies.

Black Studies cannot be isolated from the world and therefore it cannot be isolated within the academy. The modern college or university, to be taken seriously as a place of major intellectual discourse, must have Black Studies. Africans and those of African descent are preeminently modern people in thinking and attitude, and whether one is at Harvard or Arizona State, it is almost impossible to understand the modern world apart from understanding the role of African people in this era. Furthermore, African American people are so much a part of the political culture, the religious context, and the economic life of America that it would be impossible to be considered well educated without knowing something of the myriad ways blacks have created space in America. Given the issues that have been articulated over the past 40 years, and anticipating what is likely to occur in the future, we believe that the *Encyclopedia of Black Studies* will serve as a much-needed guide for those who are seeking clarity in the ever more complex world we live in. While our encyclopedia does not purport to provide all that is known about African people the world over, we are confident that you will find in this work a full measure of the state of Black Studies.

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Editors' Note: The majority of our contributors provide brief descriptions of the resources they recommend in the Further Reading sections that appear at the end of the individual entries. We invite you to learn more about the subjects presented in the *Encyclopedia of Black Studies* by following up on these suggested resources.

A

ACCOMMODATIONISM

Accommodationism generally refers to a public policy in which African Americans are advised to accept current racial domination and discrimination in order to be gradually granted full citizenship and integration into American society at some future time. As a major turn in 20th-century African American social and political philosophy, accommodationism is usually associated with Booker T. Washington's thought and practices. Washington's philosophy of accommodationism is best characterized by its emphasis on African American vocational training and industrial education, procapitalist and antiunionist stances, public acceptance of the dialectic of white supremacy and black inferiority, black collaboration with influential and wealthy whites so as to paternally critique and correct "backward" and "childlike" blacks, and euphemization of the importance of electoral politics and the struggle for civil rights and social justice.

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON'S PHILOSOPHY OF ACCOMMODATIONISM

Where many of the most noted 19th-century African American leaders were distinguished by their emancipatory efforts to free blacks from bondage and bring into being an authentic multicultural America, Washington's words and deeds stand in stark relief. He has been hailed as the archetypal African American conservative, because he urged blacks to acquiesce to rather than radically oppose the racism of the established order. Washington's economic strategy

and educational philosophy is commonly contrasted with the social and political philosophy of other turn of the 20th-century African American leaders and intellectuals. Most often Washington's accommodationism and conservatism are compared with W.E.B. Du Bois's much mangled theory of the "talented tenth" of blacks capable of leading the rest, critique of cultural nationalism, and democratic socialism. However, Du Bois was merely one of many critics who took issue with Washington's "Tuskegee Machine," an informal group of individuals led by Washington who were the principal opinion makers in the African American community. In fact, a short list of some of Washington's other—albeit often omitted—critics reads like an all-star roll call of 20th-century African American social and political thinkers and radical journalists: Francis Grimke, William Monroe Trotter, George W. Forbes, Thomas T. Fortune, A. Philip Randolph, Oliver C. Cox, Kelly Miller, and J. Max Barber. What perplexed Washington's critics—many of whom were at one time Washington supporters, Du Bois included—was his double-dealing with regard to politics, economics, and education.

Washington's Political Philosophy

Washington's conservative political philosophy counseled blacks not to seek immediate "social equality" but to be "patient, faithful, law-abiding, and unresentful" in the face of white racial domination and discrimination. In his famous 1895 address at the Cotton States Exposition in Atlanta (commonly referred to as the "Atlanta Compromise" address), Washington, in his customary fashion, catered to the

whims and wishes of whites when he stated, “The wisest among my race understand that the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremest folly.” Washington wanted to assure whites that his ideology was one of conservative black economic and educational development, a brand of thought that did not demand redress for past or present white wrongdoing and anti-African activity—for example, the African Holocaust, enslavement of Africans, and segregation of blacks in U.S. society.

However, many of Washington’s critics were quick to point to the fact that although he publicly advocated an apolitical or, as some have asserted, an *antipolitical* philosophy for black development, he was nonetheless privately involved in the search for solutions to both black and white political problems. Despite his nonpolitical public stance, Washington served as a sort of unofficial African American advisor to four U.S. presidents: Grover Cleveland, William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, and William Taft. Behind the scenes and in clandestine black political circles, Washington used his Tuskegee Machine and international influence to fight for civil rights and social justice. For example, in 1900 he covertly lobbied against racist election provisions in Louisiana’s state constitution. Further, it was reported that in 1903 Washington personally spent over \$4,000 opposing Alabama’s segregation laws in federal courts. Washington’s critics, however, in both the past and the present, have maintained that no matter what he did privately, his stated public position and approach to racist policies gave whites the impression that blacks were not as devoted to democracy as they were interested in earning a dollar. Washington went so far as to assert, “The opportunity to earn a dollar in a factory just now is worth infinitely more than the opportunity to spend a dollar in an opera-house.” In other words, he asked African Americans to accept segregation provided they would have every opportunity to advance economically.

Washington’s Economic Theory

Washington believed that with economic advancement, blacks would be in a position to gain and maintain power in U.S. society, which is to say that he foresaw blacks becoming a political force. He said, “It is important and right that all privileges of the law be ours,” and he added that such “privileges” would be gained by “severe and constant struggle rather than

artificial forcing.” Politics and economics went hand in hand in Washington’s ideology, but greater emphasis was placed on economics. In his assessment of blacks’ situation at the turn of the 20th century, Washington opined that a firm economic foundation would enable blacks to achieve their freedom faster than a purely political or agitative approach would. He quickly befriended wealthy whites, such as Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller, and literally became the darling of turn of the 20th-century philanthropy circles. It is in this setting that Washington mugged and masked most, telling “darky jokes” and deprecating and diminishing black dignity. According to his biographer Louis Harlan, Washington’s comfort with belittling black dignity before wealthy whites, evidenced by his constant reiteration of his favorite “coon stories” and quips such as “there seems to be a sort of sympathy between the Negro and the mule,” helped to exacerbate and perpetuate racist myths and stereotypes about black inferiority.

Washington’s Philosophy of Education

What might be called Washington’s philosophy of education was essentially an extension of his political and economic thought. In fact, although much has been made of Washington’s emphasis on vocational training and industrial education, records show that both Hampton, where Washington went to school, and Tuskegee Institute, where he was president, produced more black teachers at the turn of the 20th century than manual or skilled laborers. One reason for this was the covert ideological character of Washington’s educational program, which promised manual laborers but delivered college-educated blacks.

Washington’s educational thought was based on that of his “tutor and idol,” General Samuel Chapman Armstrong, who developed a pedagogy that was designed specifically to coerce blacks to accept post-Reconstruction white racial rule. Armstrong argued that blacks should be encouraged to take up industrial education as a way to subordinate and hold them as second-class citizens in the white-ruled, post-Reconstruction South. According to Armstrong, blacks were “not capable of self-government,” and should be banned from the American political arena. He eagerly advertised himself as a “friend of the Negro,” urging African Americans to “let politics alone,” claiming that black votes during Reconstruction enabled “some of

the worst men” to become involved in politics, creating a situation that “no white race on this earth ought to endure or will endure.” Clearly Washington’s aversion to public politics stemmed from Armstrong’s influence on him. Throughout his public life, Washington asserted that African Americans’ first priority “was to get a foundation in education, industry and property.” In order to build this foundation, Washington urged African Americans to forego open agitation against segregation and for political franchise. This public policy had severe and long-term consequences for African Americans: educational and economic underdevelopment; continued and increased antiblack violence, especially lynching; temporary throttling of black social and political theory and praxis; and censure and erasure of black intellectual independence.

— *Reiland Rabaka*

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- Childs, John Brown. (1989). Constituting the Vanguard: Washington and Du Bois Imagine Leading Groups, Each in His Own Image. In *Leadership, Conflict, and Cooperation in Afro-American Social Thought*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. Childs’s essay situates the debate between Du Bois and Washington as an ongoing issue of political and social leadership within the African American community.
- Cox, Oliver C. (1951). The Leadership of Booker T. Washington. *Social Forces*, 30, 91–97. This remains one of the most insightful pieces ever written on the leadership philosophy of Booker T. Washington.
- Harlan, Louis R. (1972). *Booker T. Washington: The Making of a Black Leader, 1856–1901*. New York: Oxford University Press. Harlan’s work is largely responsible for establishing a framework for examining Booker T. Washington in light of the complex issues that faced black leadership in the American South.
- Marable, Manning. (1997). Booker T. Washington and the Political Economy of Black Accommodation. In *Black Leadership*. New York: Columbia University Press. This is a brilliant examination of Washington’s philosophy in the context of the overall political economy of the black community.
- Washington, Booker T. (1932). *Selected Speeches of Booker T. Washington*. E. Davidson Washington, ed. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran. These speeches are the best

primary source of Washington’s philosophy, as they represent public expressions of his private reflections on the conditions of African American people.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The concept of affirmative action as a governmental policy to redress past and current acts of racial (and later sexual) discrimination first entered the public lexicon on March 6, 1961 when President John F. Kennedy issued Executive Order 10925. Facing mounting pressures from African Americans, liberals, civil rights activists, and other humanitarian groups, Kennedy called upon employers to engage in “affirmative action” to address, forthrightly, the race issue in America, particularly as it related to the federal government’s role in supporting racial inequities in employment opportunities. Although calling it affirmative action was new, public demands for a nondiscriminatory form of government can be traced as far back as the U.S. Constitution.

From its very inception, affirmative action was intended to support a policy of fairness and equal opportunity in federal employment practices, with the initial efforts focused on businesses and organizations that received federal support through governmental contracts. On September 26, 1965, President Lyndon Johnson provided the cornerstone of affirmative action policy when he reaffirmed the government’s position in Executive Order 11246. The order prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, and national origin, but not sex. In 1973, President Richard Nixon amended Executive Order 11246 with Executive Order 11375 in order to include sex as a protected class, thereby concluding the presidential initiatives that launched affirmative action policy. Responsibility for oversight of policy implementation rested with the Department of Labor.

THE EVOLUTION OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

During the first decade of the policy’s existence, affirmative action’s evolutionary process was marked by the passage of various legislative and regulatory acts, laws, executive orders, and Supreme Court decisions—and supported by legal mandates of the U.S. Constitution, the Fourteenth Amendment, and civil rights acts. It was an important aspect of the nation’s

overall civil rights initiative. As the concept continued to evolve, the principles of fairness and the expectation of equal opportunity for all were applied to businesses, corporations, institutions of higher education, and other societal organizations. Many institutions, although not mandated to do so by the federal government, voluntarily created and implemented affirmative action programs as they attempted to find ways to eliminate discriminatory practices and improve opportunities for African Americans, women, and people of color.

Affirmative action was an outcomes-oriented policy that went beyond the mere principle of nondiscrimination. Practices of nondiscrimination were differentiated from those of affirmative action, which went further by suggesting that specific efforts would be used to recruit, employ, and promote formerly excluded people. Affirmative action's basic premise was that positive action must be taken to overcome the systemic forms of institutionalized racism, discrimination, and oppression that permeate every sector of American society.

During the initial stages of policy implementation, affirmative action received much support from politicians, academics, and public intellectuals, who applauded the government's efforts to diversify the workforce. Affirmative action rules and regulations were vigorously applied to the Philadelphia Plan, which established the goal of hiring those who were discriminated against to work on publicly funded projects in an effort to diversify the building trade unions and expand opportunities for blue-collar workers. However, as the premise of equal opportunity spread and eventually made its way to institutions of higher education, strong opposition to the policy emerged, resulting in the higher education arena serving as the central battleground of affirmative action.

By the mid 1970s, affirmative action had emerged as one of the nation's most contentious and controversial social policies. Proponents argued that affirmative action is a morally justified approach to redressing the nation's historic practices of racial and sexual discrimination. They insisted that to create a more equal society, aggressive equal opportunity strategies must be applied to every segment of American society, particularly higher education, which serves as a door of opportunity to improved social standing. Opponents advanced the concept of reverse discrimination, contending that whites were being victimized by college

and university efforts to include members of diverse racial and ethnic groups on their campuses. While many acknowledged the devastating effects of past discrimination on African Americans and other groups, they posited that a "color blind" approach was the only legitimate way to end centuries of social discrimination and social injustice.

The 1978 Supreme Court decision in the *Regents of California v. Bakke* marked the beginning of a decline in public support for affirmative action. Bakke, a 36-year-old white male engineer, had been denied admission to the University of California's Medical School at Davis. He sued on the basis that the institution's affirmative action program, by specifying the number of racial minorities to be included in each class, constituted a quota system and violated his constitutional rights as an individual applying to the school. Ruling in his favor, the Supreme Court affirmed that quota systems were a violation of constitutional law but that the utilization of race as a factor in admissions was not. The decision set in motion a national debate about what was acceptable under the government's affirmative action policy.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND POLITICAL DISARRAY

In the 1980s, the Reagan Administration's open opposition to civil rights and race-sensitive solutions to the nation's social problems did not bode well for affirmative action. The Reagan Administration's desire to jettison affirmative action as soon as it was politically possible was well known. In addition, repeated legal challenges and growing ambiguity about what constituted a constitutionally sound program made it difficult for institutions committed to racial diversity to continue their affirmative action efforts. While the social inequities in the distribution of America's social resources was a jarring public reality, governmental support for affirmative action continued to dissipate.

Jimmy Carter's administration was supportive of affirmative action policy; George Bush's administration was not. Bill Clinton's administration offered hope that affirmative action initiatives would be strengthened, particularly as they related to the appointment of federal justices who were repeatedly entrusted with the responsibility of interpreting the legality of the nation's affirmative action efforts. Early in his

administration, George W. Bush indicated that he would not be supportive of affirmative action policies. However, the legal challenge to the University of Michigan's affirmative action program that finally made its way to the Supreme Court in 2003 was the most anticipated affirmative action ruling in the 21st century.

Conservative activists sued the University of Michigan hoping to strike down the school's race-sensitive admission programs at both the undergraduate college and the law school. Although the activists' support was broad based, colleges, universities, Fortune 500 companies, and retired military personnel from throughout the nation filed amici (friends of the court) briefs in support of Michigan's program. In a 5–4 vote, the Supreme Court affirmed the *Bakke* decision, noting, "It is necessary that the path to leadership be visibly open to talented and qualified individuals of every race and ethnicity." However, in a related decision, the Supreme Court invalidated the school's undergraduate policy that utilized a point system to help diversify its student body.

Affirmative action is a viable, morally justified, civil rights initiative that forces the nation to engage in redistributive justice. It is, in the words of the late Justice Thurgood Marshall, absolutely "necessary that we continue using racial classifications to remedy the historic discrimination against African Americans." For many in the African American community, affirmative action is the unfinished business of the civil rights movement, the black power movement, Reconstruction, and the Freedmen's Bureau, leaving most to ask the question, if not affirmative action, then what?

— Patricia Reid-Merritt

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- Hanmer, Trudy. (1993). *Affirmative Action: Opportunity for All?* Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow. This is a good introduction for those new to the topic.
- Ramphele, Mamphela. (2000). *The Affirmative Action Book: Towards an Equity Environment*. Capetown: IDASA Public Information Centre. This book demonstrates that the concept of affirmative action is applicable to any society where there is inequity.
- Woods, Geraldine. (1989). *Affirmative Action*. Edmonton, Alberta, Canada: Franklin Watts. Woods's book introduces a young adult audience to the history of mistreatment and discrimination.

AFRICA WORLD PRESS

Africa World Press, Inc., based in Lawrenceville, New Jersey, was launched in 1983 with the publication of Ngugu wa Thiong'o's *Barrel of a Pen: Resistance to Repression in Neo-Colonial Kenya*. Since then, Africa World Press has published over 400 titles, including nonfiction, poetry, and photographs. The founder of the press, Kassahun Checole, was a graduate student in political science at the State University of New York in Binghamton when he decided to start a press that would allow African writers to write for the American audience. One of the most successful books published during the early days of the press was the book *Afrocentricity* by Molefi Kete Asante. It had been published first by Amulefi Publishing of Buffalo, New York. However, when it was taken over by the Africa World Press, the book and the press grew in popularity.

Initially the press published works by African writers who were well known, but in the 1990s the press had started to publish works by new authors, expanding its reach in the American public and to the African continent. By the early 21st century Africa World Press had evolved to become the leading publisher of books on African, African American, Caribbean, and Latin American issues.

Discovering a need to expand to serve the new African nations, the press sought to find partners in Africa who could assist in launching operations on the African continent. The publisher was especially eager to have the government of Eritrea, his home nation, involved in the distribution of books for the public and the school systems of the African nations. This became a major part of the operation of the press for many years. Africa World Press developed Red Sea Press as an imprint to deal with strictly African books, works that explicate uniquely African issues, while Africa World Press continues to publish books by African American and Caribbean writers who write on subjects that affect the pan-African world, such as *The Afrocentric Paradigm* by Ama Mazama. Africa World Press, with offices in London, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Ghana, is a diligent publisher and distributor of books pertaining to the pan-African world.

— Molefi K. Asante, Jr.

AFRICAN AESTHETIC

An explication of an African aesthetic requires an operative definition of aesthetic. Admittedly, the term evolved out of the Greek word *aesthetikos*, which means merely “perceptive,” but the term *aesthetic* is widely held to connote a philosophy of beauty. We normally speak of an aesthetic as representing the standards by which a society assigns value to their cultural productions, especially their expressive art forms, such as music, dance, theater, and the visual arts (e.g., painting and sculpture). Although many African ethnic groups do not have a specific word or term similar to the word *aesthetic*, the value that they place on their artistic productions—music, dance, sculpture, and masked spiritual entities—is equal to the value that other societies place on similar art forms, and thus an African aesthetic exists in practice if not in name.

THE EXPRESSIVE NATURE OF THE AESTHETIC

Melodic speech that comes down to us as song is probably as old as speech itself, and movement to music—dance—may well be synchronous in inception with speech and song. Visual expression reaches at least as far back as the Paleolithic age, and it is through this early recorded art form that one can plausibly point to ritual dance scenes that would also, no doubt, involve incantations or song. Furthermore, Africa’s expressive arts can be identified because their character is distinctive from that of other cultures’ artistic modalities. Although no exact formal philosophy of African art exists, when the practice of African art is scrutinized over time and space, it speaks volumes. Black Studies scholars have investigated ways of developing an aesthetic construct that encompasses one African art form and can also be applied to other African art forms. What follows is an examination of African artistic productions and how the many artistic practices, from the Paleolithic period on, express, represent, or signify a predilection for the unique and valued multiplicity of what is commonly held as African art.

The magnitude and diversity of prehistoric rock and cave art in Africa are staggering and almost beyond belief. The sites in North Africa, which include the Tassili Plateau, the Atlas Mountains, and others, number in the tens of thousands. In the southern

portion of Africa, there are at least 100,000 sites. The oldest among the different sites date back to between 26,000 and 30,000 B.C.E. Anthropologist Mary Leaky discovered prehistoric art in Kenya and Tanzania that she assigned dates back to at least 15,000 B.C.E.; the finds at Tassili date back to at least 30,000 years. All of the investigators of prehistoric African art have expressed their amazement at its variety and distinctiveness. The Paleolithic art of different areas in Africa, whether carved into rocks and caves’ walls or painted on them, reveals depictions of realistic images as well as abstracted versions. Such a variety of early expressions of art portends the multiplicity of traditional and present-day African art.

THE SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS

An examination of African art from this early period down through the ages reveals the embodiment of three significant elements: craftedness, originality, and spirituality. The fact that at different sites different types of images are identifiable reveals that certain stylistic norms were being practiced even during the Paleolithic period. Such adherence to an acceptable mode of creating images or scenes is a communicable *craftedness*. Within the various identifiable types, subtle variations appear to have been permissible, allowing for a certain amount of *originality*. While specific religious intentions cannot be proven or corroborated, most paleontologists and art historians agree that some, if not most, of the human images with symbols connoting natural or celestial concepts represent some form of *spirituality* or spiritual ritual. Thus the ability to craft the images to meet specific group criteria, but with individual variation, and yet have the image exude or suggest a certain spiritual aura follows African art’s evolution and metamorphosis down through the ages. A close study of Paleolithic African art therefore establishes that even in this early age a predilection for particular expression, a predisposition for specific icons, a propensity for symbolic images with religious implications, an “aesthetic” is indisputable.

Like the prehistoric cave and rock art, traditional African art has a socioreligious function. Whereas the prehistoric depiction of animals had a function related to hunting ritual, and scenes involving humans and celestial icons had some divine or propitiation ceremonial function, anthropological field research has shown that traditional African art’s function is related

to one or more of life's passages—birth, initiation, marriage, eldership, death, rebirth. This need to create art for a ritual or ceremony to celebrate the rites of passage is a sociological behavior shared by most of Africa's indigenous groups. It is through an examination of certain images, icons, and symbols, as well as an unprecedented use of mixed media to create the unique concepts of African art, that one can discern a plausible connectedness of African art across time and space. This diachronic and synchronic inquiry also reveals that African art is often spiritually based, even when such art serves a cultural function rather than having been created for or used in a specific religious ceremony. That African art has continued to have a cultural function when many other cultures ceased to use art in such a fashion is indicative that there is a shared African aesthetic.

THE COMMEMORATIVE FUNCTIONS

Examples of this continued use of art with a cultural function are the commemorative sculptures of African rulers—earlier on the monumental Pharaohs of ancient Kemet and Nubia, and more recently the Ndop of the Bakuba. Just as the Kemetians and the Nubians felt that their rulers were god-kings (i.e., rulers endowed with godlike qualities), the Bakuba symbolize Ndop's significance as Chemba Kunji. Each sculptural image is a commemorative work of art paying homage to a beloved and respected ruler by the portrayal of his physical likeness or by indicating by symbolic embellishment his attributes and contributions that enhanced his people during his reign. As the ruler, he is revered unquestionably because his ordination began with a divine ritual giving him the sacred abilities of the supreme creator. The same can be said of the images of the Oni of Ile Ife, of the Oba of Benin, and of the Bangwa of the Bamaleke.

Other examples of how different African ethnic groups share an aesthetic of a spiritually based art are the mother-and-child figures of the Asante, the Yoruba, the Senufu, the Bamana, the Bakongo, the Chokwe, and the Makonde, to name just a few. All of these mother-and-child images serve the same purpose as the earlier image of Auset holding Heru. A comparison of the religious practices of Kemetians (ancient Egyptians) and those of the Nubians and other indigenous Nilotic peoples reveals similarities. The religious practices one finds in Egypt and Sudan, one also finds in Congo and Benin. The mother figure

as gestator, nourisher, and giver of life symbolizes the earth as mother and the African woman as the visual prototype. A Paleolithic rock painting of this madonna motif and a sculpture of the earliest portrayal of Auset and Heru leave no question about the Africanness of either of these mother-and-child figures symbolizing birth, regeneration, and nourishment.

The unique variations of masked figures among most African groups—such as Nimba of the Baga, Kponiugo of the Senufu, Banda of the Nulu, and so on—have their counterparts in early rock and cave art, as well as in the Kemetian panoply of sacred images that are part human and part animal (e.g., Sphinx, Anubis, Sekhmet, etc.). Many African scholars agree that a primal reason for African people art from prehistoric times forward is that it serves a survival function that involves giving physical form to spiritual meaning. African artists create a synthesis of visual elements that exemplify the special attributes of the spiritual entity being represented.

THE TYPE MOTIFS

There are many type-motifs that symbolize various aspects of culture. These type-motifs may be the exaggeration of content-loaded concepts, such as enlarged breasts, oversized genitals, the pregnant stomach, or the expanded protruding navel, suggesting nourishment, procreation, or continuity of life. Such aesthetic standards become visual canons, general formulas, artistic conventions that must be followed by the artists or artisans of each ethnic group; otherwise viewers from outside of the particular cultural groups would not be able to recognize Yoruba art as being distinct from Asante art, Bakuba art as distinct from Dan art, Senufu art as distinct from Bayaka art, and so on. While the art of each group is distinct from the art of every other group, each discernible practice is nonetheless one of multiple expressions of similar cultures sharing a common origin of interconnectedness flowing from earlier rock and cave art. It is clear that this vast interconnected African art shared a beginning from which flowed similar content concerns with spiritual and religious ramifications. Through an examination of the form—medium selection, decorative motifs, design patterns—an African aesthetic becomes even more incontrovertible.

African artistic expression is older and more numerous than any other group's artistic achievement the world over. From thousands of Paleolithic rock

and cave paintings to the monumental art of the Nile Valley civilizations to traditional and contemporary expressions throughout Africa and the pan-African world, a multitude of African groups have shared unique and distinct artistic idioms.

There is no separation between form and content in African art. A broad analysis of the form of Africa's art, from its masked spiritual representations to its expressive sculptural statues to its textiles and tapestries, reveals cultural productions that are complex—brightly colored with multifarious patterns and/or embellished with intricate designs. This type of expressive elegance is also exhibited in Africa's other expressive art forms, such as music, dance, and theater, as well as in different religious rituals. The richness of African music and dance has long been accepted and documented as a viable contribution to world culture.

THE AESTHETIC IN MUSIC

African music is distinguished from the music of other world traditions by the superimpositions of several lines of meter. Broadly speaking, the difference between African and European rhythms is that whereas any piece of European music has at any one moment one rhythm in command, a piece of African music has always two or three and sometimes as many as four rhythms. A similar correlation can be made between European and African dance, whether or not it is being performed in a particular religious ceremony or secular presentation. Take the wedding ceremony dance of the Tiv people of Nigeria. A Western researcher had to be taught to dance the dance of the Tiv to understand it. It was not as simple as she thought it would be. Having learned the dance steps, she was then taught to move her hips and shoulders in particular ways. "My hands and my feet were to keep time with the gongs, my hips with the first drum, my back and shoulders with the second." The Tiv wedding dance was not unlike most African dance in that good dancers are expected to move one or more parts of their bodies to one or more of the different rhythms being played by different instruments of different drums.

All of Africa's significant expressive cultural modes use many dominant or simultaneously significant elements. This multidominance or simultaneity can be experienced when listening to the multirhythmic, polymetric African music; when observing the multimovements of different parts of the body of an

African dancer; and when looking at African fabrics with their multiple use of color and patterns, African masks with their colorful and mixed media fabrication, and African sculptures with their intricately ornamented surfaces. Simply stated, the concept of multidominant cultural elements is a useful construct by which to measure, analyze, or describe African culture, especially its expressive art forms such as music, dance, and textile design (printed or woven), and probably their multilayered folk literature as well. The predisposition to apply colors in layers; the proclivity to use high-key sharply contrasting colors; and the predilection for use of multiple textures, mixed media, and complex design patterns and shapes is fundamental to African material culture and its visual art.

— Robert Douglas

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AFRICAN AMERICANS

African Americans are an African ethnic group whose members are citizens of the United States of America. They remain one of the most biologically diverse groups in the United States because of the historical intermingling of scores of African ethnic groups, Native Americans, and Europeans. The term *African American* is something of a misnomer, as the many people of African descent in Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Cuba, Venezuela, Peru, Colombia, the Antilles, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Uruguay, which like the United States are part of the Americas, are not included in the term *African American*. Nevertheless, the term has been used to designate people of African descent who are domiciled in the United States since 1865. Prior to that year, blacks were not Americans, and therefore most saw themselves only as Africans. There were, however, a few free blacks who called themselves

“colored citizens” when, in fact, they did not possess the rights of American citizens.

SIZE AND COMPOSITION

African Americans constitute the second largest racial group in the United States of America. Africans came with the Spaniards in the 16th century to the area that became the United States. However, the first appearance of groups of Africans in the English colonies of America occurred in 1619, when 20 Africans were brought as indentured servants to Jamestown, Virginia. Subsequent importations of Africans over a period of 200 years from western Africa, stretching from Morocco on the north to Angola on the south, greatly increased the African population in the United States. By the time of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, the population of Africans in the United States had reached 4½ million.

African Americans are a composite people comprised of numerous African ethnic groups—Yoruba, Wolof, Mandingo, Hausa, Asante, Fante, Edo, Fulani, Serere, Luba, Angola, Congo, Ibo, Ibibio, Ijaw, and Sherbro—with a common origin in Africa and a common struggle in the United States against racial oppression. Many African Americans show evidence of racial mixture with Native Americans, particularly Muskogee, Choctaw, Cherokee, and Pawnee, as well as with Europeans from various ethnic backgrounds.

African Americans were predominantly a rural and Southern people until the great urban migration of the World War II era. Thousands of Africans moved to the major urban centers of the North to find better jobs and more equitable living conditions. Cities such as Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, and Detroit became magnets for entire Southern communities of African Americans. The lure of economic prosperity, political enfranchisement, and social mobility attracted many young men and frequently women, and the elderly were left on the farms of the South. Men would send for their families and men and women would send for their aging parents once they were established in their new homes in the North.

Residential segregation became a pattern in the North, as it had been in the South. Some segregated communities in the North gained prominence and became centers for culture and commerce. Harlem in New York, North Philadelphia in Philadelphia, Woodlawn in Detroit, Southside in Chicago, and Hough in Cleveland were written into the African American's

imagination as places of high style, fashion, culture, and business. The evolution of African American communities from Southern and rural to Northern and urban has occurred since 1945. According to the 2000 census, the largest African American populations are found in these cities: New York, Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Houston, Baltimore, New Orleans, Memphis, and Washington, D.C. In terms of the percentage of the population of a city that African Americans represent, the following cities are the five leaders among cities with populations over 300,000: Washington, D.C. (70%), Atlanta (67%), Detroit (65%), New Orleans (55%), and Memphis (49%). East St. Louis, Illinois, is 96% African American, but its population is less than 100,000. The cities with the largest African American populations are New York, with 2.1 million African Americans, Chicago with 1.4 million, Detroit with over 800,000, Philadelphia with close to 700,000, and Los Angeles with more than 600,000.

In 2002, the population of African Americans was estimated to be 37 million. In addition to the African American population in the United States, there are approximately a million African Americans abroad, mainly in Africa, Europe, and South America. African Americans constitute about 12% of the U.S. population. This is roughly equal to the percentages of Africans in the populations of the South American nations of Venezuela and Colombia. The United States has the second largest population of Africans outside of the continent of Africa. The following countries have the largest population of African-descended people in the world: Nigeria, Brazil, Egypt, Ethiopia, Congo, and the United States.

CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC ORIENTATION

African Americans are now avid speakers of English. During the 17th century, most Africans in the Americas spoke West African languages as their first language. In the United States, the African population developed a highly sophisticated pidgin, usually referred to by linguists in its creolized form as Ebonics. This language is the prototype for the speech of the vast majority of African Americans. It is comprised of African syntactical elements and English lexical items. Use of this language made it possible for Africans from various ethnic and linguistic groups (e.g., Yoruba, Ibo, Hausa, Akan, Wolof, Mande, etc.) to communicate with each other as well as with the

Europeans with whom they came in contact. The impact of the African American language on American society is thorough and all embracing. From the ubiquitous “O.K.,” a Wolof expression from Senegal, to the transformations of words like “bad” and “awesome” into expressions of something entirely original, one sees the imprint of African American styles derived from the African heritage. There are more than 3,000 words, place names, and concepts with African origins found in the English language of the United States of America. Indeed, popular speakers of the African American idiom are the source of the most dynamic additions to the language—from the words of jazz musicians and rappers to street slang, all of which have given American English its own authentic color. The proverbs, poems, songs, and hollers, which come with the historical saga of a people whose only epic is in the great songs known as the spirituals, provide a rich texture to the ever-evolving language of the African American people.

A CAPTURED PEOPLE

African Americans did not freely come to America. Theirs is not the history of a people seeking to escape political oppression, economic exploitation, religious intolerance, or social injustice in their homeland. Rather, the ancestors of the present African Americans were stolen from the continent of Africa, placed on ships against their will, and transported across the Atlantic. While most of the enslaved Africans went to Brazil and the Caribbean, a great portion landed in the Southern states of the United States. At the height of the European slave trade, almost every nation in Europe was involved in some aspect of the enterprise.

As the slave trade grew more profitable and the European captains became more ambitious, larger ships with specially built “slave galleries” were commissioned. These galleries between the decks were no more than 18 inches high. Each African was allotted a space no more than 16 inches wide and 5½ feet long for the many weeks or months of the Atlantic crossing. Here the Africans were forced to lie down shackled together in chains and fastened to staples in the deck. Needless to say, many Africans perished under such conditions. Where the space was 2 feet high, Africans were often allowed to sit with their legs over each other’s legs like riders on a crowded sled. Africans were transported from Africa to America seated in this

position with a once a day break for exercise. Many died or went insane.

The North made the shipping of Africans its business; the South made the working of Africans its business. By 1860, the census counted 4½ million Africans in the United States. The number of Africans increased rapidly from the 18th century on—from 757,208 in 1790 to 4,441,830 in 1860. The African American population grew both by increased birth rates and by importation of new Africans. But by 1860, slavery had been virtually eliminated in the North and West. And by the end of the Civil War in 1865, it was over for every state. After the Civil War, 14% of the population of the United States was African. The 4½ million Africans who made up the black population in 1865 are the ancestors of the overwhelming majority of Africans living in the United States today.

WHEN FREEDOM CAME

During the Reconstruction period after the Civil War, African American politicians introduced legislation that provided for public elementary and secondary education, something that was rarely present before the campaign by African American legislators. This public act of creating a radical policy for the benefit of the masses remains one of the great legacies of the African American involvement in the legislative process of the 19th century. Education has always been seen as a major instrument in changing society and bettering the life chances of African American people. Lincoln University and Cheyney University in Pennsylvania, Hampton University in Virginia, and Howard University are some of the oldest institutions of learning for the African American community. Other universities, such as Tuskegee, Fisk, Morehouse, Spelman, and Atlanta, are now a part of the American educational story of success and excellence.

The great civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s ushered in a whole new generation of African Americans committed to advancing the cause of justice and equality. Rosa Parks refused to give her seat to a white man on a Montgomery city bus and created a stir that did not end until the most visible signs of racism were overthrown. Martin Luther King, Jr., emerged as the leading spokesperson and chief symbol of a people tired of racism and segregation and prepared to fight and die if necessary to obtain legal and

human rights. Malcolm X took the battle one step further, insisting that African Americans were psychologically lost and therefore had to find historical and cultural validity in the reclamation of their connection to Africa.

Thus, out of the crucible of the 1960s came a vigorous movement toward full recognition of the African past and legacy. African Americans' relationships with other groups depended more and more on mutual respect rather than on African Americans acting like clients to other groups. African Americans expressed their concern that the Jewish community had not supported affirmative action, although there was a long history of Jewish support for African American causes. Accepting the role of vanguard in the struggle to extend the protection of the U.S. Constitution to oppressed people, African Americans made serious demands on municipal and federal officials during the civil rights movement. Voting rights were guaranteed and protected, educational segregation was made illegal, and petty discriminations against African Americans in hotels and public facilities were eradicated as a result of the sustained protests and demonstrations of the era.

NATIONAL INVOLVEMENT IN VARIOUS SECTORS

The existence of a growing economy does not guarantee that African Americans will be served by that growth. The labor of African Americans has been a key component in the economic system of the United States since its inception. However, the initial relationship of those of African descent to the economy was based on the position of Africans as enslaved labor. Africans were instrumental in establishing the industrial and agrarian power of the United States. Railroads, factories, residencies, and places of business were often built by enslaved Africans. Currently African Americans are engaged in every sector of the American economy, though there is less integration in some sectors than in others. A considerable portion of the African American population works in the industrial or service occupations. Others are found in the professions, holding positions such as teacher, lawyer, doctor, and manager, more often than in small businesses. These patterns are based on previous conditions of discrimination in businesses throughout the South. Most African Americans could find

employment in communities where their professional services were needed, therefore, the above-mentioned professions and others that cater to the African American population have provided professionals with numerous opportunities for employment.

During the past 20 years the number of businesses opened by African Americans has begun to increase, after decreasing in the final decades of the 20th century. During the period of segregation, many businesses run by and solely for the convenience of the African American population flourished. When the civil rights movement ended most of the petty discriminations and it was possible for African Americans to trade and shop at other stores and businesses, the businesses located in the African American community suffered. There is now an awareness in the African American community of the need to see businesses as connected with and dependent on the greater American society. In addition, a greater role, a role closer to equal that of men, is played by African American women than by American women in other ethnic groups. Indeed, many of the chief leaders in the economic development of the African American community are and have been women. Both men and women have always worked in the majority of African American homes and during the enslavement, work was the principal activity of both men and women.

CULTURAL PATTERNS AND CUSTOMS

African American marriage and kinship patterns are varied, although most now conform to the marriage and kinship style of the majority of Americans. Monogamy is the overwhelming choice of most married people. Because of the rise of Islam in the African American community, there is also a growing community of persons who practice polygamy. Lack of marriageable males is putting intense pressure on African American females to find new ways of maintaining traditions and parenting children. Within the African American population, various arrangements constitute family. Thus, people may speak of family, aunts, uncles, fathers, mothers, and children without necessarily meaning that there is a genetic kinship between them and those about whom they are speaking. African Americans often say "brother" or "sister" as a way to indicate the possibility of that being the actual fact. In the period of the enslavement, individuals from the same family were often sold to different

plantation masters and given the names of those owners, creating the possibility that brothers or sisters would have different surnames. Most African Americans' names are derived from the enslavement period and are not African names but, rather, English, German, French, and Irish names, for the most part. Few African Americans can trace their ancestry back before the enslavement. Those who can do so have normally found records in the homes of the plantation owners or in the local archives of the South. African Americans love children and believe that those who have many children are fortunate. Thus it is not uncommon for African American families to have more than four children.

African American children are socialized in the home, but the church often plays an important role in socialization. Parents depend on other family members to chastise, instruct, and discipline their children, particularly if the family members live in close proximity to the parents and the children know them well. Socialization also takes place through rites and celebrations that grow out of either religious or cultural observances. There has been a growing interest in African child socialization patterns with the emergence of the Afrocentric movement. Parents are introducing African rites of passage at an early age to provide their children with historical referents. Increasingly, such rites are challenging traditional religious rites for children in the African American community by becoming the preferred form of transition ritual around puberty. For some time, churches and schools have done rites in which children have been expected to recite certain details about heroines and heroes or about various aspects of African American history and culture to be considered mature in the culture.

Many independent schools have been formed to gain control over the cultural and psychological education of African American children. A distrust of the public schools has emerged during the past 25 years because African Americans believe that it is difficult for African American children to gain the self-confidence they need from teachers who do not understand or are insensitive to their culture. Youth clubs established along the lines of the African age-set groups are popular as drill teams and formal youth social organizations. On the other hand, neighborhood street gangs are often associated with delinquent behavior and should not be confused with the new, more culturally aware youth groups that are generally healthy male

and sometimes female socialization clubs. Church groups and community center organizations seek to channel the energies of these groups into positive socialization experiences. They are joined by the numerous Afrocentric workshops and seminars that train young people in traditional African behaviors and customs.

African Americans can be found in every stratum of the American population. However, it remains a fact that the vast majority of African Americans are outside of the social culture of the dominant society in the United States. In just under 140 years, African Americans who were emancipated with neither wealth nor good prospects for wealth have been able to advance in American society against all odds. Considered determined and doggedly competitive in situations that threaten survival, African Americans have had to outrun economic disaster in every era. Discrimination against African Americans remains in private clubs, country clubs, social functions, and some organizations. Nevertheless, African Americans have challenged hundreds of rules and regulations that have tried to limit their choices.

THE STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY

Among the major players in the battle for equal rights have been the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the National Urban League (NUL). These two organizations have advanced the social integration of the African American population on the legal and social welfare fronts. The NAACP is the major civil rights organization as well as the oldest. Its history in the struggle for equality and justice is legendary. Thurgood Marshall, the first African American to sit on the Supreme Court, was one of the organization's most famous lawyers. He argued 24 cases before the Supreme Court as a lawyer and is credited with winning 23 of them. Although there is no official organization of the entire African American population and no truly mass movement that speaks to the interests of the majority of the people, the NAACP comes closest to being a conscience for the nation and an organized response to oppression, discrimination, and racism.

At the local level, many communities have organized committees of elders who are responsible for various activities within the communities. These committees are usually informal and are set up to assist the communities in determining the best strategies to

follow in political and legal situations. Growing out of an Afrocentric emphasis on community and cohesiveness, the committees are usually comprised of older men and women who have made special contributions to the community through achievement or philanthropy.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

African Americans participate freely as members of the two dominant political parties in the nation, the Democrats and the Republicans. Most African Americans are Democrats, a legacy left by the era of Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the New Deal Democrats who brought about a measure of social justice and respect for the common people. There are more than 6,000 African Americans who have been elected officials in the United States, including the governor of Virginia and the mayors of New York, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Detroit and Chicago. Concentrated in the central cities, the African American population has a strong impact on the political processes of the older cities. The national Democratic Party chairperson is of African American heritage and some of the most prominent persons in the party are also African Americans. The Republican Party also has its share of African American politicians, though not as large a share as that of the Democrats. There is no independent political party in the African American community, although it has remained one of the dreams of leading African American political strategists.

Conflict is normally resolved in the African American community through the legal system, although there is a strong impetus to attempt consensus first. The idea of discussing an issue with other members of the community who might share similar values is a prevalent one in African American society. The first recourse when problems arise is another person. This is true whether it is an individual, social, or familial problem. Rather than calling a lawyer first, an African American is most likely to call a friend and seek advice. To some extent, the traditional African notion of retaining and maintaining harmony is at the heart of the matter. *Conflicts should be resolved by people, not by law* is an African adage.

THE PRACTICE OF RELIGION

African Americans practice the three main monotheistic religions as well as Eastern and African religions.

The predominant faith of African Americans is Christianity, the second largest group of believers accept the ancestral religions of Africa—Vodu, Santería, Myal, and a third group of followers practice Islam. Judaism and Buddhism are also practiced by some people in the African American community. Without understanding the complexity of religion in the African American community, it is not possible to venture too deeply into the nature of the culture. While African American involvement in the religions of Christianity and Islam attracts attention, the African religions are present everywhere, even in the minds of black Christians and Muslims. Thus, traditional practitioners have introduced certain rites that have become a part of the practices of the Christians and Muslims. African greetings and libations to the ancestors are heard in black Christian and Muslim gatherings. African Americans are spiritually oriented—they weave religion into everything they do so that there is no separation between religion and life. They have also given American society the master songs known as spirituals. Many of the practitioners of the African religions use the founding of Egypt as the starting date for the calendar, thus 6302 A.F.K. (After the Founding of Kemet) is equivalent to 2002. This is particularly true among followers of Auser Auset, a neo-Kemetic religious group. Yet there is no single set of beliefs to which all African Americans subscribe.

Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, January 15, and Malcolm X's birthday, May 19, are the two most important days in the African American calendar. Kwanzaa, a celebration of first fruits, which was initiated by the philosopher Maulana Karenga, is the most joyous occasion in the African American year. Kwanzaa is observed from December 26 to January 1, and each day is named after an important virtue.

There is no wide acceptance of cremation in the African American culture. The majority of African Americans choose burial over cremation. Funerals are often occasions of sadness followed by festivities and joyousness. "When the Saints Go Marching In" was made famous as the song played by African American musicians in New Orleans to convey African Americans to the other world. Sung and played with gusto and great vigor, the song summed up the victorious attitude of a people long used to suffering on earth.

— Molefi Kete Asante

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AFRICAN AMERICANS AND AMERICAN COMMUNISM

Of the many radical and socialist political movements of the 20th century, the Communist Party (CP) USA, more than any other, placed black liberation at the top of its agenda. The Party won some critical victories for that cause and achieved a small but significant following among black workers and intellectuals, especially during the 1930s and 1940s. The first contact between blacks and communists was the result of a convergence of seminal events in the second decade of the 20th century. The Great War engendered irreparable splits in socialist parties over support or opposition to a war that opponents viewed as imperialist. The Bolshevik Revolution in Russia followed by the formation of V. I. Lenin's Third Internationale (Comintern) spurred anticolonialist currents, as Lenin declared that struggles of non-European colonial and dependent peoples for self-determination was essential to the fortunes of working-class movements in developed states. Those events, in turn, stimulated movement toward the communist orbit by a segment of a new urban black intelligentsia drawn largely but not exclusively from West Indian immigrants already schooled in anticolonialism.

THE CRUSADER

In 1917, Cyril Briggs, a native of Nevis and St. Kitts, founded the journal *The Crusader*, which advanced a militant racial "catechism" of the greatness of African peoples. Inspired by Woodrow Wilson's stated aim of freedom for oppressed nations and colonies, Briggs promoted African liberation while calling for struggle and agitation against racial injustice in the United States. In 1919, Briggs formed the semisecret African Blood Brotherhood (ABB), which advocated armed resistance to lynching, the right of blacks in the South to vote, the right of black workers to unionize, and defiance of Jim Crow laws. By then he had become disillusioned with Wilson and drew closer to the first black recruits to the Communist Party, such as Otto Huiswoud, Claude McKay, and others. Inspired by the Third Internationale's call for revolutionary unity between colonial peoples and labor in the metropolitan states, Briggs was increasingly drawn to Marxism and to Lenin's view of the struggles of blacks against national oppression as inherently antiimperialist.

In 1919, the Communist Party's founders had barely moved beyond the view of Eugene Debs and the Socialist Party that socialists had "nothing special to offer the Negro" and that blacks would only rise as the working class rose. For Briggs, however, the road to freedom for Africa and for people of African descent was through the world "socialist commonwealth." An Afrocentric outlook came to rest on the notion that communism was endemic to the African communal experience. The unfolding world movement led by the fledgling socialist Russia would indeed have something special to offer the Negro. It would lift the imperial yoke from Africa, assist the struggles of blacks all over, and consequently honor the aspirations of black people as indispensable to the revolutionary process. Briggs was among the first to weld revolutionary socialism to a radical nationalist vision that demanded freedom for Africa and for African Americans.

THE AFRICAN BLOOD BROTHERHOOD

While the African Blood Brotherhood most likely never exceeded 3,000 members, it attracted militant intellectuals such as Richard B. Moore, Otto Huiswoud, W. A. Domingo, and Grace Campbell, as well as clusters of war veterans, principally in

New York and Chicago. Briggs's increasing stress on an alliance between peoples of African descent and the international communist movement soon became a source of antagonism between the ABB and Marcus Garvey's far larger Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). In some measure, Briggs had anticipated the first extensive discussion of the "Negro question" at the Fourth Comintern Congress in 1922, which concluded that the struggles of blacks against oppression were inherently antiimperialist. Nationalist organizations like Garvey's UNIA carried the seeds of revolutionary battle against imperialism, so Briggs repeatedly sought to influence Garvey to accept an alliance with the communists. Garvey, however, held to his fervent belief in racial solidarity as the exclusive agency of social transformation. Neither Briggs nor the communists were able to budge Garvey, and the conflict between Briggs and the Jamaican leader became increasingly personal and was finally sundered beyond repair.

THE AFTERMATH OF WORLD WAR I

By the mid-1920s, revolutions had been defeated in Europe, the postwar U.S. labor upsurge had been crushed, and the red scare had led to the deportation of thousands of radical alien immigrants. The radical tide dissipated and a conservative antilabor trend became dominant. The revolutionary nationalist perspective of black communists was superseded (with the Comintern's support) by an effort to get black proletarians emigrating from the South to join organized labor. The African Blood Brotherhood waned and died as communists organized the American Negro Labor Congress (ANLC) in 1925 to batter down the doors of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and advance interracial unionism.

The ANLC registered some accomplishments. It organized a militant strike of black women laundry workers in Chicago, it vigorously defended black seamen charged with cowardice aboard a sinking ship bound for the Caribbean, it supported striking black coal miners, it played a leading role in the strike of motion picture projectionists in Harlem in the late 1920s—insisting that there could be no hegemonic black culture in Harlem unless there was a struggle to uplift the economic conditions of African Americans. But the ANLC suffered from chronic and ultimately fatal sectarianism, despite pleas from black organizers

to the Comintern to assist in toning down the open role and direction of the Communist Party in the organization. Hobbled by its own narrowness, by a party whose ethnic federations often sought insularity through the exclusion of blacks, and by the country's conservative climate, the ANLC could never overcome its small following and ineffectiveness.

THE NATIONAL QUESTION

By 1928, the CP's "Negro work" remained in crisis and was placed for discussion and debate on the agenda at the Sixth Comintern Congress. Harry Haywood (also known as Heywood Hall), a young black recruit to the Communist Party who was studying at the Communist University of the Toilers of the East (KUTV) in Moscow, received support from the Soviets to lead a drive to characterize the Negro question in the United States as a national question. Haywood argued that in 215 contiguous Southern counties, running from the Tidewater to East Texas, the black majorities constituted an oppressed "nation within a nation" that had been blocked from the larger nation by the residue of slavery and the betrayal of Reconstruction. Thus, in the South, the goal of blacks was self-determination (i.e., not necessarily separation of the races, but the right of choice by the black majority); in the North, their goal was political, economic, and social equality.

The concept of national self-determination for the black majority in the South was fatally flawed. Even V. I. Lenin, who generally promoted self-determination, had pointed out in his *Statistics and Sociology* that the dynamic development of industrial capitalism in the United States rapidly shrunk national differences and undermined the special claims of various groups while solidifying the country into a single national entity. However, defining the Negro question as a national question bared the depth of a special oppression that transcended race and class. It underscored a brutally repressed nationality—an assault on basic human identity itself.

Thus the black freedom movement was elevated to the highest status in the Leninist lexicon; black life constituted a revolutionary force in its own right, one absolutely indispensable to the fortunes of the working class. Lenin believed that the working class would never achieve its own goals without the Negro people and their movement for self-determination. It was

therefore the “sacred duty” of white labor to respect the aspirations of blacks and to prove through relentless struggle against all forms of racism and discrimination the worthiness of interracial radical alliances. Blacks would only overcome generations of distrust of radical whites if those whites unreservedly respected blacks’ national consciousness and right of political choice. Thus, education, cleansing of the heart, mawkishness, and sentimentality were rejected as a basis for commitment to black liberation and were replaced by the concept of revolutionary necessity.

That new ideological framework, combined with the onset of the Great Depression, unleashed a frenzy of activity rivaled only in history by the abolitionist movement. In 1929, the Communist Party dissolved the ANLC and formed the League of Struggle for Negro Rights (LSNR). The LSNR used its paper, *The Liberator*, which was edited by Cyril Briggs, to stress traditional black resistance to oppression, and its attacks on lynching and racist violence mirrored the militant timbre of the Sixth Comintern Congress. In the 1930s, the poet Langston Hughes was president of the congress. March 6, 1930, a day of mass demonstrations for unemployment insurance, marked the beginning of significant black involvement in communist-led actions. In 1930, the Party established a beachhead in Alabama and began the painful task of building the Share Croppers’ Union under brutally repressive circumstances that cost the lives of perhaps a score or more of black croppers. The union laid the groundwork for the labor and civil rights movements in Alabama.

The Scottsboro case followed soon thereafter in March of 1931. It constituted a herculean global effort to save the lives of nine boys framed on a rape charge. A battle between the communist-led International Labor Defense (ILD) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) erupted over control of the case, baring important underlying disagreement about which social class, bourgeois or labor, would lead the black liberation movement. It also revealed sensitive issues about the conjunction of race and class when the communists often revealed a deeper affinity and respect for the impoverished Scottsboro parents than did the middle-class leaders of the NAACP. The Scottsboro case followed a long and tortured trajectory through three trials and numerous appeals—along the way establishing important precedents that established the right to adequate counsel and the inclusion of blacks on

juries. The nine defendants were ultimately spared the electric chair, although some of them spent long, arduous years in prison. Concurrent with the Scottsboro case was a broadly based campaign to free Angelo Herndon, a young black communist convicted under an archaic pre-Civil War sedition statute in Georgia. There were also scores of other cases involving African Americans ensnared by a racist legal system.

At the same time, in their own ranks the communists were faced with resistance to racial equality, especially in the social sphere. After complaints from black members about racist treatment within the CP, a series of publicized “white chauvinism” trials were staged to confront white communists charged with racism, which the CP viewed as rooted in capitalist exploitation but having taken on a life of its own in white working-class consciousness. Before large audiences, “the stench of the slave market” was decried as those charged were forced to choose between political purgatory or confession and renewal. Despite the contrivances, the trials often provoked questions in the black press and black community about whether blacks could follow the injunctions of the larger polity to hate a movement that was willing to purge its ranks of members whose “crimes” constituted little more than standard social practices.

Throughout the sectarian early 1930s, when the communists repeatedly castigated middle-class “enemies” in the black community, the Party nevertheless won respect for its militant antieviction, antilynching, welfare rights, labor organizing, and other struggles in streets and courtrooms, at unemployment and welfare offices, on picket lines, in cotton fields, and in classrooms. This impressive record ultimately could not stem the doubts of African Americans about the fidelity of white labor in general to black liberation or about the ability of the Party to overcome its own pariah status. Thus the seeds of a black labor alliance were planted.

With the coming of the antifascist Popular Front in the mid-1930s, the communists adopted a far broader and more inclusive relationship with the black community—jettisoning ideological division in favor of stress on common ground and cooperation in building interracial unions, advancing civil rights, and combating the worldwide fascist danger. The founding of the National Negro Congress (NNC) in 1936 in pursuit of those aims marked a high point in communist influence on blacks. The congress coalesced scores of

black church groups, civic organizations, and unions. The NNC aimed to cultivate a cadre of black labor organizers to help build powerful industrial unions in the auto, steel, meat packing, and electrical industries.

The Southern Negro Youth Congress (SNYC), which was founded in 1937, mobilized Southern youth and students to fight segregation, demand voting rights for blacks, work for equality in education and health care, and assist in building unions, especially in the tobacco and food processing industries. The SNYC also trained a new generation of young black radicals and communists, among them James and Esther Jackson, Edward Strong, and Louis Burnham, who would go on to leadership positions in the Communist Party and in the postwar progressive movement around Henry Wallace's 1948 presidential candidacy. In 1938, communists joined Southern liberals to form the Southern Conference for Human Welfare to advocate economic justice and equality.

By the mid-1930s, communists were embracing and promoting black culture as the quintessence of a national people's culture. Black writers and artists like Richard Wright, Paul and Eslanda Robeson, Langston Hughes, Jacob Lawrence, and many others were drawn to a vibrant radical interracial cultural community within the communist orbit where their poetry, graphics, and works for the theater were promoted by Communist Party publications and by Party-influenced organizations. The antifascist spirit drew about 80 African American men and a woman nurse into the international brigades to fight Franco's insurgency in Spain, while scores of black artists, like Cab Calloway and Count Basie, performed at benefit concerts for the Spanish loyalist cause.

While the communists' defense of the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939 crippled the support for communism in some areas, the communists' standing in black communities was largely undamaged. Communists and their allies in this period organized an extensive campaign to end Jim Crow in major league baseball, continued to provide vehicles for expression and development of African American music and art, and organized boycotts of segregated public facilities and the film *Gone With the Wind*. After the Nazis invaded Soviet Russia in June of 1941 and the United States entered the war against the axis powers, the Party leadership expressed reservations about a "Double V" campaign for victory against racism at home and fascism abroad. Rather, the leadership stressed the need for national all-class unity in the struggle to defeat

fascism. Some African Americans felt disappointed and abandoned as a result of this apparent downgrading of the battle for equality. However, antiracism was by then deep in the bones of black and white communists and liberal allies and could not be fully placed on the back burner. Campaigns went on during the war for full implementation of Fair Employment Practices in burgeoning defense industries, for desegregation of the armed forces, and for an end to discriminatory policies against the black community.

In 1944, CP general secretary Earl Browder dissolved the Party, jettisoning the last vestiges of Lenin's concept of an organization of dedicated revolutionaries. It was replaced by the Communist Political Association, a loosely organized educational and civic action group. The concept of national self-determination for the Black Belt was interred as Browder declared that Southern blacks had "self-determined" assimilation into the larger society. Less than 2 years later, Browder was ousted, the Party reconstituted, and the self-determination doctrine resurrected.

Through these upheavals, the Negro National Congress and SNYC had become moribund. Then, in 1946, the communists helped found the Civil Rights Congress (CRC), led by communist lawyer William L. Patterson, a veteran of the International Labor Defense and the Scottsboro battles. The CRC gained notoriety when it placed before the United Nations a petition, "We Charge Genocide," which documented a long list of government-sanctioned assaults on African Americans that in the organization's view constituted genocide.

The CRC also fought scores of cases in the courts and in the streets involving African Americans ensnared by the legal system. Among the most well known were the cases of Rosa Lee Ingram in Georgia, Willie McGee in Mississippi, and the "Trenton Six" in New Jersey. Rosa Lee Ingram, a widowed tenant farmer and mother of 12, had, along with two of her sons, been convicted and sentenced to death for killing a white neighbor. The jury had ignored strong evidence that the killing was clear-cut self-defense against the neighbor's attacking the Ingrams with a rifle butt, and they proceeded to a speedy trial and sentencing. An international campaign combined with legal appeals ultimately spared the lives of Ingram and her sons. The CRC fought in vain to save Willie McGee, who was executed in 1951 for rape of a white woman in Laurel, Mississippi, despite overwhelming evidence that the charges were motivated by the

woman's rage after McGee ended an affair with her. The six black defendants known as the "Trenton Six" were freed in 1951 on appeals entered by the CRC after they had been sentenced to death in the killing of a white shopkeeper, despite witnesses who identified the killers as "two or three white or light-skinned black teenagers."

The 1948 campaign of Henry Wallace for president, in which communists played a prominent role, was marked by a powerful commitment to civil rights and by the refusal of Wallace and his running mate, Senator Glen Taylor, to appear in the South before segregated audiences. Defying physical threats and barrages of rotten eggs and tomatoes, the Wallace campaign rallied Southern liberalism in the first major postwar assault on segregation and was a factor in pressuring Wallace's rival, Harry S. Truman, to accept a strong civil rights plank in his successful campaign for the presidency.

Yet, the Cold War was deepening and was having a complex and contradictory effect on the relationship of communists, blacks, and the struggle for equality. In an increasingly repressive environment, the old adage that it was "tough enough being black without also being red" appeared to be borne out by particularly harsh demands on radical and communist African Americans to march in lockstep with growing anticommunism and to abandon their criticisms of the larger society's racial injustice. Communist leaders such as New York City councilman Benjamin J. Davis and Henry Winston were sentenced with 11 white colleagues to federal prison for "teaching and advocating overthrow of the government"; Paul Robeson's concert career was destroyed and his passport confiscated; W.E.B. Du Bois was indicted in 1951 for "failure to register as a foreign agent" due to his sponsorship of the Stockholm Peace Appeal to ban nuclear weapons (but the charges were later thrown out). Baseball star Jackie Robinson was forced to testify against Robeson before the House Un-American Activities Committee, and leaders of the major mainstream civil rights organizations were repeatedly called upon to denounce the left and to affirm their support of the U.S. conflict with the U.S.S.R.

At the same time, the U.S. government's Cold War with world communism had a positive effect on the ongoing battle for equality in the United States. With a contest for hearts and minds in Africa, Asia, and Latin America raging, segregation and racism in the United States was becoming a heavy albatross that

had to be lifted. The historic Supreme Court decision in May of 1954 ending segregated schools noted the negative effect of unequal education on the battle against communism being conducted by Washington.

The 1955 bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama, that was led by Martin Luther King, Jr., ushered in the modern civil rights revolution, which in significant measure, with all its faults and missteps, echoed the long and neglected history of the left's struggles for racial equality. A vibrant link between past and present was forged when veterans of the old Share Croppers' Union like Hosea Hudson and Ned Cobb joined the new battles of the 1950s. Yet, the Communist Party, buffeted by the Cold War, McCarthyism, and the revelations by Nikita Khrushchev in 1956 of the crimes of Stalin, was now in decline. However, Party members and many who had left the Party continued to work for desegregated schools and voting rights while the left-wing Southern Conference Education Fund (successor to the Southern Conference for Human Welfare) extended valuable experience to the rising Southern movement.

The upsurge in the antiwar and civil rights movements in the 1960s brought a modest spike in the Party's young African American membership, Angela Davis the most prominent among the new members. The doctrine of national self-determination had again been interred in 1958, but elements within the Party defied national policies against nationalism, responding sympathetically to the black power movement and even establishing an unprecedented all-black youth club in Los Angeles.

The collapse of the U.S.S.R. and the states of Eastern Europe engendered a deep, irreparable split in the Communist Party. Long-time Party leader Gus Hall was accused of abandoning the traditional Party position on the centrality of the struggle against racism and for black liberation. Prominent black activists like Angela Davis, Charlene Mitchell, and James Jackson, as well as a number of local African American leaders left the Party to form the democratic socialist Committees of Correspondence. But despite its often heavy-handed relationship with the African American community, the Communist Party established an important and influential record in the long and continuing struggle for fulfillment of the promise to African Americans of equality, justice, and interracial unity.

— Mark Solomon

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AFRICAN AMERICAN ORATORY

Rhetoric, in its broadest sense, is the theory and practice of persuasive eloquence, whether spoken or written. Spoken rhetoric is oratory, and oratory is shaped by the historical experiences and cultural worldview of a people. The oratory of African Americans, which is unique from the oratory of other cultural groups, is intricately tied to all African American experiences. Thus the study of African American oratory examines the historical experiences, political situation, identities, and ideological positions of a variety of black speakers, as well as their oratorical abilities and skills. The history of African American oratory reveals the strategies and themes orators employed when confronting 19th- and 20th-century historical topics

involving U.S. laws, justification of the institution of slavery, public lynching, Jim Crow segregation, inadequate education, poverty, discriminatory housing, and unfair employment practices. War and peace, human rights, political rights, civil rights, and economic power issues have raised and called to step forth to the platform various black spokespersons, including religious, diplomatic, and protest leaders and revolutionaries, to report various wrongs of the nation. Also within this rich oratorical tradition are the oratorical talents of black comedians, poets, rap artists, pimps, and con artists. What follows is a brief chronological survey exploring African Americans' historical experiences, their oratorical skills' unique characteristics, and their rhetorical choices over the course of the past 4 centuries, which should shed more light on this subject.

The African American community endured violence, discrimination, and segregation. To free themselves from these shackles, African American men and women have served in the armed forces from the Revolutionary War through the Vietnam War and beyond, fighting for freedom, equality, justice, and the preservation of cultural identity. They have adapted to, integrated into, or resisted the strength of the white-dominated and racist system of governance in the country. Yearning for their human dignity and basic equality, African Americans with oratorical skills have responded to white violence and abuse through more radical and revolutionary means by articulating radical integrationist, pan-Africanist, black nationalist, and Marxist themes. Many of them made both sacred and secular appeals calling for national peace, harmony, love and nonviolence, religious fellowship, militancy, nationalism, black power, and/or repatriation. These orators delivered messages in an attempt to persuade the nation to give blacks equal citizenship status with whites.

There were rampages against oppression in the late 19th- and early-20th-century accommodationist appeals of the Tuskegee Institute's Booker T. Washington and his political machine, as well as in the late 19th- and 20th-century black nationalist and pan-Africanist oratory tradition of Martin Delaney, Edward Blyden, Alexander Crummell, Bishop Henry McNeal Turner, Marcus Garvey, W.E.B. Du Bois, Paul Robeson, Kwame Toure, and Malcolm X. From the mid-19th century to the present, there have been confrontational, agitational, radical integrationist addresses against oppression by orators such as David

Walker, Charles Remond, Henry Highland Garnet, Maria Stewart, Frederick Douglass, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Sojourner Truth, Adam Clayton Powell, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., Fannie Lou Hamer, Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, Robert F. Williams, Angela Davis, Stokely Carmichael (also known as Kwame Toure), Maulana Karenga, Huey P. Newton, Louis Farrakhan, Jesse Jackson, and Al Sharpton. A persistent theme in this African American oratory was and is the issue of race and slavery. Men and women orators before and after the abolition of slavery expressed their concerns, feelings, attitudes, and aspirations about ending white supremacy and racial and ethnic discrimination and replaced these issues in their speeches with the themes of black pride and freedom.

An important dimension of African American oratorical history involves the principal spokespersons' ability to create articulate and effective speech behavior on the platform. Early on, Africans in America cultivated an appreciation for Nommo, the generative power of the spoken word, since reading and writing by Africans was outlawed. African Americans' communicative uniqueness in using Nommo for sacred and secular purposes became for these orators a transforming power of vocal expression and eloquence. Out of an African heritage steeped in the oral tradition, African American orators developed, consciously and unconsciously, unique communication patterns and skills in work songs, sermons, and spirituals with two meanings, one for the body and one for the soul. Nommo also created an atmosphere in which the calls of black speakers and the responses of black audiences in sacred and secular contexts constituted one act of communication. This is apparent in most African American Baptist church settings when the preacher states something and the congregation responds, "Take yo' time, take yo'time," "Fix it up, Reb," "Preach it, Reb," and when contemporary rap music artists say, "Somebody scream," and members of their audience scream.

Other rhetorical qualities of Nommo on which African American orators rely in sacred and secular situations involve the use of proverbial statements, spontaneity, indirection, and image making. Indeed, the oratory of African Americans is predicated upon the power of the spoken word. The oratory of Malcolm X, to a greater extent than the oratory of many of his contemporaries of the latter half of the 20th century, was stunning in cadence and logic. Malcolm X—like Martin Luther King, Fannie Lou

Hamer, and the oratorical giants before them such as Marcus Garvey and A. Philip Randolph—relied on Nommo for force, majesty, and an oratorical style steeped in the perennial traditions of art to bring about a comprehensive and passionate statement on justice. Following these rhetorical conventions, a number of contemporary rappers, comedians, and other orators—from Langston Hughes to The Last Poets, Melle Mel, Chuck D, KRS One, Queen Latifah, Will Smith, Ice T, Common, and Sister Souljah—have continued the rich oratorical tradition of African Americans.

— Adisa Alkebulan

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AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES, TEMPLE UNIVERSITY

For 4 years, from 1997 to 2001, an ideological struggle was waged over the philosophical direction of the Department of African American Studies (DAAS) at Temple University (TU) in Philadelphia. The department had gained national and international fame in the late 1980s for its Afrocentric orientation, as well as for being the first program in the country to grant a Ph.D. in African American Studies (AAS), under the leadership of Molefi Kete Asante, the founder of the Afrocentric paradigm. However, the department started drawing negative attention in 1996 when a serious effort was made by a group of white and black professors and administrators to have Molefi Asante's tenure at Temple terminated. They had charged Asante with abuse of power, but the real issue, as was later revealed, was the widespread discussion on

campus about the Afrocentric orientation of the department.

The Ford Foundation refused to grant funding to the department, claiming that it was too political. Those who attacked Asante wanted to find a more agreeable black person to run the department. Although their efforts to railroad Asante out of office failed, this was only the first open attack on the department from the Temple administration, to be followed by many more. Asante, whose term was expiring on June 30, 1997, announced during the fall of 1996 that, for personal reasons, he would not seek reelection as chair of the DAAS. The dean, Carolyn Adams, quickly seized this opportunity to attempt to implement a drastic philosophical change in the DAAS. This change, it seems, was to be part of a broad revamping of Temple University's public image, with a serious commitment to luring students from the suburbs. A highly visible DAAS, whose philosophical orientation was perceived as hostile to white supremacy, could have seriously undermined the success of the plan.

AN ARRAY OF FORCES

From the very beginning, Adams engaged in questionable tactics in order to ensure that the next DAAS chair would develop a vision that was appealing to the rest of the university. She took it upon herself to appoint a search committee, made up of Sonia Sanchez (Women's Studies), Sonya Peterson-Lewis (AAS), Trevor Sewell (School of Education), Thaddeus Mathis (Social Work), Nathaniel Norment (AAS), Abu Abarry (AAS), and Kariam Welsh-Asante (AAS), who was later replaced, at her own request, by Ama Mazama. Originally chaired by Sanchez, the committee was eventually cochaired by Peterson-Lewis and Sewell. The students also insisted on having a representative and elected Fabanwo Aduana. The latter was only reluctantly accepted by Adams, who proceeded to unilaterally appoint a student who was not elected, Edi Becton.

The search committee appointed by Adams was charged with identifying potential candidates for the position and bringing them to campus. Five candidates were invited in May and June of 1997: Joyce Joyce, Ronald Bailey, Geneva Smitherman, Mary Hoover, and Mwalimu Shujaa. The Union Contract's Article 14, which defines and protects the rights of the Temple faculty, stipulates that it is the faculty's

prerogative to recommend a particular candidate to the dean, who may reject or accept the nomination. However, Adams disregarded the contract altogether, and thus violated the DAAS faculty's rights by insisting that the DAAS faculty could only nominate either Joyce Joyce or Ronald Bailey.

In June of 1997, 8 out of 12 faculty members responded by filing a class action grievance against the dean for violating their right to nominate their own chair. The Union (TAUP) sided with Adams and dismissed the grievance as moot. In July of 1997, Adams organized an "election" of her own, out of her office, with only two names on the ballots. She was greatly assisted in this by her African American assistant, Mary Middlebrook, as well as Ella Forbes, a junior DAAS professor about to be reviewed for tenure. In fact, Forbes was one of two people (the other one being Nathaniel Norment) who voted for Joyce. Two other ballots were cast—one faxed by C. T. Keto, a professor on leave in South Africa who favored Bailey, and one from Peterson-Lewis who elected both candidates, thus disqualifying her ballot. The rest of the faculty decided to boycott what they considered to be an illegal election. On July 18, 1997, Adams announced the result of her election: Joyce had been elected with two votes and would therefore become the chair of the DAAS for the next 5 years. Indeed, she was offered the position by President Liacouras and accepted it on August 29, 1997, just in time for the fall semester.

FOUR DIFFICULT YEARS

The new era that opened with the appointment of Joyce—over the wishes of the overwhelming majority of the faculty and the students, who had selected Mwalimu Shujaa and Mary Hoover as their top candidates—proved to be quite disruptive and destructive. Joyce, a professor who had spent turbulent years at previous institutions, was quite aware of the dispute that opposed the dean to the faculty over her appointment. While granting numerous favors to those who had supported her, Joyce chose to display what was perceived as sheer vindictiveness, hostility, and contempt toward those faculty and students who had not supported her candidacy. One of her first moves, for example, was to make up an *a posteriori* requirement for qualifying for a teaching assistantship, and to try to fire the teaching assistants on that capricious and illegal basis. When this failed, she denied the teaching

assistants access to an office, thus forcing them to hold conferences with their students in hallways. It was widely reported that she asked one student and one faculty, Jason Neuenschwander and Nathaniel Norment, to remove the pictures of African ancestors that had been on the walls of the department for many years. At any rate, they were seen removing the pictures from the walls and this further enraged other students. This move was perceived by many as the symbolic violation and destruction of a sacred African space, a true declaration of war. In addition, Joyce created extremely difficult working conditions for those under and opposed to her. For example, she restricted their access to a copy machine for several years by having the machine locked up in a closet. Furthermore, she did not consult with those who had not supported her candidacy. Joyce held only one faculty meeting during her first year, even though the by-laws required monthly meetings, and she and her allies ruled the department.

However, in addition to and more important than Joyce's tyranny and pettiness was her dangerous agenda of dismantling the program and replacing it with a watered-down version of the program, one in which students in AAS would have two advisors—one from AAS and one from a European studies department such as history, English, women's studies, anthropology, or another department. This, it was claimed, was necessary, in order to ensure quality. This requirement served as reminder of Joyce's belief in African intellectual inferiority, as no other department had any such requirement. It also aimed at bringing the DAAS back in line with the European intellectual tradition, from which it had strayed for too long. In addition, and quite unsurprisingly, the few new DAAS faculty who were temporarily hired under Joyce and Adams had no understanding of or sympathy for the Afrocentric paradigm. Consistent with Joyce's agenda of reforming the philosophy in the DAAS was her withdrawal of all departmental support from the annual Cheikh Anta Diop Conference, which is dedicated to the advancement of Afrocentric scholarship. Similarly, the celebration of Kwanzaa was no longer organized nor endorsed by the department.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL STAKES

Most graduate and undergraduate programs in African American Studies embrace the Eurocentric perspective. Central to that perspective is the notion that the

African experience is fundamentally subordinate to the European experience and is therefore ultimately best understood within a Eurocentric cultural and historical context. Indeed, the European experience is allegedly universal and "others," including Africans, are defined by their encounters with Europeans. Thus Africans have been defined as less than Europeans, "uncivilized," "primitive," and "illiterate," as well as, more recently, "underdeveloped," "developing," and so on. By dictating the concepts that must be used in order to apprehend the African experience, Eurocentric thought effectively maintains Africans in a state of mental incarceration. Totally alien to the Eurocentric perspective, on the other hand, is the idea that there could exist a culture and history developed by Africans independently of and even prior to Europe. Afrocentricity argues against such ethnocentric reductionism and presses instead for an epistemological centeredness—an understanding of the African cultural and historical reality based on African-generated criteria. Afrocentricity also insists that unless African American Studies scholars embrace such epistemological relevance, they can only hope to conduct Eurocentric studies of Africa and her people, not genuine African Studies.

By articulating the Afrocentric paradigm, Molefi Asante set in motion a true revolution, one that would definitively challenge Eurocentric scholars' false claims of the universalism and superiority of Eurocentric thought, as well as show the path to



Dr. Adisa Alkebulan, African American Studies professor, San Diego State University, a graduate of Temple University DAAS

African empowerment through African self-knowledge, self-definition, and self-naming. Over the years, hundreds of people from several continents came to Temple seeking to be part of this unique and liberating learning experience. European studies were seen as a kind of intellectual plantation from which Africans genuinely interested in African liberation could now escape thanks to Afrocentricity. The real nature of the attacks launched against the pro-African orientation of the DAAS by white and black administrators at Temple University was certainly not missed by those who resolved to exercise their African agency and consequently stood up and fought to defend Afrocentricity.

THE FIGHT FOR AFROCENTRICITY

The fight for Afrocentricity involved its supporters in a fight against Joyce and Adams. Joyce's ruthlessness and negative agenda were met with fierce resistance from the very beginning by students such as Fabanwo Aduana, Adisa Alkebulan, Erin Moore, Zainabu Jones, Pamela Yaa Asantewaa Reed, Geoffrey Giddings, and Buashie Amatokwe; staff such as Sekai Zankel; and faculty such as Molefi Asante and Ama Mazama. Those who supported Afrocentricity adopted three main strategies: confronting the department and the university on all issues viewed as racist or harmful to students and the discipline, making appeals to the administration, and making appeals to the community. As far as the first strategy is concerned, every effort was made to prevent the Joyce administration from implementing any radical changes. Thus Joyce was bombarded with letters about her vision and goals. Student leaders found ways to broadcast their anti-Joyce, anti-Adams, and anti-Sonia Sanchez sentiments with statements that appeared everywhere—on walls, doors, and elevators on campus—forcing everyone to notice that a gross injustice was being committed. Underground newsletters were also widely circulated on campus. In response, Temple dispatched undercover agents and had video-cameras installed in the department.

As far as the appeals to the administration are concerned, letters were written on a weekly basis by outraged students and faculty. This was done in part to alert the administration to the abuses suffered by the faculty and students but also to make it clear that Joyce did not have the situation under control. The faculty, following the Union Contract, voted Joyce out

of office several times. However, the administration refused to honor their vote. Instead, it recommended Joyce for tenure after only one semester, against the wish of the DAAS senior faculty and against Temple's own requirement that a faculty member not be recommended for tenure until a full year had elapsed. Joyce was also publicly and strongly backed by the Women's Studies program, which was cochaired by Sonia Sanchez. Sanchez was the subject of a book Joyce had published shortly prior to coming to Temple, and she supported Joyce's appointment and tenure. In addition, one of Joyce's first moves as chair was to appoint Sanchez's friend Jimmy Garret as visiting faculty and to give Sanchez's son a job as a receptionist. The tension at Temple escalated and was brought to a head on May 22, 1998, when pro-Joyce student Gregory Carr physically assaulted anti-Joyce professor Ama Mazama.

The community was made aware of the attacks on the DAAS Afrocentric orientation by local newspaper articles, radio interviews, a rally, flyers, demonstrations at Temple-sponsored events, and so on. On the intellectual front, to counter the Eurocentric discourse promoted by the new administration, Afrocentricity was publicly nurtured within the DAAS by Nommo, which was organized by Ama Mazama and many students as a round table where Afrocentric forums were held. Nommo also became responsible for celebrating Kwanzaa.

When it finally became clear that Temple University had no intention of addressing the issues raised by DAAS students and faculty over Joyce's appointment and actions, legal action was taken. This action was in the form of a lawsuit, filed in civil court on February 4, 1999, by Ama Mazama against the Union (TAUP) and Temple University, in the name of the ancestors. The lawsuit filed by Mazama alleged (1) that Temple University had violated the rights of the faculty under the collective bargaining agreement, and (2) that TAUP had acted in bad faith and breached its duty to Mazama of fair representation. The lawsuit consequently sought to force TAUP to proceed to arbitration. Mazama hired Leon Williams, an African American attorney well-known in the Philadelphia area for his pro-community activism. In response, Temple hired the largest law firm in Philadelphia, Ballard & Co., to defend it. This, however, would prove futile, as TAUP and the university lost the lawsuit. In 2000, after hearing the facts during a 2-day trial on January 10 and 11, the judge agreed with

Mazama's allegations and ordered TAUP to proceed to arbitration. TU and TAUP appealed the verdict twice, all the way to the Pennsylvania Superior Court, only to again and finally lose the case in September of 2000. Shortly afterward, Joyce announced her resignation and transfer into the Women's Studies program on July 1, 2001. Joyce was replaced by Nathaniel Norment, one of Joyce's former and now disgruntled supporters, who made several public statements reaffirming the Afrocentric orientation of the Department of African American Studies at Temple University. The struggle to maintain Afrocentricity at Temple had been won.

— Ama Mazama

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AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES: THE FIRST DOCTORAL PROGRAM

The history of the first Ph.D. program in African American Studies at Temple University must be seen in the light of the department's evolution in terms of its scope and function. African American Studies at Temple was first constituted as the Afro-Asian Institute in 1971, making it one of the first programs during the stormy birthing of the field in the great wave of department and program creations that occurred from 1969 to 1972. It was the most dynamic intellectual program in the Philadelphia area, bringing to Temple, which is located in a heavily African

American community, a new resonating insight into political, economic, and cultural issues. The program initially designated the Afro-Asian Institute soon changed its name and purpose, becoming the Department of Pan African Studies. The name was changed once more when in 1984 it became the Department of African American Studies.

The Afro-Asian Institute, heavily influenced by Muslim students, was a program, whereas Pan African Studies took the form of a department when it established a reporting mechanism comparable to that in other academic departments and an undergraduate degree program. There had been a struggle for acknowledgment of the legitimacy of an African American program from the very start of the Afro-Asian Institute. Faculty members at Temple regularly called for the abolition of the program. Its students were constantly harassed, and some of the faculty who participated were intimidated by colleagues who wondered how they could squander their time and career on something as ephemeral as Black Studies.

Numerous African and African American faculty members paid for their involvement in the department's battles with collegial and university committees by being refused tenure. Yosef ben-Jochannan, the popular Egyptologist, had a public battle with the university over his credentials. Nevertheless, by 1978 the department had grown to 13 faculty members. It was at this time that the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences offered faculty members in the department the option of leaving the department for more traditional ones. Several of these individuals accepted to go to other departments, including Wilbert Roget to the French department and Sonia Sanchez to the English department. One professor was placed in the Office of the Dean. Some left the university altogether. The net result was the dismantling of a large activist group of African scholars.

Nevertheless, the department persisted to assert its academic rights and succeeded in gaining a mass following in the community. By the late 1970s, the issues were public and the department was under pressure to change its emphasis and shape. Professor Odeyo Ayaga was the chair of the department, and he immediately began to establish contacts in the university and the city and state governments. Ayaga was a remarkable leader at a time that demanded steadfastness, integrity, and commitment to the intellectual project of African American Studies. He shared his contacts, ideas, and impressions of the university, as

well as insights into the political nature of the Temple campus, with Molefi Kete Asante, the new chair. Ayaga graciously passed on to Asante his contacts and sources from the various government and civic bodies.

THE CREATIVE CONTEXT

When Molefi Kete Asante arrived at Temple from State University of New York (SUNY) at Buffalo, where he had served as chair of the Department of Communication and the Department of Black Studies, there were only three professors in African American Studies: Odeyo Ayaga, Alfred Moleah, and Tran Van Dinh. All the other departmental faculty members had been chased away, humiliated, denied tenure, or otherwise forced to change departments. Professor Dinh took early retirement in the fall of 1984 and that left three department members. There was an air of optimism on the campus because a new administration had taken over the university and a new dean would likely be coming aboard. The community sensed the possibilities inherent in such a situation and demanded to see a rebirth in the department. The highly valued Community Education Program had been left languishing and a community leader, Maisha Ongonza, was leading the remnants of that program and essentially running the day to day affairs of the departmental office.

Professors Ayaga and Moleah were exhausted by the constant battles with the administration. They had become experts at writing memoranda to defend the department and their understanding of the mission of the undergraduate program. They had put up as good a fight as possible given the fact that Ayaga was Kenyan and Moleah was South African, and the white professors kept them on the defensive. Both had been radicalized by their involvement with the department because the type of racism they confronted at Temple was different from what they knew at home and quite unexpected; they vowed to save the department but knew that they had to save themselves first. Stress took its toll on them.

Asante informed them that even with only three faculty members, they had to propose a revitalized vision of the department and fight for it. They essentially asked Asante to take the lead in defining the new direction of the department. With swiftness, and because there was some hoopla around the change in the department, Asante took advantage of the momentary goodwill by proposing to hire three new faculty

members over the following 2 years and introducing a master's degree program. The provost gave the green light on the hiring but did not commit to the graduate program proposal because it had to go through the university committees.

THE INITIAL PROPOSAL: THE MASTER'S PROGRAM

Using the model for programs he had written for UCLA (University of California, Los Angeles) and SUNY, Asante drafted a graduate program in African American Studies to be submitted to the Graduate Committee of the College of Arts and Sciences at Temple. There already existed master's programs in Black Studies at Cornell University, Ohio State University, UCLA, Yale, SUNY at Albany, and Atlanta University. However, from the beginning, Asante believed that most of the departments had no clear philosophical or conceptual basis to the aggregation of courses that existed in their programs. What was different about Asante's conception was that it made the Afrocentric paradigm the instrument guiding program development.

The faculty proposed that the master's program be split into two natural divisions: cultural aesthetic and social behavioral. Courses were created and grouped according to these concentrations. For example, the social behavioral track or concentration included seminar courses on Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr., Cheikh Anta Diop, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Zora Neale Hurston. Some other courses were proposed but not approved. The cultural aesthetic track or concentration included courses such as African Aesthetics, Ebonics, African American Drama, African American Art, Négritude, and African literature. Students were required initially to take three core courses regardless of the track that they chose as their principal area of concentration. These courses included Proseminar in Graduate Studies in African American Studies, African Civilization, and Research Methods in African American Studies.

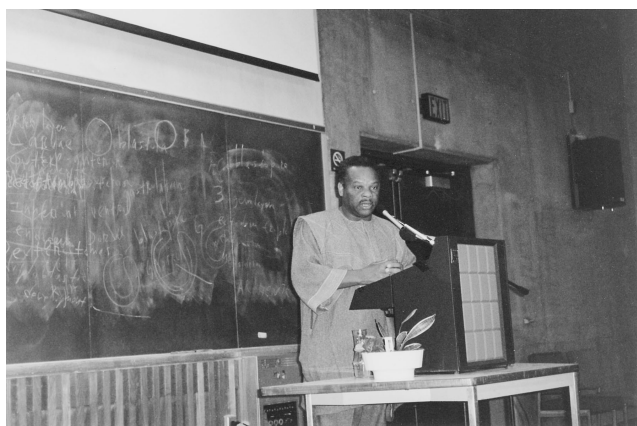
The initial reading of the proposal by the Graduate Committee of the College produced considerable discussion and academic scramble. Some professors felt that there was just no way that African American Studies as a department was going to have a graduate program. They did not believe in it as a field or as a discipline. Some conservative professors even claimed that African American Studies represented a catering

to the notion of “relevance” in education. Others believed that such a graduate program would have a deleterious effect on the graduate programs in English, history, and sociology, bringing unnecessary competition for a decreasing pool of students. Still others said that no students would enroll in the program because students want traditional degrees. Perhaps the harshest criticism came from Emma Lapzansky, a black history professor who was also an assistant dean. Lapzansky wrote that the program “would ghettoize” education. Asante’s response was that the aim was to correct the ghettoization of education inasmuch as Temple’s curriculum and departments without African American Studies were ghettos of whiteness in curriculum, departmental theories, methods, and faculty representation. His response was followed by silence from the dean’s office, and soon thereafter Lapzansky left the university.

No other opposition to the program surfaced in letters; those who objected to the proposal were careful not to write their objections. They whispered that there were limited materials to teach at the graduate level in African American Studies. But they spoke out of ignorance and did not have to be confronted head-on except as the objections were dealt with in several revisions of the proposal. Relying on the expertise of a wide range of scholars in the field, Asante was able to answer most of the objections quite easily.

THE POSSIBILITY OF A DOCTORAL PROGRAM

When the Graduate Committee of the College of Arts and Sciences had made its decision to return the



Dr. Molefi Kete Asante, Afrocentric theorist and activist

initial proposal for a master’s degree to the department for additional documentation, Asante decided to research the possibility of initiating a doctoral degree program, since the major assessment work had already been done for the master’s. Examining about 200 programs at various universities, he discovered that there were at least 20 doctorate-granting programs in the nation with less faculty than African American Studies at Temple had at the time. Soon he added Kariamuwelsh, Sonja Peterson-Lewis, and C. T. Keto to the department. Professors Odeyo Ayaga and Tran Van Dinh had taken early retirement. Professor Alfred Moleah was the senior professor, having been in the department the longest and having achieved the rank of full professor. However, he did not participate in the creation of the graduate program. His interests were external to the department at the time, as his preoccupation with the South African struggle kept him busy with international responsibilities.

Asante attempted to add a social policy component to the proposal as a third concentration, to answer the need for a track for students interested in transforming the way the areas of social welfare, health, transportation needs, and other delivery mechanisms in the African American community were studied and researched. The inclusion of this social policy component was rejected by the university committee for both the master’s and the doctoral programs. By the time the new faculty members, Welsh, Peterson-Lewis, and Keto, had taken on the vision and mission of the department, there was a new turn of events. A new dean, Lois Cronholm, was appointed to the College of Arts and Sciences. Lois Cronholm and her assistant dean, Jayne Kribbs, along with provost Barbara Brownstein and executive vice president H. Patrick Swygert, became the doctoral program’s strongest supporters, even in the face of faculty opposition. President Peter Liacouras played a major role in articulating the vision that was to give Temple the best department of its kind in the nation, but he could not force the faculty to act on the proposal.

The approval of the master’s and doctoral programs by the Graduate Committee of the College of Arts and Sciences created euphoria in the National Council of Black Studies. It was a national triumph, indeed, an international achievement for Temple University. Asante and the department had achieved a great victory, and all of the arguments, setbacks, delays, and threats of obliteration were reduced to memories, recorded memories but memories nevertheless. The

reviewers who had visited the campus to offer advice and suggestions included Professor James Turner of Cornell University, Professor William Nelson of Ohio State University, Professor Delores P. Aldridge of Emory University, Professor Marimba Ani of Hunter College, and Professor Maulana Karenga of California State University, Long Beach. In addition, Howard Dodson of the Schomburg Center came to support the department's movement for a doctoral program. These reviewers' advice and suggestions were incorporated into the final report.

In an attempt to forestall any objection to the admission standards of the new programs, the department introduced the highest grade point average (GPA) requirement in the College of Arts and Sciences at the time. A student had to have a 3.0 GPA to enter the program and a 3.6 GPA to apply for the teaching assistantship. A year or so later, the department elevated the admission requirement to a 3.2 GPA for admission. One of the reasons for this was that the department had experienced an unusually high number of applicants, contrary to the speculation of those who believed that there would be only a few students interested in the graduate program. Initially the department received hundreds of applications.

APPROVAL AND RECOGNITION

The Temple University Board of Trustees approved the proposal for a doctoral program in African American Studies in 1987. This represented one of the most critical historical developments in American higher education for the following reasons: (1) it represented a major breach in the structure of white supremacy, (2) it introduced a new paradigm, and (3) it minimized the significance of race in theoretical and conceptual innovation.

The proposal to create a new doctoral program in a major white institution in the United States was a bold act. The power to grant terminal degrees had always been held by whites; even at predominantly black institutions where the doctoral degree was offered, it was usually based on some model of a white doctoral program. Thus a history doctorate at Atlanta University was based on the history doctorate at Georgia, Emory, or some other university. In other words, there were no doctoral programs in the United States not created by white people.

The doctoral program in African American Studies at Temple represented the first time that a new

terminal degree was written and proposed entirely by an African intellectual and then accepted and approved by a predominantly white institution. The construction of a new way to approach and interrogate phenomena of the African experience created, *inter alia*, space for radically new interpretations of data. By introducing the idea of studying phenomena from the standpoint of African agency, that is, as subjects acting and not simply acted upon, the Afrocentric perspective opened up an entirely fresh field of research. For example, the U.S. constitutional conventions could suddenly be examined from the perspective of the Africans who cooked for the delegates or who drove their carriages. One could ask, "What were these enslaved black folks thinking while the colonial white folks were thinking?" Perhaps national independence was a gift of Europe, but through years of struggle, freedom was truly to be ultimately a gift of Africa.

The introduction of the doctoral program in African American Studies shattered the idea that blacks could not propose any intellectual program from which whites could learn. Before this development, the idea



Dr. Miriam Ma'at-Ka-Re Monges, recipient of one of the first doctorates in African American Studies from Temple University

that whites created and everyone else participated in their creation had been the common educational practice, but the doctoral program at Temple was a radical change in that equation. It served to minimize race in the construction of concept and theory, and thereby struck a blow for equality in theorizing about any phenomenon related to the African experience.

NEW DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

As of 2004, 15 years after the establishment of Temple University's doctoral degree in African American Studies, five additional universities offer the degree: Yale University, University of Massachusetts (U Mass) at Amherst, Michigan State University, Harvard University, and University of California, Berkeley. However, Harvard, Yale, and Michigan State offer interdepartmental degrees, with the bulk of their graduate courses coming from traditional university departments. Indeed, only Temple, U Mass, and Berkeley offer the degree from a departmental structure, and only Temple has a disciplinary approach.

—Ama Mazama

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AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES: GRADUATE STUDIES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Of the 175 African American Studies (AAS) programs and departments currently in existence, 15 offer a

master's degree and 6 also offer a doctoral degree. Given that AAS departments and programs have been in existence since the late 1960s, universities have been quite slow in creating and maintaining graduate programs in AAS. Ohio State University and Cornell University were the first institutions to implement a master's degree program in AAS in the early 1970s. It was almost 20 years later, in 1988, that the first doctoral program in AAS was created at Temple University, under the leadership of Molefi Kete Asante. Several years later, other universities—such as the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Harvard University, Yale University, Michigan State University, and the University of California, Berkeley—followed Temple's lead and created their own doctoral programs in AAS. However, these universities did not espouse the same philosophy that informed the first doctoral program in AAS. Indeed, there is a major difference between the Temple doctoral program and the others, in that the AAS department at Temple consciously rejects the European metaparadigm and espouses the Afrocentric paradigm developed by Molefi Kete Asante.

AN INTELLECTUAL DEPARTURE

What defines *Afrocentricity*, the philosophy upon which the Afrocentric paradigm is based, is the crucial role it attributes to the African social and cultural experience as the ultimate reference point. Afrocentricity fully acknowledges the negative impact that Europe has had on the lives of African people, and it suggests the restoration of a sense of historical and cultural continuity as the first and indispensable step for Africans' recovery. Quite naturally, the Afrocentric historiography assumes ancient African civilizations as the most relevant historical and cultural source for African people, wherever they may find themselves today. Afrocentricity also contends that it is Africans' acceptance of ideas foreign to their cultural reality and ethos, ideas imposed on them by Europeans as "universal" and superior, that has caused the state of great confusion in which Africans currently find themselves. It is this confusion that has created the imperative need for Africans everywhere to find in their own cultural references the concepts and practices that will benefit them.

The organizing principle of the Afrocentric paradigm is the centrality of the African experience for African people. The position taken by the department

of AAS at Temple is that what defines African Studies as African Studies (and not something else) is its focus on the African experience from an African perspective (i.e., Afrocentricity). Much of what passes for AAS is nothing but European studies of Africa and her people. Such confusion is made possible by the unquestioned, yet highly problematic, acceptance of the European perspective as universal.

THE TEMPLE UNIVERSITY MODEL

AAS at Temple concerns itself with different topics, and this does not contradict the undisciplined status of African Studies but is very much to be expected, since African Studies endeavors to cover the African experience's multiple dimensions. As a result, it covers all aspects of African lives. The purpose of Afrocentrically generated knowledge is to empower African people and give them the means to ultimately put an end to their current predicament. The strong commitment to Afrocentricity in the Temple AAS department is demonstrated by its sponsorship for many years of the Annual International Cheikh Anta Diop Conference, a major platform for Afrocentric scholarship, and especially by the courses it offers. For example, students are taught, among other things, ancient African history and civilizations, as well as to decipher the ancient Egyptian language *mdw ntr*. Although the period of Africans' enslavement in America is understandably mentioned in several classes, emphasis in AAS is placed on Africans' past, current, and possible victories. Thus a new name, *Africology*, meaning the study of African phenomena from the standpoint of African people, has been suggested for AAS.

The Temple program was from the start an important voice for Africans, and it instantly became highly successful in attracting hundreds of Africans from all over the world, as well as non-Africans from North America, Europe, and Asia. These students came to the AAS department eager to be a part of a liberating educational experience. However, existing as it did in a white supremacist context, its very success worked against the Temple program. Indeed, in 1997 Temple's administration hired Joyce A. Joyce as the new chair for the department of AAS. In a number of proposals, Joyce defined her mission—to dismantle the Afrocentric program and place it under the intellectual tutelage of various European studies departments. Under this new plan, AAS doctoral students would



Dr. Adeniyi Coker, Director of African American Studies at the University of Alabama, Birmingham, who in 1991 became the first student to receive a Ph.D. from a department of African American Studies

have had two advisors, one in AAS and one from another department or program (such as history, English, anthropology, sociology, or women's studies), a formula that had never been employed in any other department at Temple University.

However, the university's plans were resisted by some faculty and students, who, through public protests and a lawsuit, were eventually able to obtain the removal of the chair and the resignation of the dean. Thus, although the department greatly suffered from the fighting and lost considerable intellectual ground, it nonetheless managed to maintain its Afrocentric orientation. Other graduate programs in AAS have not been subjected to the severe attack leveled at Temple, and this is in large part attributable to such programs posing no threat to the tradition of Eurocentric academics. Indeed, those departments do not fundamentally challenge the implicit assumptions about Europe and Africa found in most American universities. These assumptions can be briefly summarized as follows: (1) all human beings evolve along the same line, (2) the European experience is universal, (3) Europeans are superior, and (4) "others" are defined by their experiences with Europeans. As a result of such assumptions, the history of all women, men, and children in the world is said to naturally coincide with that of Europeans. Thus Europeans are

implicitly or explicitly held to be the universal norm by which Africans' intellectual, cultural, and social "progress" or, rather, lack of progress will be evaluated. This is ethnocentrism par excellence, as it claims that there is only one way of being human, and it is white. What it also suggests is that for Africans to put an end to their inferior condition, they must emulate Europeans. In addition, this ethnocentrism implies that Africans could not have had a meaningful existence before their contact with Europeans, hence the creation of a Eurocentric historiography that places the brutal European intervention into African lives as the defining starting point of Africans' existence.

Thus, the history of Africa is divided into precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial periods, during the latter of which, it is said, Africans started "developing." In a similar fashion, diasporic Africans are made to believe that their history started in the 17th century, when their immediate ancestors were dragged in chains to American shores. In that context, the bulk of diasporic Africans' existential experience would have been as "slaves" to Europeans. In the best and most generous case, enslaved Africans are depicted as "resisting" their mean white "masters"; in the worst case, they are depicted as acquiescing to their servile status and happily participating in their own oppression. However, whatever the case, the fundamental and racist assumptions of this Eurocentric historiography are not questioned: Africans are always defined *in relation to* Europeans.

DISTINGUISHING FACTORS IN GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Unfortunately, most graduate programs in AAS display an unquestioned acceptance of applying the European paradigm to the African experience. This has two major consequences. The first one is that most graduate programs are informed by a Eurocentric historiography. At the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, for example, only one course, African Origins of the Afro-American Community, seems to suggest an awareness that the so-called Afro-Americans had a life before their enslavement by Europeans, while at Harvard University such a course is not even available. In fact, in programs other than that at Temple University, Africans are referred to either as "Blacks" or as "Afro-Americans," but never as "African Americans," let alone "Africans," in course titles.

In addition, the categories used are, unsurprisingly, Eurocentric. The University of California, Berkeley, for instance, offers courses on "developing societies" (i.e., societies, like those in Africa, defined as less than and needing to emulate European societies).

The second major consequence of most graduate programs applying the European paradigm to African experience is that they then define themselves as "interdisciplinary" or "multidisciplinary." Indeed, all graduate programs, with the exception of those at Temple University and the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, define African Studies as interdisciplinary, that is, as a field of study that is dependent on so-called traditional, established disciplines (i.e., European disciplines). In other words, in order to exist, African Studies must be tied to European studies.

The clearest example of that line of thinking is provided by Yale, which offers a joint doctoral degree in a European discipline and AAS. Furthermore, in that strange arrangement, there is no claim to equality, since the department of AAS considers the European discipline chosen by a student to be "his or her primary field of study." Thus, the AAS department readily admits to its being secondary to the "traditional" discipline chosen by the students. All the faculty who supposedly teach in that department have joint appointments or no appointment at all in AAS. At Harvard, where the degree awarded is a "Ph.D. in Afro-American Studies," a similar model prevails, since half of the courses taken by the students who seek a Ph.D. in Afro-American Studies must be from a "traditional" discipline, such as anthropology, sociology, or English. Quite consistently, all the faculty of the Department of Afro-American Studies at Harvard have joint appointments. In fact, Harvard University, which has claimed to have the premier department of AAS in the country, attempted to garner credibility for its Afro-American program by hiring Henry Louis Gates in 1990, who in the midst of much media hype embarked on assembling a loose group of highly visible black intellectuals, the "Dream Team," who remained fully committed to their respective European disciplines and departments. This strategy, however, resulted in a precarious arrangement for Harvard's Afro-American Studies department, which started to crumble away a few years later with the departure of some of its most visible half members, such as Cornel West and Anthony Appiah, who both were attracted to programs other than African

American Studies elsewhere, shortly followed by Gates's own leave of absence. In fact, Harvard does not even claim disciplinary status for Afro-American Studies but, rather, defines it as a "field," with a focus on African people as the defining criterion and its tools of intellectual investigation drawn from the European disciplines that are defined as primary.

There is the same emphasis on the multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary aspect of AAS elsewhere, of course. AAS departments have focused on doctoral programs rather than master's programs due to spatial constraints. Master's programs tend to define African Studies as a field focusing on the black experience rather than as a discipline. For example, the Department of AAS at Ohio State University, which has the largest number of faculty of any AAS department, espouses the definition of AAS as multidisciplinary, with students having to take courses in literature, music, history, psychology, sociology, political science, economics, community development, and so on. The Africana Studies and Research Center at Cornell University, on the other hand, advocates a "transdisciplinary" approach."

There are at least two interrelated reasons why those who teach in African Studies programs are quite comfortable with a definition of African Studies as multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, or some similar concept. Having been trained, for the most part, in a European discipline, they simply continue applying the skills acquired while being trained as sociologists, psychologists, literary critics, linguists, historians, and so on, while focusing on some aspect of the African experience. They have generally not questioned the premises upon which the European intellectual discourse rests, nor have they seriously questioned the relevance of such discourse to African lives. This is indicative of the pervasive confusion among black scholars about the academic and intellectual standing of AAS. This state of affairs is not a new development—it has characterized AAS since its inception because AAS was created out of a strong political spirit rather than a clear intellectual vision. It is most likely, therefore, that as long as AAS is conceived as a mere appendage to European studies, it will fail to entrench itself further in the academy. In order to grow stronger at the graduate level, AAS must attain disciplinary status, which can happen only if scholars involved in AAS accept Afrocentricity as their defining paradigm.

— Ama Mazama

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AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES: THE INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

Indian scholars believe that African American Studies, especially African American literature, poses an important challenge to white American literature. Since much of white American literature, which has taken root in India, militates against the ideals of liberty and equality for all peoples, Indian scholars welcome African American literature as an alternative to it, an alternative that fosters the genuine values proclaimed in American documents. This exciting body of African American literature is filled with the spirit of self-examination and questioning, challenging the very basis of almost all major institutions of America. This literature is thus of unique interest to Dalit Indians (i.e., the oppressed Indians formerly called untouchables), who are similarly engaged in articulating, questioning, and challenging the contradictions in Indian society.

AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES AND DALIT STUDIES

Although throughout the world the history of those oppressed in the name of color, caste, or religion has

not run the same course, the broad framework of the struggle of the oppressed for liberation has been more or less the same. The context of the production of Dalit Indian and African American literary discourses is the suffering, marginalization, and oppression of these groups by the supremacist ruling classes and discrimination. Oppressed African American scholars have seen similarities between their predicament and that of the suffering masses in other parts of the world. They have thus provided a perspective for the study of oppression and resistance and inspired Dalit Indians to see through the designs of the nexus between the white *savarana* (meaning “upper class” in Hindi) and the oppressor or ruling capitalistic classes. Like their African American counterparts, the writings of the Dalit record the search for identity and selfhood in the context of their respective cultures and the struggle of their community to survive whole, forcing their oppressors to revise their literary imagination and affirm the legitimacy of their voices. In this regard, the Dalits relate much of their assertion of literary and cultural ideals to those of the practitioners of African American Studies.

In their writings the Dalit have closely examined the sociocultural religious framework that has limited their horizons and sought the possibility of reforming the way they live. In doing so, they reject the existing religious order. Yet they find it difficult to collectively revolt against the system. As in the case of some African Americans, some Dalits have compromised and given up their past. One reason for the Dalits’ lack of response to issues of history is that education came late to them and, with the exception of Bhim Rao Ambedkar, they have lacked strong leaders. In addition, there were the middle-class Dalits who estranged themselves from their caste and got entangled in the socioreligious complexities and microinterests of the society. However, they still inspired their brothers and sisters to change their ways and also to do something to change the “touchable” Hindu. At the same time, the Dalits gave a wake-up call to the *savarana* Hindus to remove the contradictions in the society or else the sufferers would blow up the structure of their democracy.

The Dalits have not had organized strategies, such as Afrocentricity, to counter their exploitation by others, but they have beguiled others by adopting quasipersonas, however uncomfortable and conscious they themselves have been of the deception. Such personas are transitory and have been adopted by the Dalits only until they are able to live without them. In the Dalits’ writings—especially in their

autobiographies, which are closer to factual reality and are the most revealing modes of expression for underprivileged selves—the movement is from awareness of the false image imposed upon them to rejection of it and, finally, to an affirmation of self. But the writings do not end in any kind of final resolution. The questions remain unanswered. The analysis of their predicament and the system is done very competently, but an alternative vision does not emerge. It is here, in this context, that African American Studies has a great contribution to make. African American autobiographers not only show the movement from the consciousness of their predicament to an analysis of America’s racism but also point a way out of the existing race relations. They point to an alternative to a materialistic civilization that is satisfied with the acquisition of trinkets and trash. African American writers, following Richard Wright, have provided a critique of white society as well as an alternative vision of a new society based on equality and justice.

The role of the black creative writers and the literary scholars who serve as intermediaries is to explain the relationship between black people and those who attempt to subdue them. These writers have discovered that they are treated differently not only because of their skin color but also because of the entire attitude with which white Americans interpret the world. The responsibility of such writers is to not be limited to the racial question and to move beyond such concerns. In doing so, writers have been able to discover the universal significance of blacks’ position. These writers thus are not confined to the limitations of protest literature and can focus on defining the nature of reality and finding appropriate forms for conveying it.

The Dalit writer can learn from the African American experience how to seek and redefine a common culture. The Dalits’ dream of a secular Indian nation that brings communities together and emphasizes unity in diversity comes into conflict with the existing, hierarchical social order in which birth still determines worth. The resolution of this conflict is not in sight and this dream of an alternative order has been temporarily sidelined. This is not to say that the Dalits need to imitate black writings. Some Dalit writings analyze the existing system very competently, and each writer deals with it in her or his own way. Although the stages and process of liberation are the same, the conditions of existence are different, so the experience and its treatment will have to be different. Black literature can provide a platform on

which Dalit writers can test their plan of action for equality, reassess key issues in intellectual history and expressive culture, dissolve boundaries, and write a nontraditional version of literature. The blueprint provided by African American writers for such a change can help the Dalits to triumph over the trivialities that divide their world.

— *Sudhi Rajiv*

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AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND PROJECT

The African Burial Ground Project began in 1991 with the discovery of an African cemetery during the building of the Foley Square Project Federal Building in lower Manhattan in New York. The cemetery was the home of the remains of over 400 Africans. This finding, the largest bioarchaeological site identified in the Americas, immediately raised awareness as well as many questions about the colonial past of Northern states, especially New York, which had more enslaved Africans than had been realized. These questions were able to be answered in the years that followed, as a result of the close study of the remains at Howard University by a team of 70 to 80 researchers operating under the supervision of physical anthropologist Michael Blakey, the scientific director of the African Burial Ground Project.

The researchers combined information yielded by DNA with the study of skulls and historical data to tell the story of those whose skeletons they were examining—for example, their place of birth, age at death, cause of death, and general life conditions. They found that the Africans had come primarily

from Congo, Ghana, and Benin. Their lives in New York had been quite harsh, as they clearly had frequently suffered from severe malnutrition and serious diseases. Children had died in great numbers, and as a whole, the birth rate was lower than the mortality rate.

On October 4, 2003, the excavated remains of the 17th- and 18th-century Africans were reinterred during a ceremony called the Rites of Ancestral Return, at the very site where they had been discovered almost 13 years earlier. The ceremony involved many cities, starting with an evening departure ceremony at Howard University in Washington, D.C., proceeding to Baltimore, Philadelphia, Newark, and finally reaching New York City. Over 3,000 people participated in what was to be, by all accounts, an emotional event, for the excavation and burial of those enslaved Africans brought the horror and evil of slavery to the fore once again, a most sensitive issue for many Africans who feel a special reverence for and gratitude to their ancestors. By the same token, it also raised the issue of the quite significant contributions Africans have made to the economic development of America, thus reinforcing the legitimacy and timeliness of the claim for reparations made by an increasing number of African Americans.

Above all, maybe, the African Burial Ground Project forced American society in general and African Americans in particular to deal with a painful chapter of history, Africans' enslavement in America, a chapter that has often been ignored or distorted, and whose scope and significance have therefore often been belittled. The African Burial Ground Project compelled Africans to revisit their identity, their relationship with the past, and their ancestors who suffered terribly not so long ago. As a result, as the public became aware of the African Burial Ground Project, many became committed and contributed to the proper and dignified handling and burial of the remains of their African ancestors. This was no easy battle in the face of federal indifference, if not resistance, to the right of African people to bury and treat their dead with the respect due them.

— *Ama Mazama*

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AFRICAN COSMOLOGY

A *cosmology* is a body or system of thought arising out of a people's history and culture that addresses issues of reality and creation, truth and value, meaning, process, and that people's place within creation. It can be differentiated from the more general term, *cosmogony*, which is a people's mythohistorical description of the creation of the universe or, put more simply, their creation story. Although indigenous African cosmologies appear to differ according to geography and regional histories, the degree to which they coincide in fundamental principles and function defines them as multiple expressions of a single cultural and cosmological construct.

In the cosmologies of traditional Africa, the physical existence of human beings is a limited but representative (complementary or synchronistic) expression of the cosmic order mandated by the creator of the universe. Human physical existence is the consequence of the actions and determinations of deities and ancestors and is being continually influenced by them. The character and existence of human physical existence are determined and shaped by the greater and parent spiritual reality. Each human being exists because of the ancestral line of which she or he is a part. The ancestral line extends from the creator, the deities, and the clan ancestors. No human being exists apart from that lineage or continuum. Each human being has a personal mission. It is the discovery and actualization of that personal mission that positions the individual to make the maximal contribution to the efforts of the collective. It is the inability or unwillingness of the person to identify with his or her personal mission and apply himself or herself to that mission that compromises the possibility of success in matters of family development and sustained and productive relations or strategic actions in his or her endeavors.

SPIRIT AS THE PARENT REALITY

Spirit is a tremendously complex and stupendously dynamic construct. The ancients understood spirituality as the parent of reality. In the framework of African cosmology, human beings are the union of spirit and physical being within a physical realm of existence. While humanity is confined in large measure to the temporal dimension, human beings continuously engage in conscious and unconscious interactions with the spirit. *Spirit* is the word used to describe the intuitive through supranational connectedness that many people feel with the entirety of creation. In its broadest usage, *spirit* refers to both the totality of existence and the multiplicity of its manifestations.

It is clear from the interviews with and experiences of many adherents of indigenous African cultures and from the work of various researchers that the terminology and understanding of designated elements of the spirit differ and often conflict within the same village. Each of the indigenous cultural systems nonetheless provides for a single creator who is a singularity and a multiplicity simultaneously. The creator has mandated order and balance. The deities or children of the creator are the ministers and emissaries of the creator. As aspects of the creator, they maintain that mandated balance and order. These ministers of the creator are the *Abosom* (Akan), the *Orisha* (Yoruba), the *Neteru* (Kemet), the *Nommo* (Dogon), the *Vodu* (Ewe), to name but a few examples. They are the intermediaries between humanity and the ancestors and creator (*Odumankoma*, *Oyankopon*, *Ngala*, *iNkosi*, *Olodumare*, *Kalunga*). The ancestors are variously referred to as, for example, *Nsamanfo* (Akan), *Egungun* (Yoruba), and *Nkukunkulu* (Zulu). These children of the creator are the first expression of the differentiation or generativity of the creator. In several African cosmogonies, the number 8 has a prominent place in reference to the original number of deities or families of deities.

In African cosmology there are provisions for one or more components of the spirit that issue directly from the creator and are the source of physical life, such as the *Kra* (Akan), *Ka* (Kemet), *Emi* (Yoruba), and *Kla* (Ga). Each cosmology provides for a component of personal destiny that may be acquired in a variety of fashions. Among the Akan it is referred to as the *Nkrabea* or *Hyebea*. Among the Yoruba, it is the *Ipin-Ori*. There are also provisions for the element of character, such as the *Sunsum* of the Akan. The elements of both character and mission are derived

ultimately from the creator. In each system there are concepts of the spiritual double or complement that exists synchronously with the physical. Also in each system, the differentiated components of the spirit are seen first as extensions of *Odumankoma*, *Oludumare*, *Amma*, *iNkosi*, as the creator is variously named, and then as expressions of the *Abosom*, the *Orisha*, the *Neteru*, and other deities. What emerges is a picture of the spirit as an incomprehensibly complex and dynamic reality of which the physical reality is but a small component.

THE FUNCTION OF RITUALS AND MYTHS

Throughout Africa, various traditional societies have employed rituals to facilitate interaction with the spiritual. They have also employed myths to foster an understanding of the spiritual reality as the parent reality that is incapable of being comprehended within the realm of materialist rationality. Thus, spirit represents the lack of name for the reality that is the greater reality. As different names exist for different aspects of all things, different names also exist for different aspects of the spirit because it cannot be described in just one way. Different terminology has therefore been used to describe various components, attributes, and manifestations of the spirit. The *Kra*, *Sunsum*, *Ntoro*, and *Mogya* are different manifestations of the spirit in the Akan people's cosmology as it relates to the human person.

Similar manifestations in the Dogon people's cosmology include the *Gozu*, *Kikin Bummone*, and *Nyama*. For the Bambara people, the *Ni* and the *Dya* are two prominent manifestations of the spirit. The Zulu people call these manifestations the *Isithunzi* and the *Ithongo*. In the cosmology of Kemet, the concepts of *Ka*, *Ba*, *Khaba*, *Akhu*, *Seb*, *Putah*, and *Amu* are manifestations of the spirit in the human being. Parallel conceptions in the Yoruba cosmology include the *Emi*, *Ori*, *Ipin*, and *Enikeji*. Similar conceptions exist among the Manding and throughout West, East, Central, and Southern Africa. These conceptions of the manifestations of the spirit in the makeup of the human being are further compounded in their interactions with other manifestations of the spirit whose terminology and character encompass altogether different dynamics.

Traditional mythology was fashioned to facilitate people's understanding of the operation of the

physical environment. The Dogon, for instance, make abundant references to various seeds and the condition of particular grains. There are also references to other features of their environment, including jackals and caves or burrows. These are prominent features of their physical space; thus it is natural for the Dogon to assume that their spiritual reality parallels their temporal experience. These temporal parallels and reference points facilitate an understanding of the operation of the spirit as it relates to their material and mundane concerns. The conceptions of the cosmos, its beginnings and the place and dynamics of humanity in its relations with the spirit, present a picture not only of abundant diversity but also of true cultural unity. Each cultural system uses scenarios analogous to people's experience in their respective environments to explain the origins and nature of the cosmos or creation. It can be said that this is the multiplicity within the singularity that is the expression of the creator.

Each regional expression mimicks the complexity of the cosmos as the people perceive it. Through a set of rituals as complex as their cosmology, each people has sought to facilitate, enhance, and maintain the connectedness of the material and the spiritual. Part of the seemingly bewildering complexity can be explained through an understanding that the spiritual is so interwoven in the material concerns and functions of the culture that the material and spiritual are indistinguishable. The underlying value and principle of African cosmology is that in it the expressions and manifestations of the creator are infinite, and it is thus not the purview of one person or group of persons to judge the worth or value of those expressions.

— Kwame Agyei Akoto and Akua Nson Akoto

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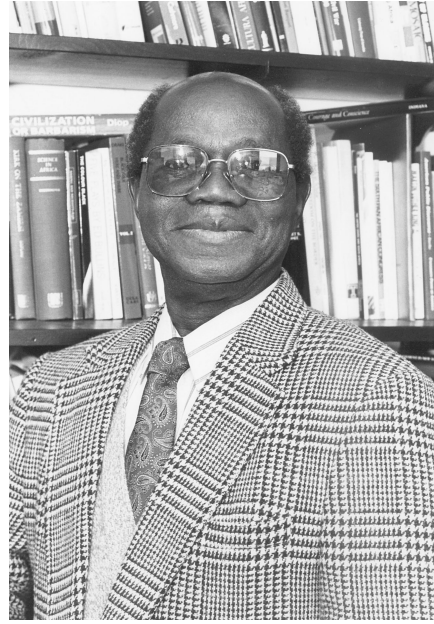
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AFRICAN DANCE IN THE UNITED STATES

African dance in the United States is a movement form that has entered the country at the university level from the continent of Africa since the 1950s. African dance, the oldest form of dance in the world, had its academic beginning in American universities in the mid-20th century as a result of the following distinct circumstances:

1. the rise in African consciousness due to the Négritude movement, African nationalism, and pan-Africanism, as expressed in the 1950s and 1960s by heads of African states such as Kwame Nkrumah, Léopold Sédar Senghor, and Julius Nyerere
2. the development in Africa of government-sponsored cultural and educational institutions for the purpose of disseminating and preserving African culture
3. the desire of African American educators and scholars to advance the scholarship in African and African American Studies beyond European paradigms, which meant that they sought to extend the understanding of African cultural traits and values to all of the Americas and the Caribbean
4. the civil rights movement of the 1960s, when emergent voices on university campuses were calling for and insisting upon coursework and disciplines that acknowledged the need for valid scholarship not predicated on colonialist models
5. the launching of cultural initiatives such as touring national dance companies that had an impact on the American panorama from Broadway to the university campuses.

Given the environment created by these circumstances, there was a new awareness around African dance that made it possible for innovative dance



Dr. J. Kwabena Nketia, philosopher of music

companies to appear. Alvin Ailey was the representative of the United States to the first international African festival of arts in Dakar, Senegal in 1965. Subsequently, Ailey's dance company toured the African continent, dancing from Ghana to Ethiopia. However, two professors—Albert Mawere Opoku and Kwabena Nketia of the University of Ghana, Legon—had the greatest impact on the transfer of African dance ideas to the United States. They were the chief promoters of West African dance in the United States. Both Opoku and Nketia worked in universities in America before retiring in Ghana in the 1980s. It was the relationship between them that brought new dances, royal court music, and new African American adherents into the realm of African dance. Subsequently, there were many African masters, such as Olatunji, who came to the United States from Nigeria to teach African dance.

In the African context, dance is always performed to music, so when we speak of African dance it must be understood to include music. African dance has become a feature in many university, civic, and private events, such as homecoming parades and celebrations; convocations and special ceremonies; banquets, arts openings, weddings, birthdays, and fashion shows; opening for featured artists; Black History Month events; Kwanzaa celebrations; Juneteenth Day celebrations; African American arts festivals; liturgical dance dialogue groups and forums; as well as in

interactions with the Hispanic community, including Santería, Lukumi, and Palos Montes celebrations.

Actually, most American colleges and universities have neither Black Studies nor African dance as a part of the curriculum. It is rare to find a department of Black Studies in which dance is a major component. Yet it is clear that African dance is a major art form in the African world. African dance is also connected to the presence in the United States of Gamelan orchestras, Caribbean clubs, drum circles, and pow-wows. This is not to say that African dance and music set this precedent but to suggest a simultaneous cultural and academic awakening of international involvement on several American college campuses (e.g., State University of New York College at Brockport, Ohio State University, California Arts, Temple University, and the University of California, Los Angeles).

Three great African dance companies, Les Ballets Africains of Guinea, National Ballet of Senegal, and The National Dance Ensemble of Ghana, have consistently brought amazing entertainment, drama, movement, and spectacle to world audiences. Traditional and classical African dance has been studied in the Americas by Henry Drewal, Kariamü Welsh-Asante, John Mason, and Robert Ferris Thompson in the United States and by Juanita Elbine Dos Santos in Brazil, as well as by hundreds of other scholar-choreographers.

— Clyde Alafiju Morgan

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AFRICAN DEMOGRAPHICS

To date, most research that has been done on human descent points to evidence that all humans originated in Africa. Thus Africa has a long history, over the course of which it has undergone numerous experiences that have affected its demographic size, composition, and distribution. Around the turn of the millennium, it was estimated that Africa is home to almost 900 million people, which is about 14% of the world's population. About one third of this population lives in urban centers, which are typically communities of 2,000 to 10,000 inhabitants. This is a recent phenomenon, however; for most of history, the African population has lived a rural lifestyle and depended on agriculture and hunting for survival.

Although human beings have lived in Africa for thousands of years, little information is available on the actual number of inhabitants for most of Africa's history. It is estimated that around the beginning of the 16th century, sub-Saharan Africa had 20% of the world's 600 million people at that time. However, European and Arab infiltration of the African continent was quite ruinous for Africans because of the diseases, violence, and slavery that accompanied it. It is estimated that the European slave trade alone led to an enormous forced movement of between 15 and 50 million Africans to the Western Hemisphere between the mid-1400s and the mid-1800s. Given the number of Africans presently in the Americas and the Caribbean, some scholars believe that the number of Africans taken from the African continent is considerably higher than 15 million. However, despite these circumstances and epidemics that have plagued the continent, the population in Africa continues to grow at a rate of 2.4%, one of the highest population growth rates in the world.

Population change results from the interaction of three variables: birth, death, and migration. A society's population can increase through natural increase, when more births than deaths occur in a

given period of time, or through net migration, when more people move into the geographical area than move out in a given period of time. At the regional level, most population change in Africa is due to natural increase, in the sense that more people are born than die in any given year. The current total fertility rate for Africa is 5.2. That is, on average, a woman living in Africa would have more than five children if she were to go through her reproductive lifetime bearing children at the current rate of women in the various age groups. This means that women in Africa on average bear two or more children than women in other parts of the world, in which total fertility rates are lower than 3. But the average age at death for people in Africa is younger than that of people in most other parts of the world by about 10 years. There are significant differences within the continent on most of these indicators, however.

Although migration plays a limited role in changing the size of the African population at the regional level, it does greatly influence the composition of various societies on the continent. Seasonal migrant labor to mines, long-distance trading, truck driving, and serving in the military are some of the occupational factors that lead to migration in the region. Generally, such occupations are filled with young men ages 20 to 35, who often establish semipermanent homes and new relationships in the places of work but also maintain regular contact with their spouses in the country. Consequently, spatial mobility is one of the major factors contributing to the spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Africa. Civil strife also frequently leads to massive movements of refugees within the continent.

There normally are a number of other socioeconomic factors that influence changes in each of the three major demographic variables under discussion. For instance, although the biological ability of women to bear children is similar across most population groups, the actual number of children born varies significantly from one social setting to another. This is mainly due to differences in the social factors that influence the opportunities and motivations for childbearing in the various African societies. Some of the reasons noted to affect fertility in Africa are low access to contraceptive services, the desire to have many children as old-age security, the poor education and low status of women, early age at marriage, a preference for sons over daughters, and high infant and child mortality rates.

Demographers have described the phenomenon of countries and regions moving from a state of high birth and death rates to a state of low birth and death rates as a *demographic transition*. This process tends to occur in three stages. In the first stage, birth and death rates are high and, as a result, little population growth occurs. In the second stage, death rates fall due to improved living conditions, while birth rates remain high. During this period, population grows rapidly as more people are born and fewer die. The third stage of the transition is reached when fertility falls and closes the gap between birth and death rates, resulting again in a slower pace of population growth. This pattern has been observed in a number of European societies, many of which are now in the third stage of the transition. In most parts of Africa, birth and death rates remained high until after World War II. When death rates began to fall in Africa, they fell more rapidly than they had in Europe, primarily through the introduction of medical and public health technology to control infectious diseases rather than from economic development within the African countries. In addition, because of better health, birth rates in Africa increased and the population continued to grow at a high rate. In the past 30 years, birth rates have fallen but death rates have fallen even faster, hence leading to continued population growth on the continent.

Aside from the total size of a population and the three demographic variables of birth, death, and migration, another important demographic characteristic of any society is its *age and sex structure*, or the proportion of people at each age, by sex. A population's age-sex structure determines its potential for future growth as well as the patterns of growth among age groups. Generally, a population with 35% of its people under the age of 15 is considered young, and this offers some indication of the likely burden that these people will place on various resources as they grow older. In addition, a large population of young women produces a substantial number of births, which influences future population growth. Recent data indicate that more than 40% of the African population is under the age of 15.

Rapid population growth is linked to many social problems, including hunger, high infant mortality, inadequate social and health services, and a poor infrastructure, including such services as transportation and communication. Population growth does not necessarily cause these problems, but there is

evidence that rapid population growth could make it more difficult to ease social problems such as those listed above, primarily because of the pressure that increasing numbers of people put on the economy and infrastructure of already resource-stricken societies. With one of the most rapidly growing populations in the world, Africa ranks below almost all world regions on several social, economic, and health indicators, such as maternal and child mortality rates, crude death rate, life expectancy, immunization rates, and average personal income.

Many countries in Africa are also now facing a crisis caused by the HIV/AIDS epidemic, which is undermining the development and human resources of the region at an alarming rate. Research and projections have shown that in some countries, the epidemic has or will slow developmental growth and reduce life expectancy at birth by more than 10 years. Since the bubonic plague in the 14th century that killed an estimated 35 million people, mostly in Europe, no other epidemic has had such a strong impact on human population as the HIV/AIDS epidemic. According to the United Nations, it has been estimated that in 2001, of the world's 40 million people living with HIV/AIDS, 29 million were living in Africa. Yet, these numbers only partially depict the magnitude of the epidemic that since the late 1980s has claimed more than 3 million people and orphaned millions of children, mainly in Africa. It is estimated that about 9% of adults between 15 and 49 years of age in Africa are currently infected with HIV. The range in prevalence varies greatly, however, from 2% to 30%, with some southern African countries being the most affected. South Africa is the country with the largest number of HIV-infected persons, at 5.0 million.

It is not possible to tell exactly what the future size of Africa's population will be. However, given past trends and existing circumstances in regard to the components of population—birth, death, and migration—some estimates can be made. If the population in Africa were to continue to grow annually at the current estimated rate of 2.4%, the population would double in just 28 years. However, there is evidence that contraceptive use is increasing in most parts of Africa. Also, other social and cultural changes that influence a change in fertility—such as increased age at marriage and increased education of females—are taking place. Birth rates are falling in many nations, such that the rate at which the population grows will decline. Yet, this decline in population growth will

likely be slow. Given the number of young people in the region, there is already an inbuilt momentum that will lead to continued population growth in Africa, even in the wake of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, for the coming 30 years.

— Robert Ssengonzi

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AFRICAN EPISTEMOLOGY

African epistemology is the African theory of knowledge, which includes the African conception of the nature of knowledge, the means used to gain knowledge, the criteria for the assessment of the validity of knowledge, the purpose of the pursuit of knowledge, and the role that knowledge plays in human existence. The adjective *African* applied to a people implies that that people, given the specificity of their location in the world and their experience in human history, have as African people a specific way of understanding and explaining the world and the complexity of the human condition. At the same time, given that Africans are members of the unique human family of *Homo sapiens*, African epistemology naturally exhibits similarities with and differences from epistemologies developed by people living in other parts of the world. In Africa, as elsewhere, the philosophizing process begins with an epistemological quest, that is, the quest for a solid foundation of human knowledge. This epistemology or theory of knowledge deals with ways of knowing and criteria for the evaluation of the validity of knowledge. In so doing, it raises the fundamental questions of how and why knowledge is created.

Confronted with the thorniest questions about human destiny in the midst of a mysterious universe, Africans

have developed since time immemorial a complex epistemology that enabled them to find satisfactory answers to the numerous questions pertaining to the human condition. Their creation myths articulated an answer to the enigma of the origin of humankind and the meaning of life in this world and the hereafter.

Thus the first questions to be addressed are how Africans articulate and evaluate knowledge and what constitute the specific characteristics of Africans' cognitive modes and their general conception of the nature and role of knowledge in human existence. The African approach to knowledge can be grasped from the wisdom of oral tradition, especially the various creation myths, folktales, and proverbs; the way of seeking truth in social, political, and religious institutions; the work of healers; the avenues for finding guilty parties in traditional justice systems; and the ways of solving family disputes and other social conflicts. However, the earliest written documents that give us a hint about African epistemology are from Kemet, especially in the definition of the philosopher from the Antef inscription (12th Dynasty, 2000–1768 B.C.E.), the Instruction of Ptahhotep (25th century B.C.E.), the Instruction of Nebmare-Nakt (Papyrus Lansing, 12th century B.C.E.), the anonymous Instruction recorded on papyrus by Chester Beatty IV (12th century B.C.E.), and the ethical teaching of Amenemope. These texts articulate the fundamental African path to knowledge that is also expressed in Zera Yacob's *Hatata*, the current Bwino epistemology of Bantu philosophy, and the Ofamfa-Matemasie epistemology of the Akan, to name but a few examples.

But what exactly is this African theory of knowledge? How do Africans access and process knowledge? Why do Africans conduct this quest for knowledge? By which means do people gain knowledge, and how are people expected to use knowledge? As these questions indicate, African epistemology deals with the faculties by which people gain knowledge, and the debate over the credibility of such means. Hence, it addresses the critical issue of truth. How can people be sure that they know the truth and that they can adequately express it in their languages?

Africans' unique history of enslavement, colonialism, neocolonialism, and racism has created an African epistemology with a specific focus on the relationship between knowledge and political and economic power. In a world where for centuries Africans have been studied and defined by their colonial or slave masters, African epistemology has come

to challenge this invention of Africa by deconstructing knowledge about African people built especially by anthropologists and other social scientists. In other words, the critique of Western and Westernized epistemologies constitutes an important part of African epistemology. Moreover, in the postcolonial era world, where the limitations of the dominant Western concepts, theories, and paradigms have become obvious, it is imperative, especially with the development of Black Studies in the United States, to decolonize knowledge by exploring different ways of knowing. Naturally, Africans have turned toward their ancestral intellectual heritage to articulate the new vision of African epistemology. In the United States, Afrocentricity emerged in the 1980s as the most influential epistemological paradigm inspired by the African tradition.

AFRICAN WAYS OF KNOWING AND COGNITIVE FACULTIES

For the sake of clarity, it may be argued that African epistemology comprises four basic African ways of knowing that can be separated into three categories, the supernatural, the natural, and the paranormal paths to knowledge. First, there is a supernatural path of knowledge in which human beings gain knowledge through the help of supernatural powers. This cognitive mode includes divination (*lubuko*, in the Kiluba language of the Congo) and revelation (i.e., messages revealed in dreams and visions). These two cognitive modes are characterized by the intervention of supernatural beings—spirits, ancestors, dead relatives, gods, goddesses—who impart knowledge to humans directly through a dream or vision or indirectly through mediums, diviners, animals, extraordinary life events, or natural phenomena that require a special kind of interpretation.

Another epistemological path is that of natural cognitive modes. In this way of knowing, human beings gain knowledge by using their natural faculties or abilities, including intuition (*mucima* in Kiluba), which consists of the work of the human heart (i.e., feeling and insight), and reason, which consists of a natural investigation of reality through the human intellect and logical thought process. Given that in Africa, intuition and reason are not mutually exclusive, the phrase *African rationality* has its peculiarity. Between these two poles of African epistemology, the natural and supernatural ways of knowing, stands a

third category of paranormal cognition or extrasensory perception (ESP), which includes such modes as clairvoyance and telepathy. The focus here is limited to divination and African rationality, which play a crucial role in African people's everyday life.

Divination

Because of the nature of its success, divination plays a crucial role in African life as a trusted means of decision making and a basic source of vital knowledge. It also plays a role in the enactment and validation of legal and political decisions in various parts of Africa. Intellectuals and peasants, politicians and technicians, professors and students, even Christians and Muslims, consult the diviner, especially when they face critical existential problems and have to make tough decisions. Long regarded as primitive hocus-pocus, divination has come to be acknowledged by more careful scholarship as an important cognitive mode not only in Africa but also elsewhere in the world, including in the intellectual heritage of the West. Through a healthy decolonization of knowledge, postcolonial scholarship has shown that divination is not an irrational practice by some charlatan or obtuse superstitious mystifiers, but rather, a powerful epistemological approach by men and women of exceptional wisdom and high personal character.

Divination stands at the core of African epistemology as a valid cognitive mode. It exemplifies well the way African epistemology integrates scientific and religious knowledge, natural cognitive faculties and supernatural powers. Divination emerges as a dynamic, complex, and sophisticated cognitive method that skillfully combines logical-analytical and intuitive-synthetical modes of thinking that in Western tradition are rigidly separated. Moreover, divination is not solely a belief grounded in religious revelation. What appears to the uninitiated as mere superstitious paraphernalia hides the diviner's profound knowledge, which is obtained through difficult techniques and a long and hard training of intellect and character. Divination is not mere faith. It is a learned discipline based on an extensive body of knowledge, which involves at once natural and supernatural phenomena, the material and immaterial, and visible and invisible dimensions of reality. As such, divination constitutes an important component of African epistemology.

African Rationality

The concept of African rationality has been distorted, obscured, and discarded by centuries of epistemic violence produced by colonial and neocolonial scholarship. In countless scholarly works shaped by Darwinian evolutionism, Hegel's philosophy of world history, and Lévy-Bruhl's grand dichotomy, the African mind has been defined in binary terms as the opposite not only of the Western mind but also of the mind of the rest of humankind. According to these philosophies, the African mind is irrational, emotional, and superstitious, and by nature antithetical to philosophical and scientific rationality. However, as postcolonial scholarship, especially the Afrocentric paradigm in the United States, has shown, African epistemology is far from the hocus-pocus of witch doctors promoted by outside scholars during the last 5 centuries.

For thousands of years Africans have domesticated cattle, developed agriculture, created astronomical calendars, mastered medicinal plants, educated their children, and survived various mortal dangers because they gained an efficient knowledge that opened the secrets of nature and unlocked the enigma of human existence. The science and architecture of Egypt, astronomy of the Dogon, architecture of Zimbabwe, art of Benin, and many other religious, philosophical, and scientific achievements still visible today bear witness to Africans' passion for genuine knowledge.

African languages indicate that Africans have used the power of reason to carefully analyze nature and the human condition in the world. The Shona language, for instance, has more than 200 different words to describe the action of walking. The adjective *big* is rendered by 183 words in the Nupe language and 311 words in Hausa. Many languages have 10 or 20 words to describe an object according to changes in its form, weight, volume, or color, and as many words to characterize an action depending on whether it is single or multiple, weak or strong, beginning or ending.

This African epistemology is based on careful observation of natural phenomena, an analytical assessment of the understanding of the phenomena, and a logical explanation of reality, and it is well articulated in the *Ofamfa-Matemasie* epistemology expressed in the Adinkra symbols of Ghana, *Ofamfa* and *Matemasie*. The Adinkra symbol *Ofamfa*, which is also called *Pempan Hwemu Dua*, literally means "search rod" or "measuring rod" and is the symbol for

critical examination and excellence. It defines the African concept of critical thinking. *Matemasie* is the symbol of wisdom and insight. It adds an ethical dimension to the epistemology by establishing the connection of knowledge and goodness, harmony, and balance. Thus the purpose of knowledge is to ensure a good life for oneself and the community.

This notion of critical thinking expressed by the *Ofamfa* symbol also is articulated in the *Hatata* epistemology of the Ethiopian philosopher Zera Yacob (1592–1685), a contemporary of René Descartes. Zera began his journey toward knowledge by identifying the obstacles that hinder the effort to know the truth. Zera observed that because the knowing process is a difficult labor, people “shy from any critical examination” and “hastily accept what they have heard from their fathers.” Thus Zera adopted criticism as the initial step toward knowledge and included other steps such as analysis (*Hatata* in Kiluba), inquiry, and the light of reason and the goodness of the created things as the basis of the cognitive method. The Baluba tradition in the Congo agrees with this *Hatata* epistemology.

The *Bwino* epistemology of the Baluba is grounded in the proverb *Mwana wihangula ye unvwâ*, meaning “the child who raises questions is the one who will gain knowledge,” which stipulates the centrality of the question in the path toward knowledge. For the Bantu, knowledge does not stem from a blind repetition of ancestral ways. The Baluba state that in order to know, one has to begin with the “art of unknowing,” being carefully aware that everything that shines may not be a “genuine knowledge” (*Bwino ke bwino*). This means that knowledge is not knowledge until it is critically examined and its validity enshrined. It is precisely this power of critical thinking that has made African tradition so dynamic, vibrant, and flexible, constantly adapting to new challenges. The very survival of African people throughout history is due to this kind of epistemology, which allowed people to assess the meaning of new realities in the light of old canons and to assess ancestral wisdom and customs in the light of new circumstances and wisdom.

It should be emphasized here that the specificity of African rationality is to be found in the concept of the thinking heart. In most Bantu languages, the word *heart* (*Mucima* in Kiluba, for example) also stands for thought. A *Muntu wa mucima muyampe* is not only a person with a good heart in the sense of being kind, compassionate, and generous but also a person of good

thought. The African thinks not only with the head but also with the heart. This means that African people reject the cold Cartesian dualistic logic. African reason dialogues with intuition and other cognitive faculties. Moreover, this relationship between head and heart introduces a human factor into African epistemology. Knowledge has to be humane. Such is the fundamental characteristic of African epistemology.

THE MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF AFRICAN EPISTEMOLOGY

Every epistemology is shaped by its theorists' conception of the object of study. African ontology involves the interconnectedness of all reality, thus African epistemology is grounded in a holistic vision. African epistemology has eight major characteristics: (1) the principle of intellectual humility and non-dogmatism; (2) cosmotheandricity (i.e., the interconnectedness of the human realm with the cosmic and the spiritual worlds); (3) an ethical dimension with a focus on wisdom; (4) rejection of the notions of “knowledge for knowledge's sake” and “art for art's sake”; (5) a holistic perspective focused on the interconnectedness and balance of reality; (6) rejection of the compartmentalization of knowledge, an integration of various disciplines, and a rejection of the opposition of reason and other cognitive faculties; (7) rejection of the opposition of the sacred and the profane, religion and science, knowledge and faith; (8) rejection of the opposition of the individual and the community as cognitive agent.

These characteristics of African epistemology are well exemplified by, among others, the *Bwino* epistemology of the Bantu people of Central Africa and the *Ofamfa-Matemasie* epistemology of the Akans. The *Bwino* epistemology is defined by the Luba proverb, *Bwino bonso ke bwino, bwino I kwikala biya ne Bantu*, “knowledge is not knowledge, true knowledge is to know how to live in harmony with our fellow human beings.” The fundamental point made by this proverb is that, in African epistemology, genuine knowledge is not divorced from wisdom. Indeed, for the Baluba, the superior level of knowledge is the *Bwino*, that is, “knowledge-wisdom.” This type of knowledge can be generated only by a person who has *mucima muyampe*, “good or pure heart.” Goodness of heart produces knowledge-wisdom, which in turn enables the character development of the knower. Thus, harmonious and peaceful coexistence with all

human beings (*Bantu*) and all things (*Bintu*) stands as the fundamental characteristic and criterion of the credibility of knowledge. In this African scheme of things, epistemology (*Bwino*) and ontology (*Bumuntu*) are inseparable. To know is to foster the victory of goodness over bad character; it is to foster human flourishing and respect for nature. This is possible only through an act of modesty.

Thus, the African journey to knowledge begins with an epistemological humility, which is the fundamental belief in the inability of a single individual to know the whole truth. As an Akan proverb puts it, “wisdom is like a baobab tree, a single person’s hand cannot embrace it.” More explicitly, an Akan proverb, *Nyansa nni onipa baako ti mu*, states that “wisdom is not in the head of one person.” This same attitude is found in Kemet, where the definition of the philosopher, the Antef Inscription, recalled that the philosopher is not a philosopher merely because he is clear-sighted, but also because he constantly seeks advice from others. More specifically, Ptahhotep taught in the 25th century B.C.E. that the sage must consult not only the wise but also the ignorant and the maids at the grindstones, for no one reaches the limits of every art and no one should be proud of his or her knowledge. This profession of ignorance that is the beginning of wisdom stems from the acknowledgement of the immensity of the cosmos and the limitations of the human mind.

As Birago Diop’s classical poem “Souffles” captures well, the essence of African ontology, the African view of reality, is cosmotheandric—it expresses the interconnectedness of the human and spiritual worlds. To paraphrase the 16th-century Abyssinian philosopher Walda Heywat, the idea is that the distortion of any part automatically affects the other parts of the whole since the whole universe is interconnected. Likewise, the Yoruba Ifa divination is based on the assumption that human beings are part of the cosmic body, which includes every life form and energy in the universe, the balance and harmony of which is indispensable for the health and happiness of every human being. This is why African epistemology rejects the opposition of the sacred and the profane, as well as the related opposition of spiritual and empirical methods in the acquisition of knowledge. For Africans, there is no duality of matter and spirit or of faith and knowledge, and no opposition of science and religion. This is well illustrated by the African healer, who always combines various cognitive modes to achieve a successful result.

The healer uses intellect in the selection of adequate medicinal plants and in the diagnosis of disease. In addition, the healer relies on divination, intuitive psychological skills, and a religious worldview that considers disease the result of a combination of factors, including unbalanced ethical conduct and broken relationships with nature, the ancestors, spirits, and fellow human beings. African epistemology is grounded in the fundamental belief that reality is one, that is, everything is interconnected in a web of relationships. There is a fundamental connection between the male and female, the living and dead, the visible and invisible realms, the spiritual and material spheres, the human and divine realms, humanity and the natural world, and so on. In this worldview, to understand or to know is to grasp the interconnectedness of all things.

Thus African epistemology rejects all forms of dualism, with the primary dualism being that of the subject and object of study. Rather than separating themselves from the object of study, Africans communicate with what they wish to know. The African becomes tree with the tree, rock with rock, water with water, and wind with wind. It is a major article of African epistemological faith that compartmentalization of knowledge and methods generates intellectual schizophrenia and obscurity—albeit *docta ignorantia*. Africans believe that such compartmentalization generates partial and disconnected knowledge rather than sound knowledge. Thus they hold that the best way to know is to use a variety of tools or human faculties and a variety of methods. Interdisciplinarity or epistemological dialogue stands at the core of the African holistic approach.

In African societies, the sage is not a person of one wisdom or one knowledge. The sage is sage precisely because of his or her ability to be a psychologist, a teacher, a spiritual master, an artist, an architect, a thinker, and a good practitioner at the same time. The wise person is a whole person because of his or her holistic knowledge and holistic approach to knowledge. The ontological and cosmological dimensions of African knowledge imply also that knowledge is not a mere language game or a pure dialectical entertainment. Knowledge is active. Indeed, it is action! Because knowledge has an impact on the knower and on reality around the knower, all knowledge is potentially dangerous and needs to be handled with extreme care and precaution. Hence, African epistemology involves an ethical requirement. The pursuit

of knowledge is inseparable from the pursuit of wisdom, for in the African understanding of things, a genuine knowledge necessarily involves wisdom. The unwise knower is referred to as a witch.

For Africans, the focus is on not knowledge for knowledge's sake but knowledge for humanity's sake. The purpose of knowledge is to enhance human flourishing and preserve and promote all other forms of life in the universe. This is why initiation is fundamental. It is critical to train human character so that people can handle knowledge for the benefit of humankind. In the African worldview, knowledge is not merely a right. With knowledge comes responsibility. The one who knows more has more responsibility to care for others and for the world. Knowledge, in African epistemology, is the path to becoming fully human and humane. It is a *sine qua non* of *Bumuntu*, "authentic personhood." A person without knowledge-wisdom is referred to as *Mufu unanga*, "dead man walking." The act of knowing is a process of becoming humane. Where knowledge leads to violence, oppression, and destruction, Africans speak of *Butchi*, "witchcraft," rather than *Bwino*, "knowledge-wisdom."

— *Mutombo Nkulu-N'Sengha*

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AFRICAN ETHNIC GROUPS

The continent of Africa contains nearly 2,000 ethnic groups. This is the largest number of diverse ethnic groups of any continent. Many of the ethnic groups of Africa are larger than European nations. For example, the Hausa population of Northern Nigeria is larger than the population of the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, Portugal, or Norway.

Each ethnic group traces its origin to a single female or male ancestor. Some groups are related to others through lineage. The Akan group of Ghana and the Ivory Coast, for instance, is connected to seven founding sisters. Each group of Akan has the same set of *abusua* as all the others. Some African people trace their ancestry to only one ancestor. For example, an ethnic group such as the Ijaw of Nigeria traces its ancestry to Woyengi, a female deity.

Of the hundreds of ethnic groups on the African continent, less than 20 can be considered major groups in terms of population. Thus, the Yoruba, Ibo, Hausa, Wolof, Mandinka, Congo, Chokwe, Akan, Kikuyu, Hutu, Oromo, Zulu, Xhosa, and Shona are among the ethnic groups that are considered significant in their countries. In some modern states, how these groups are treated and how they treat others determines the fate of national politics.

A major source of internal political conflict in Africa has been the rivalry between ethnic groups, such as the war between the Hutu and Tutsi in East Africa. The Hutu and Tutsi populations share the same language and the same ancestors, but they have had devastating wars. One reason for the animosity might be that the colonial era European powers, mainly the Germans and the French, created distinctions between groups of East Africans in order to have a buffer population devoted to the colonial masters.

African ethnic groups are no different from ethnic groups on other continents in their relatedness to ancestry. Just as there are Irish, Scottish, Welsh, and English ethnic groups in the United Kingdom, there are various ethnic groups in African countries. These groups must never be referred to as *tribes*, as this is a pejorative term related to a notion of Africans as uncivilized, primitive, and backward. African ethnic groups represent culture, customs, and traditions.

— *Molefi Kete Asante*

FURTHER READING

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AFRICAN LIBERATION DAY

On April 15, 1958, in the city of Accra, Ghana, African leaders and political activists gathered at the first pan-African conference held in Africa. This conference, under the auspices of Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah, was attended by representatives of the governments of Liberia, Morocco, Libya, Sudan, Tunisia, Ethiopia, Ghana, and the United Arab Republic, as well as by representatives of the National Liberation Front of Algeria and the Union of the Cameroonian Peoples. In celebration of the first collective presence and call for action of this nature on African soil, April 15 was celebrated as African Freedom Day for 5 years. Then, on May 25, 1963, the leaders of 32 independent African states met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and at this historic and significant meeting, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), currently known as the African Union, was formed and chartered, and the independence of two-thirds of the continent from colonial rule was celebrated. Since that meeting, May 25 has been celebrated everywhere as African Liberation Day (ALD).

The idea of African Liberation Day was initially born to combat colonialism and the oppression of African people, and its meaning has since broadened to embrace the fight against all of the injustices imposed on people of African descent throughout the world. The spirit of this day is to promote awareness and encourage organization worldwide to fight against inherently racist foreign and domestic policies and socioeconomic conditions facing people of African descent.

African Liberation Day was born to honor the legacy and continue the struggle of the ancestors, celebrate annually the initial plight of the founders

of the day, continue the progress of the liberation movement, and symbolize the determination of the people of Africa to free themselves from foreign domination, exploitation, and all forms of oppression resulting from colonization and white supremacy. African Liberation Day was influential in the defeat of colonialism and apartheid in South Africa and has helped to expose imperialism imposed by the United States. Currently the supporters and coordinators of the commemoration of African Liberation Day fight against dictatorial and corrupt governments, ethnic cleansing, AIDS, exploitation, and various forms of subjugation imposed on people of African descent.

— Deborah LaNier

FURTHER READING

- Hakata, Michelle. (2001). African Liberation Day Marked in Style. *New African*, 398(18), 12–17. This article celebrates the 43rd commemoration of African Liberation Day, in which the keynote speaker Vivene Younger, a member of the central committee of the All Africa People's Revolutionary Party (AAPRP), addressed the continuing political struggles of Africans throughout the world. *New African* follows selected commemorations of ALD annually.
- www.blacknet.com.uk/aapprp BlackNet.com This Web site provides historical information on the origins of African Liberation Day and highlights the main objectives of the movement.
- www.thetalkingdrum.com This Web site is a resource for obtaining historical information surrounding the founding of African Liberation Day. It also contains updates on the current political debates and issues for people of African descent and information on the key leaders and freedom fighters who have contributed to African struggle for liberation.

AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY

The Google search engine indicates a strong African presence in the world of philosophy. Indeed, while there is no category for white philosophy in cyberspace, statistics from February of 2004 indicate 3,050,000 hits for black philosophy, 1,620,000 hits for African philosophy, and 1,220,000 hits for African American philosophy. African philosophy received many more hits than Indian philosophy (1,340,000), Japanese philosophy (1,320,000), Jewish philosophy (1,300,000), Arab philosophy (367,000), Islamic philosophy (644,000), and Spanish philosophy (6,180). African philosophy comes closest in number

of hits received to Chinese philosophy (1,650,000) and Greek philosophy (1,770,000). Although the presence of African philosophy in cyberspace comes after that of major European traditions, the presence of black philosophy surpasses that of British philosophy (2,090,000) and German philosophy (2,610,000) and is equal to the presence of French philosophy (3,050,000). The presence of American philosophy, with 5,130,000 hits, reigns supreme in cyberspace.

Although merely indicative, this presence of philosophical literature in cyberspace points in its own limited way to the presence and influence of African philosophy in today's world. Nowadays, African philosophy is part of the regular curriculum in philosophy departments in Africa and around the world. And yet, just three decades ago, the very notion of the existence of African philosophy was controversial, and many in philosophy departments believed that the rational enterprise of philosophy was incompatible with African cultures, if not antithetical to the structure of the African mind itself. Furthermore, in some corners of the world community, some philosophers remain skeptical and suspicious of African rationality, despite the presence of numerous books, journals, and associations of African philosophy. Considerations of African history, especially of the slave trade and colonialism, have since 1945 put the following questions at the center of the debate about African philosophy: What is African philosophy? Who qualifies as an African philosopher? What makes specific African thought philosophical? What makes a philosophy African? However, the history of African philosophy and its object of study are broader and deeper than this preoccupation with relatively recent African history suggests.

The notion of African philosophy refers simply to the African love for wisdom, that relentless passion of the African mind to know and to know the truth about human existence and the world. African philosophy is indeed a careful examination of life and of living beings. As such, it involves a rational meditation on love, suffering, mortality, and immortality. It is a reflection on ways of living a good life and a constant questioning of the credibility of institutions created for the purpose of achieving such a good life. It proceeds by way of a methodic, systematic analysis of knowledge and known phenomena, a study of the fundamental questions of human existence, articulated in an explicit, critical, autocritical, and systematic discourse that is sometimes symbolic and proverbial but very often discursive.

What is meant by African philosophy, then, is the specific African way of understanding and explaining the world and the drama of the human condition. It is the systematic effort of the African mind to understand the world as a meaningful cosmos and to understand the place and role of human beings and other creatures in the universe. It is thus a rigorous pursuit of truth and a rational search for the meaning of human existence. African philosophy is at once an activity of the mind, a way of expression, and a way of life based on genuine knowledge and wisdom. Indeed, it is a way of thinking, speaking, being, and living wisely. Such an enterprise entails the use of critical thinking not to achieve skepticism and cynicism but to enhance human flourishing. Since time immemorial, Africa has praised wisdom over age and titles and maintained that the unexamined life is not worth living. Thus the Baluba, like many other African people, established a clear distinction between *kunena* ("to speak eloquently and wisely") and *kunenakanya* ("to speak incoherently and unwisely") and between *kulanga* ("to think well") and *kulangakanya* ("to think with confusion or to have evil thought"). In fact, the person with a lack of knowledge and unwise conduct was regarded in traditional Africa as *kivila*, *kidingidingi*, that is, an "empty well" or a worthless being. Thus according to African philosophy, the goal of life is to become humane by pursuing wisdom.

Throughout the ages, African philosophy has been expressed orally and in written texts, in both African and foreign languages, notably in Latin, Arabic, French, English, German, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish. Over the last 5,000 years, African philosophy has trodden many paths, constantly adapting its method and language to the evolution of its object of inquiry, which constantly changes according to ecological, economic, political, and cultural circumstances.

In ancient times, African societies produced their own philosophers, the sages who articulated their thought in creation myths, proverbs, sapiential folktales, and the ethical vision that governed political, religious, and other social institutions. At that time, people philosophized entirely in African languages. It was a philosophy of Africans, by Africans, and for Africans. It produced African cosmologies such as those of the Yoruba and the Dogon, a vision of human nature, and a theory of human dignity and human rights; it also produced ethical norms and the wisdom of a good life. African investiture speeches embodied an entire political philosophy, the African vision of the

meaning and aim of political power, the distinction between a bad ruler (like Kilopwe) and a sage king (like Mulopwe), the centrality of the welfare of the people in the art of government. In addition, ancient philosophers meditated on metaphysical questions regarding the spiritual world, immortality, and the afterlife.

AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY IN THE WESTERN MIND

In modern times, however, colonialism and enslavement introduced a rupture with the past, a rupture so deep that the very notion of the existence of an African philosophy was put into question. The new schools created by the colonial masters and slaveholders in the 19th and 20th centuries aim to destroy African historical consciousness. Both in Africa and in the Americas, Africans and those descended from Africans were taught to regard their past as aphistorical, irrational, and worthless. Since the tragic encounter between Africa and Europe in the 15th century, almost all the prominent Western philosophers vigorously denied Africans' ability to think properly. Following in the footsteps of renowned Western philosophers—Hume, Montesquieu, and Voltaire—Kant, who is celebrated as a paragon of critical thinking, denied philosophy to Africans on somatic grounds. Despite the presence of Amo Afer, an African professor of philosophy, in Germany during his own time, Kant wrote of the African man that he “was black from head to toe, a clear proof that what he said was stupid.”

After Kant, Hegel, in his *Philosophy of World History* (1827), proclaimed ex cathedra that Africans were not only outside the kingdom of reason but also outside history and outside humanity itself. After Hegel, Lévy-Bruhl, applying Darwin's theory of evolution to the human mind, declared the African mind “prelogic” and radically antithetic to the Western mind. This epistemic violence, which served as the rationalization of the necessity of colonialism, soon provoked a reaction that led to the rise of African contemporary philosophy. Initiated as a literary movement by Africans and those of African descent in the Americas and Europe, this movement was to turn into a powerful laboratory for new philosophical ideas, which crystallized mainly in the Négritude and pan-African movements at the beginning of the 20th century.

However, it was the publication of *Bantu Philosophy* in 1945 that generated the most consistent and explicit philosophical tradition of modern Africa.

Written by an obscure Belgian missionary, Placide Tempels, working among the Baluba people of Katanga (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo), the book articulated the metaphysical and ethical vision of Baluba wisdom. It was warmly embraced by Léopold Sédar Senghor and other prominent figures in the Négritude movement and adopted by the newly created publishing house *Présence Africaine*. Writing to approve or disprove the philosophical ideas of the Baluba proposed in the book, which radically challenged the Western dogmatic monopoly on reason, armies of philosophers in Europe and Africa engaged into a heated debate that, from 1945 to 1975, produced the fundamental literature of the contemporary African philosophical discourse.

This contemporary African philosophy was largely produced in Western languages by thinkers trained in schools established by Europeans. In response, the pan-African and Négritude movements stressed the need to decolonize the mind by articulating a way of philosophizing in tune with ancestral African traditions and contemporary African concerns. Many questions emerged in this early period of defining African philosophy, which stretched from 1940 to 1980. First and foremost, Africans were asked to prove the philosophical quality of African thought to a skeptical Western establishment, which controlled publishing policies and even continued to run the educational system and faculties of philosophy in postcolonial Africa until the 1980s. In this context dominated by the hermeneutics of suspicion, whether there could be an African philosophy became a focal topic for many articles and books over several years. It was still an important topic in the 1990s, as publications by Kwame Gyekye in Ghana and Lucius Outlaw in the United States indicate. In wrestling with this question, African philosophy gained an expertise in the scrutiny of the pitfalls and dissonance of Western philosophical traditions, as well as in the vast semantic field of the concept of philosophy.

THE BREADTH OF AFRICAN PHILOSOPHICAL DISCOURSE

Moreover, African philosophers turned to a serious study of the history of philosophy in Africa, which culminated in the articulation of a comprehensive history of African philosophy going back to pharaonic Egypt. The result of the superb research done by Cheikh Anta Diop and Theophile Obenga in this field led to the overthrow of the “Greek miracle” dogma

and the articulation of a fundamental paradigm shift in the history of world philosophy. The question of the conditions for the possibility of a specific philosophy was turned on the West, which had to justify its own originality and rationality in view of new historical evidence proving that the founders of Western philosophy—including thinkers like Pythagoras and Plato and many other scientists and philosophers—had been trained by Egyptian philosophers in Nile Valley schools for many years. The new findings made clear that Western cultural arrogance and Lévy-Bruhlism were baseless, founded as they were on myths of Western primacy. As a result, a confident African philosophy emerged and directed its energy to productive preoccupation: to think the human condition in Africa.

While most of the contemporary African philosophers are trained professionals, with master's and/or doctoral degrees in philosophy, and very often professors in departments of philosophy and Black Studies, the field of contemporary philosophical discourse is broader than the circle of academics. If what makes a thought philosophical is its substance, then rational and rigorous thinkers are also found outside the often narrow circle of academic philosophers. Thus significant philosophies are also found among novelists, poets, and dramatists, such as Léopold Sédar Senghor, Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe, Ngugi wa Th'iongo, Sembene Ousmane, Mongo Beti, and many feminist novelists, to name but a few. Philosophy is also found in the writings of professional theologians whose training generally includes many years of philosophical studies, as well as in the works of professional anthropologists, political activists, lawyers, and artists. Thus, African philosophy exists in a multitude of literary genres. In many libraries, important philosophical texts can be found in the sections of religion, anthropology, art, and literature in addition to on the shelves in the philosophy section or in philosophical journals. Likewise, the question of authorship is not limited by birth certificate or somatic complexion. As recent anthologies of African philosophy edited by Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze and other Africans attest, the African philosophers include thinkers of African descent in Europe and the Americas, as well as the white, Western coalition of those willing to write on the subject.

Indeed, this latter category includes scholars such as the British Africanist Basil Davidson, who has written about the African philosophy of history and

African politics; Martin Bernal, whose work, like that of Cheikh Anta Diop and Theophile Obenga, challenges the Greek miracle ideology; Johannes Fabian, who like V. Y. Mudimbe has deconstructed anthropology and colonial epistemic violence; Jean-Paul Sartre, whose solidarity with the colonized people and his sophisticated analysis of colonialism and racism has prompted Mudimbe and some other scholars to welcome him among "African philosophers"; and the British philosopher Robert Bernasconi, who has done an analysis of racism in Western philosophy that is enlightening and can usefully be read along with Lucius Outlaw, Cornel West, or Lewis Gordon. Since Western philosophers are insiders who have the ability to better understand the passion of the Western mind, those who have for years contributed to Africans' struggle for full humanity through a denunciation of colonialism, neocolonialism, imperialism, and racism or through a genuine study of African languages, culture, and wisdom bring a valuable contribution to African philosophy.

THE AFRICAN PHILOSOPHICAL TRADITION

With regard to the means of expression, Africa has both the tradition of oral philosophy and that of written texts. Although most of the traditional philosophy was done orally, there is also a long tradition of written texts that goes back to ancient Egypt, where there existed, long before the rise of philosophy in ancient Greece in the 6th century B.C.E., one of the most ancient philosophies in the world. This Kemetic philosophical tradition flourished from around the 27th century B.C.E. (in shortest chronology) to the 4th century C.E. Then, during the era of the Roman Empire, a new tradition flourished in North Africa, led by thinkers converted to Christianity, such as Saint Augustine. The Islamic University of Sankore in Timbuktu flourished from the Middle Ages into the 17th century and produced powerful thinkers like professor Ahmed Baba (1556–1627), who wrote more than 40 books on subjects as diverse as philosophy, theology, astronomy, and biography.

Among the many scholars at the University of Sankore during the 15th and 16th centuries were Mohammed el-Mrili (a professor of law), Ahmed ben Said (a professor of logic), and Ben Mohammed Aquit (a professor of logic). As a jurist, philosopher, and theologian, Ahmed Baba confronted the issue of

slavery in the Islamic context. He challenged the legal and theological arguments used at the time to justify the practice of enslavement. Unlike the Moroccan jurist al-Wansharisi, Ahmad Baba placed the burden of proof not on the slave but on the slavedealer, who must prove his lawful right of ownership of the slave he offers for sale. To the question “Can one take the word of an enslaved person?” that many Arabic jurists answered “No,” Ahmad Baba replied with a firm and documented “Yes.” With regard to theological arguments, he dismissed the story that the black person could not create philosophy. Ahmad Baba was an avowed believer in the capabilities of all humans, and as a black man himself, he thoroughly understood the issues of his day. Despite the limitations imposed by his condition as a Muslim, Baba contributed in his own way to the articulation of an African philosophy of human rights.

The Ethiopian Tradition

In the 16th and 17th centuries, a rationalistic philosophical tradition flourished in Ethiopia with authors such as Zär’a Yacob or Zera Yagob (1592–1685), a contemporary of René Descartes (1596–1650) whose book *Hatata* (meaning “Analysis” or “Treatise”) clearly deals with a rationalistic philosophy. Zera began his journey toward knowledge by identifying the obstacles that hinder humans’ effort to know the truth. Zera observed that because the knowing process is a difficult labor, people “shy from any critical examination” and “hastily accept what they have heard from their fathers.” Thus Zera adopted criticism as the initial step toward knowledge, followed by steps such as analysis (*Hatata*), inquiry, and the light of reason and the goodness of the created things, as the basis of his cognitive method. The Baluba *Bwino* epistemology agrees with this Zera’s *Hatata* epistemology, as does the *Ofamfa-Matemasie* epistemology of the Akan. The Akan people used the artistic Adinkra symbol to express their love for the wisdom of critical thinking. They used the symbol called *Ofamfa* or *Pempan Hwemu Dua*, which literally means “search rod” or “measuring rod” and stands for “critical examination and excellence.” Aware of the pitfalls of cold logic and excessive rationalism, they added to *Ofamfa* another epistemological dimension called *Matemasie*, the symbol of “wisdom and insight,” thus making it clear that the purpose of knowledge is to ensure a good life for oneself and the community.

THE PHILOSOPHY’S RENDEZVOUS WITH THE WEST

In the century of the Enlightenment, African philosophy was still in the process of discovering its correct path. The Western world had a rendezvous with African philosophy with Amo Guinea Afer (1703–after 1753), Edward Wilmot Blyden (1832–1912), and Olaudah Equiano (1745–1797). These African authors grew up in the Western world and used their knowledge of the Western languages and writing system to articulate a systematic view of the African conception of freedom and human rights by denouncing theories and practices they considered to be harmful to human dignity and human aspiration to happiness. While Baba struggled for African dignity in the Islamic world, Afer, who became known as Anthony William Amo, had to face the question of the enslavement of Africans in the Western Christian world. Coming from a Christian perspective, Amo used his studies of Western philosophy to articulate a doctrine on the rights of black people in Europe. With two doctorates, in philosophy and law, and in 1738 having authored *Tractatus de Arte Sobrie et Accurate Philosophandi*, a book on logic and epistemology, Amo was the first African philosopher of modern times. In the very era of the Enlightenment, this contemporary of Kant studied and thought philosophy in Europe.

Amo was born in Axim, in the region of Ghana, and arrived in 1707 in the Netherlands, where he was baptized a year later in the Lutheran church at Brunswich-Wolffenbüttel. In his dissertation for his doctorate of law, which he defended in 1729 at the University of Halle in the Netherlands, Amo already revealed his concern for the human rights of Africans. The title of his dissertation, *Dissertatio Inauguralis de Jure Maurorum in Europa*, makes this clear. After law, he studied philosophy, first at the University of Halle and then at the University of Wittenberg in Germany, where in 1734 he defended his dissertation, *De Humanae Mentis Apatheia*, written under Martin Löscher. Amo’s philosophy of liberty can best be appreciated by juxtaposing it with the philosophy during that same period of another African, Jacobus Capitein, who wrote and publicly defended at Leiden University in the Netherlands a thesis affirming that there is no opposition between slavery and Christian freedom.

In England in the late 1780s, the brilliant writer Olaudah Equiano (1745–1797), who was originally

from West Africa, used his familiarity with the English language and culture to write a book publicizing the evils of the slave trade and strongly condemning the system of slavery. Contrary to Hegel's conception of slavery, Equiano argued for the African traditional sense of human dignity and moral values. Decades later, in the 19th century, the philosophical scene was occupied by a brilliant elite from the Americas, people like Edward Wilmot Blyden (1832–1912), Marcus Garvey (1887–1940), and W.E.B. Du Bois (1868–1963).

After World War II, a new elite emerged in Africa to carry on the articulation of African philosophy. While Kwame Nkrumah's pan-Africanism stimulated thought in English-speaking countries, in Francophone Africa, the creation of *Présence Africaine* in 1947 and the *Société Africaine de Culture* spread the impact of the Négritude movement, and with it Bantu philosophy. Kwame Nkrumah's book *Towards Colonial Freedom* (1947), Aimé Césaire's *Discours sur le Colonialisme* (1950), and Frantz Fanon's *Peau Noire, Masques Blancs* (1952) played a crucial role in the articulation of an African philosophy of human rights.

Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal, Cameroon, Kenya, Uganda, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo became major centers of philosophical production between 1969 and 1990. It is worth noting that in the postcolonial era, beginning in the 1970s, the critique of colonialism, neocolonialism, imperialism, and racism turned progressively into a critique of African sources of estrangement, notably postcolonial tyrannical regimes. At the same time, the struggle for intellectual and spiritual decolonization of the African mind continued. This early trend, which was inaugurated by Stefano Kaoze, well before Placide Tempels, produced vigorous thinkers like Alexis Kagame, Vincent Mulago, and John Mbiti, who turned toward the traditional wisdom contained in proverbs, folktales, and other traditional institutions to articulate a typically African perspective on the world. Although a younger postmodernist and postcolonial generation, which includes such thinkers as Paul Hountondji and Marcien Towa, has mockingly referred to this trend as "ethnophilosophy," contemporary philosophers' reconciliation of modern thought with African traditional wisdom has enabled them to productively move beyond a mere repetition of Western philosophical theories. Thus, in their writings, Alexis Kagame, Vincent Mulago, Léopold Senghor, Hampate Ba, and Birago Diop have brought back to academic life a

wealth of traditional wisdom, which constitutes a precious source of information for younger generations of philosophers.

Historians of African philosophy have attempted various classifications of dominant trends, from ethnophilosophy to hermeneutical philosophy. Others have spoken of African humanism, Négritude, pan-Africanism, nationalism, political philosophy, critical philosophy, sagacity, and many more. These are all facets of an epistemic tradition that carries the struggle of Africans for full humanity. These ways of thinking often overlap and can even be found in the work of a single author. Because of the mortal danger to Africans of Western domination and local tyrannical regimes, contemporary African philosophy has focused on themes pertaining to political philosophy, ethics, and the philosophy of history. It thus wrestles, among other things, with the issues of personhood, cultural alienation, and the search for an authentically African mode of being and becoming humane. It denounces human rights violations, racism, colonialism, neocolonialism, dictatorship, and sexism, and it struggles to articulate a path for African renaissance and for African survival and global peace in a world where machines and a heartless global market tend to overcome genuine humanism.

Although a small number of agnostics, such as Okot p'Bitek and V. Y. Mudimbe, have emerged in contemporary African philosophy, religion remains generally inseparable from the African philosophical tradition because of the central role that it plays in African lives. However, in a land where Africans have been religiously abused, a critical evaluation of religious practice has become indispensable to the credibility of faith itself. Thus a rich philosophy of religion—articulated by Fabien Eboussi Boulaga, V. Y. Mudimbe, John Mbiti, Jean Marc Ela, Bimwenyi Kweshi, Engelbert Mveng, Chinua Achebe, Cheikh Hamidou Kane, and Mongo Beti—has largely contributed to the Africanization of Christianity, as well as to the purification of both African traditional religions and the bourgeois and colonialist Christianity supported by Western governments and their missionary agents. The fact that the wealthy continent of Africa, blessed with all kinds of natural resources, has one of the poorest populations in the world, while African wealth languishes in Western banks, constitutes one of the most dramatic challenges to Western Christian solidarity with Africa. It clearly appears that Africa needs justice and not charity. Here the global

religious charity rhetoric has become too problematic for a continent where people have become beggars, nationalists without nations and capitalists without capital.

The fundamental philosophical question raised here is whether faith and reason can be reconciled in a land so fond of harmony and balance. It seems that a *sine qua non* condition for the credibility of faith in Africa requires a careful scrutiny of the relationship between religion and economic or political interests of nations. On the other hand, the poet Birago Diop introduced to the world the nobility of African traditional religions by capturing in his famous poem "Souffles" that most essential notion of cosmotheandricity, which characterizes the African spiritual worldview and constitutes the metaphysical foundation of those noble African virtues of solidarity and universal hospitality. Honoring these values requires a philosophical critique of some obscurantist aspects of African social life, from tribalism to blind nationalism and from crass materialism to sexism.

Although contemporary philosophical discourse is still overwhelmingly dominated by male thinkers, the traditional dialectical challenge to patriarchy and sexism has been taken up by a progressively growing generation of feminist philosophers. Creative thinkers like Tanella Boni (from the Ivory Coast), Awa Thiam (from Senegal), Sophie Oluwole (from Nigeria), Marie Pauline Eboh (from Nigeria), and Mercy Amba Oduyoye (from Nigeria) are proudly carrying the torch of women's liberation inspired by traditional African values.

The study of traditional culture has enhanced esthetics. The environmental crisis of the planet, the looting of African minerals and forests, the pollution of African air and water by modern industries, and the dumping in Africa of nuclear and other toxic waste by foreign corporations has led to the rise of an ecological philosophical discourse. Although still in the making, this thinking has already generated a profound critique of science and technology and a reflection on traditional sciences and technologies. Such critical thinking is likely to produce a vigorous African philosophy of science. Likewise, in light of the deepening human crisis generated by the global market and arms industries, African thinkers are now turning toward the ancestral notion of personhood and creating a powerful African humanism based on the notion of *Bumuntu*. This notion inspired the South African Peace and Reconciliation commissions, among

others. In addition, the recent phenomenon of nonviolent political struggle through a broad national dialogue, popularized under the concept of the national conference, is already generating a new trend referred to as *Bumuntu* philosophy or humanism of the third millennium.

The peculiarity of the African mode of philosophizing consists in the focus on balance, harmony, and a holistic vision of the world. Thus African philosophy does not reject religious worldviews, nor does it privilege a narrow rationalism. In Africa, philosophy is not an art for art's sake, but rather, a serious reflection on how to enhance human flourishing. This is why the governing principles of African philosophy are *Bumi* (life), *Bumuntu* (a genuine way of being humane), hospitality, and solidarity. In the 21st century, the dangers constituted by globalization and the rise of terrorism and counterterrorism are likely to generate a new trend in African philosophy, a trend that will enlarge the concept of terrorism to include the violence of global marketers and the Machiavellian warlords of world politics.

AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

In the field of the philosophy of religion, there is a need to articulate an African critique of "just war" ideologies and to formulate a vision of African self-defense in the face of a gathering danger of extermination. This will be an entirely new direction, which can be referred to as African polemology. Its challenge will be to find an alternative to the Machiavellian ethos of modern real politik and to the war ethic of Pax Romana articulated in the famous militarist dogma of Flavius Vegetius Renuat: *Qui desiderat pacem, praeparet bellum*. The notion that war is a necessary tool for bringing peace, and that in war violence itself becomes the highest form of love, was characteristic of Hitler's philosophers, as Kurt Flasch reminds us in his enlightening *Die Geistige Mobilmachung; Die Deutschen Intellektuellen und der Erste Weltkrieg*. But Africa, the cradle of humanity, has other philosophical commitments. And rightly so. In this highly competitive global village, in this era of perpetual war for perpetual peace, African survival itself is at stake, and so is the credibility of African modes of philosophizing.

In this era of global economic and political turbulences, in this world where nations come together to ensure their economic and political survival, the early

philosophical dream of African unity articulated by pan-Africanist thinkers acquires a greater significance. Césaire's *Discourse on Colonialism* (1950), Patrice Lumumba's political thought, and Nkrumah's conscientism and critique of imperialism are of great value, as this is an imperial era. The vision of a new political order envisaged by Nyerere's Ujamaa and the African humanism of Kaunda are also worthy of consideration. For it is self-evident that no real salvation can come from Western ideologies of communism, Marxism, or selfish capitalism. The African traditional virtues of hospitality and solidarity call for the creation of a new world order. And in this context, the ideology of pan-Africanism needs to be reshaped. It is worth recalling that African philosophy has been pan-African since its very inception in the modern era. Both the pan-Africanism of Nkrumah and the Négritude of Senghor drew from the vitality of thinkers from the Americas. Since the 1990s, Asante's Afrocentricity—the vigorous philosophical movement that originated in the United States and has now globally popularized the vision of Cheikh Anta Diop—has followed in the footsteps of pan-Africanism. Afrocentricity has contributed to the dismantling of the Greek miracle ideology and the decolonization of the history of philosophy.

AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY IN THE AMERICAN CONTEXT

Today, the United States constitutes one of the major centers, perhaps the most significant center, of African philosophical production. This intellectual relationship among Africa, Europe, and America, which contributed to the dismantling of the system of the slave trade as well as the defeat of colonialism, is perhaps the only chance to face the dangers of this new era of global empires. To reread Du Bois, Nkrumah, Lumumba, Cabral, and Fanon in the light of current state of world affairs implies a reexamination of some of the premises of the current trend of postmodernism, for it is too obvious that in this imperial era, where 18th- and 19th-century rhetoric has come back to the fore, there is nothing “post” in the dominant postcolonial discourse of our time, especially when we recall that postcolonies are to a certain extent none other than an Africanization of Western colonies. In other words, the fundamental deconstructionist task of African philosophy and its hermeneutics of suspicion,

its prophetic gadfly role, remains and will continue to be disseminating the noblest expressions of African love of wisdom, for humans continue to philosophize to know how to live carefully and meaningfully.

Finally, it should be noted that the contribution of African philosophy to the world is already felt, especially in the field of philosophy of history. The rediscovery of Kemetic philosophy, and the acknowledgment that Pythagoras, Plato, and some early Greek philosophers studied in Egypt, has revolutionized our understanding of the global history of philosophy and challenged the dualistic view articulated by thinkers such as Lévy-Bruhl, Kant, Hegel, Gobineau, and Voltaire regarding Africans' ability for philosophical reasoning. Thus, African philosophy has challenged many of the Western assumptions regarding non-European people, and in so doing, it has contributed to the decolonization of knowledge in general and philosophical knowledge in particular. The challenge for Africa, as for many people around the world, is now how to build a peaceful global village. African suffering; the genius of African languages (which are gender inclusive); the traditional values of community, interdependence, interconnectedness, solidarity, and hospitality; the respect for nature and for spiritual values; the respect for life; and the wisdom of African proverbs constitute an important asset for a new way of philosophizing so needed at the present time.

— Mutombo Nkulu-N'Sengha

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the social sciences, which have largely contributed to the invention of the idea of a primitive and prelogical Africa. Tempels, Placide. (1969). *Bantu Philosophy*. Paris: Présence Africaine. This book contains the confession of a missionary who went to Africa with a mindset shaped by colonial theories of evolution and the ethnological mythology of Lévy-Bruhl, and who was surprised that the image of Africa that was inculcated in him in Europe was totally false. Tempels's acknowledgment of the existence of African rationality and a sophisticated sense of morality challenged the very foundation of the colonial regime which was based on the civilizing mission ideology. Although still shaped by the colonial Hegelian paradigm, this book contributed to African philosophical discourse by challenging the distortion of knowledge by "scholars of colonial empires."

AFRICAN RENAISSANCE

African Renaissance is the name of an intellectual movement with the purpose of expanding and promoting the ideas of Cheikh Anta Diop. The movement was founded in the early 1990s in Paris by professor Theophile Obenga and nuclear physicist Cheikh M'Backe Diop, the son of Cheikh Anta Diop. In 1948, Cheikh Anta Diop had called for an African Renaissance based on the values and constructs of African reality. The African Renaissance movement is thus related to the Afrocentricity movement in its determination to define African ideas and ideals from an African perspective. Furthermore, like Afrocentricity, the African Renaissance movement views ancient Kemet as the starting place for all discussions of culture and language in the African world.

Under the direction and tutelage of Theophile Obenga, the African Renaissance group in Paris organized themselves into a school devoted to teaching and publishing Afrocentric scholarship. Cheikh M'Backe Diop used his scientific background to advance the work of the group. The combination of the efforts and talents of African linguist, historian, and philosopher Theophile Obenga and nuclear physicist Cheikh M'Backe Diop contributed to African Renaissance becoming a major instrument in the dissemination of Afrocentric ideas in the Francophone world.

In the beginning, a core group of 8 to 12 intellectuals, professionals in such fields as education, science, communication, and computer science, started meeting twice a month in Paris at the Sorbonne with the

idea of creating the foundation for a renaissance in African thinking. Over time, they attracted hundreds of students to their seminars and published many books in support of the African Renaissance movement. Among the activities of the African Renaissance group is the publication of the journal *ANKH*, the leading journal in the study of Kemet in the African world. *ANKH* has defended the positions outlined by Cheikh Anta Diop in his earlier works on the African origin of civilization and advanced a pan-African study of the connectedness of African languages to the Nile Valley civilizations.

African Renaissance promoter Salomon Mezepo, an architect and the publisher of Menaibuc Editions, emerged as a leading personality in the promotion of the work of the African Renaissance movement. Menaibuc published the writings and scholarship of the major African Renaissance scholars, such as Theophile Obenga, Jean Philippe Omotunde, Ama Mazama, Nzue Paulin Carlos Mozer, Gregoire Biyogo, and others. A principal scholar and teacher in the African Renaissance school is Jean Philippe Omotunde, who embarked on a campaign to reeducate the French public about the African origin of civilization. Like Obenga, his major teacher, Omotunde gathered many facts of African history and culture and presented them in powerful analytical and critical works.

African Renaissance is linked with the Afrocentricity intellectual movement, the Temple Circle, and other groups and scholars interested in classical civilizations, African advancement, and the general rise of humanity. Each year members of the African Renaissance join in the academic conference held in Philadelphia that is dedicated to Cheikh Anta Diop.

— Molefi Kete Asante

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Diop, Cheikh M'Backe. (2003). *Cheikh Anta Diop: L'Homme et l'Oeuvre*. Paris: Présence Africaine. This is the definitive work on the greatest African intellectual of the 20th century. Written by the nuclear physicist Cheikh M'Backe Diop, the son of Cheikh Anta Diop, this book is not a sentimental

work, but one that deals concretely with the entire corpus of this outstanding African scholar.

Obenga, Theophile. (2001). *Le Sens de la lutte contre l'africanisme eurocentriste*. Paris: L'Harmattan and Gif sur Yvette, France: Khepera. This is a powerful discussion of the racism that emerges in the writings of several leading French scholars when they approach the study of ancient Egypt. Obenga responds to the attacks on Afrocentricity and African Renaissance scholarship by Fauvelle-Aymar, Chretien, Perrot, Walker, and other anti-Afrocentric authors.

AFRICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION

The African Studies Association (ASA) was formed at a conference in New York in March of 1957 as a nonprofit organization open to all individuals and institutions interested in African affairs. There were 35 Africanists who attended the conference, including association founder Melville F. Herskovits. The major objectives of the conference were to bring together people with a scholarly and professional interest in Africa, to improve communication among Africanists, to collect and disseminate information on Africa, and to stimulate research on Africa. The majority of the ASA membership is in the United States, with smaller numbers in Canada, Asia, Europe, and Africa. Most members are teachers and researchers associated with institutions of higher learning. The membership includes individuals with careers in international development and health, foreign affairs, government service, K-12 education, and church and social work.

The African Studies Association held its first annual meeting at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, in September of 1958. The registered fellows of the association, as they were then called, numbered 90. Among these association members were 24 women and several African and African American scholars. The others were predominantly white Africanists. As the first president of the association, Herskovits explained its creation as an opportunity to enhance communication among scholars who had a sustained interest in Africa. In the over 4 decades of its existence, Herskovits's ideas about the purpose of the African Studies Association have been realized through the spreading of an association that every year brings together scholars to exchange ideas about their research findings and analyses and to rekindle their sense of kinship with those with whom they share an interest in Africa.

HERSKOVITS'S VISION

However, Herskovits's vision of the association as one whose sole purpose was to be a gathering of scholars for scholarly purposes did not have the support of the entire membership of the association. The African and African American membership, in particular, disagreed with Herskovits. Their major argument was that their scholarly production ought to have some form of connection to the larger society in which the African Studies Association exists. Indeed, Herskovits's preference was to engage the world in his writings rather than through the association. He has done this eloquently by using his research on the African kingdom of Dahomey and African roots of African American culture to engage racial ideas about Africa and an orchestrated mainstream erroneous projection of Africans and African Americans.

Herskovits's actions as the president of the African Studies Association were, however, contradictory to the ideas in his scholarly works. The climax of this contradiction was his role in helping to deny funding to pan-Africanist W.E.B. Du Bois's *Encyclopedia Africana* project, while offering the association's full assistance to the CIA's Allen Dulles in his projects in Africa. Scholars were critical of his actions as the greatest affront to the institutionalization of African Studies since the birth of ASA in the 1950s and the 1960s. Herskovits's actions were interpreted by African Americans as an attempt at eliminating competing forms of scholarship on Africa, in this case, the pan-Africanist element. Thus, it has been speculated that perhaps Herskovits used his position as the African Studies Association president to undermine Du Bois's *Encyclopedia Africana* project because of his concern that pan-African scholarship would generate racial tension and increase his marginality as a white Africanist.

CONTROVERSY AND TURMOIL

Since the 1950s and the 1960s, there have been debates and discussions about how the African Studies Association should be run. At the heart of the events that shook the 1969 annual meeting of the association in Montreal, Canada, was the question of who within African Studies should have the power to define the content of the new directions for the field. Herskovits's contradictory extremes led to an engaging debate about who should define the scholarly standards of African Studies, and how those who held

power within the association were using their positions to limit and control the activities of individual scholars within the association.

At the climax of the crisis in the African Studies Association, a group within the ASA known as the Black Caucus urged the association to depart from Herskovits's formulation charter, which defined the association as a marketplace of intellectual ideas set apart from the political atmosphere of the existing environment. The group also responded to the fact that in 1969 only one black person was holding a decision-making position in an association whose dealings were predominantly about black people, their countries, and their societies. Thus the Black Caucus specifically implored the association to promptly broaden the participation of black people in all phases of its *modus operandi*.

The crisis in the African Studies Association, which had been intense, reached its peak when the proceedings were interrupted by African and African American scholars who staged a walkout from the meeting. The entire Montreal meeting was given over to arguments regarding the loyalties and priorities that Africanist scholars should adopt. The fallout from these discussions resulted in the formation of a new organization by those who were not content with the priorities of the African Studies Association. Led by John Henrik Clarke, the pan-Africanist Black Caucus of the African Studies Association moved to form the African Heritage Studies Association (AHTA). Pan-Africanist scholars formed the AHTA specifically to further build on and expand the previous tradition of African scholarship and research, a major component of African Studies that had been ignored by the association.

The precarious nature of the ASA membership's discussions and the split that continued for many months after the Montreal conference are indicative of the volatility of the debate about how the African Studies Association should operate. As challenging as those times were, they actually forced the association to examine difficult but necessary questions that required collective intellectual engagement. In the 1970s and early 1980s, the association moved to initiate the dawn of a new era of activism. The ASA's board of directors passed several resolutions that reflected the association's sensitivity to diverse issues, with the need to promote greater interest in African Studies among African Americans as a top priority of their new agenda.

EFFORTS AT RECOVERY

In the mid-1990s, the African Studies Association decided to grapple with the concerns and issues that had dogged it since the 1960s, so the association began a self-conscious evaluation of its program and individual scholars. At the fore of the criticism of the ASA was its lack of relevance to Africanist scholars on the African continent. The Africanist scholarship on Africa reflected in the work of ASA's members seemed to distance itself from African continental realities. The inability of the Africanist scholars to work in harmony with their African colleagues in an atmosphere of mutual respect resulted in the association's failure to achieve one of its major goals of building bridges between its research communities.

The African Studies Association sponsors an annual meeting, which provides an occasion for panels, plenary sessions, discussion groups, exhibits, and films. The meeting is held in different regions of North America in cooperation with major colleges, universities, museums, and other institutions, and participants attend from America, Africa, Asia, and Europe. With an average attendance of 1,300, the association's annual meeting has become one of the largest annual gatherings of Africanists in the world. Today, the association represents a diverse group of people interested in Africa and the African people. The association also provides information and support services to the Africanist community. Four ASA periodicals are currently produced annually: *African Issues* (formerly *Issue: A Journal of Opinion*), *ASA News*, *African Studies Review*, and *History in Africa*.

The African Studies Association continues to search for better ways to respond to the issues, questions, and concerns that emerged in the late 1960s and were later revisited and readdressed in the late 1990s. Such issues include the initiation of specific steps to engage African Americans in the association, as indicated in its resolution of 1970, and the adjustment of its operative structures to establish collaboration and cooperation as a means to bridge the divide between American scholars of Africa in the United States and their African colleagues in Africa. The resolve to cast away the negative legacies of the past and initiate a new course for the association is being pursued and sustained in the overall interest of African Studies and Black Studies. This resolve is capable of meeting the needs of current dynamic trends because it is

rooted in pan-Africanism—the only perspective that can promote the broad, self-consciously inclusive approach to the association that is required to put it on the right course.

One of the major objectives of the African Studies Association has been to promote the teaching of African Studies as an academic discipline. This has been achieved to a large extent. The number of African Studies programs in U.S. institutions has increased dramatically since the founding of the African Studies Association, and many of the institutions have been carrying out extensive research on Africa. African Studies will continue to grow more rapidly as African nations increasingly strive to exert their influence on the world. ASA is hosted by Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey in New Brunswick, New Jersey. ASA is currently a member of three organizations: the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLSA), the National Humanities Alliance, and the National Council of Area Studies Association (NCASA). In addition, the association has a close relationship with the Association of African Studies Programs.

— David Shachia Agum

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- www.africanstudies.org This is the official Web site of the African Studies Association.

AFRICAN WORLDVIEW THEORY

The African worldview theory is essentially a combination of the classical and contemporary, continental and diasporic African overarching outlook on human experience and the natural and phenomenal world. It is distinguished from the worldviews of other peoples in so far as it is grounded in and grows out of African history and culture. African peoples' beliefs about God, nature, and major life rituals—such as birth, puberty, adulthood, marriage, elderhood, and death—exhibit enough commonalities to warrant being called an African worldview. These commonalities in many areas of the life-worlds and lived experiences of African peoples render interminable philosophical disputes and semantic discussions as to whether there exists a general or universal African worldview utterly unnecessary and unrewarding. One can know the African worldview by knowing what tasks are performed by a discussion of it.

The key tasks in any discussion of the African worldview are to bring to the fore what African worldview theorists mean by commonalities in African cultures and societies and to lay bare, in a critical and culturally grounded fashion, what many of these theorists are pointing to in their discussions of differences in and among the various African cultures and societies.

CONTENTIONS OF COMMONALITIES

Worldview theory is at work in all other cultures and societies, as a people cannot survive, and certainly cannot flourish, without creating and transgenerationally passing on systems and traditions of thinking (philosophy), belief (spirituality and/or religion), and values (axiology) that enable them to cope with the specific sociohistorical and cultural challenges of their milieu. In the classical world, African people laid the foundation for human culture and civilization and, throughout the continent, developed societies that rested on and revolved around similar systems of thought, belief, and values.

In the contemporary African world, which includes both continental and diasporic African peoples and cultures, major challenges and common experiences have emanated from, among other issues, African enslavement, the African Holocaust (*maangamiz* in Kiswahili), and the subsequent colonization of

African peoples both on and off of the African continent. The similarities—though, to be sure, not identical nature—of the various thought, belief, and value systems of continental and diasporic African peoples have led many theorists to argue that there is indeed an African worldview. This worldview constitutes a combined continental and diasporic African perspective on life that sums up what Africans know about the world; how Africans evaluate the world, both rationally and emotionally; and how Africans respond to the world volitionally.

DISCOURSE ON DIFFERENCES

Also important in terms of discussing the African worldview is the discourse on differences within African cultures and societies. This discourse, which generally compares and contrasts classical continental with contemporary diasporic African experiences, often argues that too much attention is paid to the commonalities of African peoples and cultures, without serious, substantiated social scientific investigations of the differences among these diverse groups. It is often argued that the phenomenal diversity of African life experiences, both before and after the African enslavement, holocaust, and colonization, did not simply problematize the unification of Africans but also made assertions of a collective worldview among African peoples seem utterly untenable.

However, the African worldview theorists argue that their assertions are indeed sound and not any different from those of the many Western European worldview theorists who, for example, utilize ancient Greco-Roman culture and civilization as the model and mean by which to measure European modern culture and civilization. Why is it, the African worldview theorists ask, that persons of European descent born and bred as far away from Europe as the United States can look to ancient Greece and Rome as their cosmological and cultural foundation, but persons of African descent who turn to ancient Egypt, Ethiopia, or Nubia are accused of myth making and made a mockery of?

THE CLASSICAL AND CONTEMPORARY, CONTINENTAL AND DIASPORIC AFRICAN WORLDVIEW

Although some scholars agree and others disagree with the basic premise of African worldview theory, it

is clear to all that enslavement, holocaust, and colonization have had an indelible impact on the way contemporary theorists and laypersons alike approach and interpret classical and contemporary, continental and diasporic Africa. African worldview theory accentuates the challenges of theorizing modern Africa. What it means to be African in the modern moment is inextricably bound up with classical and contemporary, continental and diasporic African history and culture, as well as philosophical, spiritual, and axiological African traditions.

— Reiland Rabaka

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- Diop, Cheikh Anta. (1974). *The African Origin of Civilization: Myth or Reality*. Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books. This book outlines in an authoritative way the contributions of Africans to human civilizations.
- Diop, Cheikh Anta. (1978). *The Cultural Unity of Black Africa*. Chicago: Third World Press. In this book, Diop makes a compelling case for the fundamental underlying cultural unity of African people.
- Du Bois, W.E.B. (1986). *Du Bois: Writings* ((Nathan Irvin Huggins, Ed.). New York: Library of America Press. This book outlines Du Bois's seminal thinking on the meaning of blackness for Africans in the diaspora.
- Gyekye, Kwame. (1996). *African Cultural Values: An Introduction*. Elkins Park, PA: Sankofa. Gyekye presents an insightful overview of African cultural commonalities.
- Mbiti, John S. (1989). *African Religions and Philosophy*. London: Heinemann. This remains the authoritative text of African religions and philosophy. Mbiti compares and contrasts a great number of African cultural groups and cogently identifies African religious and spiritual universals.
- Soyinka, Wole. (1985). The African World and the Ethnocultural Debate. In Molefi Kete Asante and Kariamu Welsh-Asante (Eds.), *African Culture: The Rhythms of Unity*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press. Soyinka discusses the complexities of African identity as a result of slavery and colonization.

AFRICANA WOMANISM

Africana womanism is a theory developed by scholar Clenora Hudson-Weems in the late 1980s to deal with African women's issues from an Afrocentric perspective. Indeed, at the heart of the Africana womanist theory lies the assertion that a true understanding of the nature of the relationship between African men and women requires a thorough understanding of and

grounding in African culture and history. In fact, Hudson-Weems coined the term *Africana womanism* in 1987 out of the realization of the total inadequacy of feminism, and like theories (e.g., black feminism, African womanism, or womanism), to grasp the reality of African women, let alone give them the means to change that reality.

According to Hudson-Weems, there are two problems with the adoption of feminism by African women. First, she argues, feminism is fundamentally a European phenomenon. As such, it is loaded with European metaphysical principles, such as the problematic, conflictual relationship between the genders, with men seen as the primary enemies of women. Such an antagonistic view of men is understandable in the context of white male hegemony and the subsequent relegation of white females to inferior and subordinate status in their own societies. Second, feminism as it developed in the 1880s was blatantly racist. The feminist movement, which started as the women's suffrage movement, was initially concerned with the abolition of slavery and social equality for all, irrespective of race, class, or gender. However, it eventually became quite conservative at the time of the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment, which granted voting rights to African American males but not to white females. For these reasons, Hudson-Weems argues, feminism does not and cannot reflect the beliefs or interests of African women. She points out in particular how, historically and culturally, African women do not apprehend African men as their enemy.

Hudson-Weems insists on the necessary complementarity of males and females always posited by African culture as an imperative for the continuation of life itself. In addition, she asserts that it would not be in the best interest of Africans as a people to allow themselves to be divided along gender lines, as African women and men both face the same evil of white supremacy. Hudson-Weems recognizes that there are issues plaguing the relationship between African women and men, and she addresses this in the following two remarks: On one hand, such issues have often been the result of living in a racist and highly patriarchal society, creating at times unhealthy behaviors and attitudes in African women and men; on the other hand, due to their lack of institutional power in a highly racialized and racist society, African men have never been in the position to oppress African women to the same extent that white people have.

Hudson-Weems asserts that the cooperation of African men and women against white supremacy is in fact necessary for the survival and well-being of African people as a whole. In place of feminism, then, Hudson-Weems proposes a theory that stems from African culture and focuses on the very unique experiences and needs of African women, a theory she calls *Africana womanism*. Furthermore, the first step toward true liberation, as Hudson-Weems sees it, entails the freedom and power to name oneself. In that respect, the term *Africana womanism*, which seeks to give African women the means to name their own reality and to define an agenda for themselves and the entire race, is a first and necessary step toward defining what it means to be an African woman setting goals that are consistent with African culture and history. In other words, it is the first step toward existing deliberately and consciously on African terms—certainly a most profound and revolutionary act in a world dominated by Eurocentrism. It is precisely this new, revolutionary aspect that is the appeal of the refreshing theory of *Africana womanism*.

— Ama Mazama

FURTHER READING

Hudson-Weems, Clenora. (1993). *Africana Womanism: Reclaiming Ourselves*. Troy, MI: Bedford. This is the reference text on *Africana womanism*, in which Hudson-Weems lays out the rationale and major tenets of her theory.

AFRICOLOGICAL ENTERPRISE

Winston Van Horne coined the term *Africology* after *Afrology*, the term coined by Molefi Asante in *Afrocentricity* (1980). In discourse and by agreement, Van Horne and Asante decided to use the term *Africology* to refer to the Afrocentric study of African phenomena (as opposed to any other way of examining phenomena). Discussions of African agency happen in the field of Area Studies and in the field known as both Black Studies and African Studies. When that discussion centers inquiry on Africa and Africans and seeks to improve the life chances of all Africans, Afrocentric theories arise. While Afrocentric scholars are guided by the same paradigm, the fields within which they work influence their inquiry and theory construction.

Scholars who use the Afrocentric paradigm have given rise to the discipline of *Africology* within the

field of African Studies. While this field addresses a global African cultural experience, it has focused geographically on Africans in the Americas. In contrast, the field of Area Studies focuses on the exclusive examination of life in contemporary Africa. In each field, Afrocentric scholars seek to conceptually unite the African transatlantic experience.

When a bold group of African American students and faculty at universities such as the University of California, Berkeley, San Francisco State, Northwestern, Cornell, and the University of California, Los Angeles made their demands for Black Studies, they broke the back of the repressive intellectual tradition and opened up an entirely different avenue for African agency. Wherever Africology expresses itself in the African world, it is because of the inspiration first articulated in the call for agency by African American students in the late 1960s. Criticized by the Marxists and radical Democrats as a bourgeois invention, Africology had to be defended on several fronts.

Using the rhetoric of the Chicago School of Sociology led by Robert E. Park, William Ogburn, and Ellsworth Faris, several African American Marxists were the first to criticize the assertion of African agency, because to them it was counterproductive and would prevent assimilation of ideas, concepts, and people. They falsely believed that the objective of the Black Studies movement was to empower a black bourgeoisie at the expense of the masses. The Marxists reacted to the Black Studies movement in this way even though the movement was the first authentically masses-led action in the academy. On the other hand, the black reactionary conservatives criticized the Black Studies movement because they saw it as a threat to social assimilation. Both fears were false and simply masked the real fear of intellectual autonomy. Both the Marxists and the reactionary conservatives misunderstood or seem to have understood too well the meaning of agency for those supporting Africology.

Africologists challenged the idea that Africans could not create concepts, constructs, and theories in the interest of human liberation. Interpreting liberation as being free of impermissible intervention in the cultural, economic, or intellectual sphere, Africologists created a new arena of disciplinary knowledge. When Afrocentricity was conceived as a theoretical option for the liberation of African people, it was seen not as an opposition to Europe but as an assertion of African agency. However, it quickly became an opposition to

Eurocentric impositions by virtue of the fact that the black and the white defenders of European hegemony sought to undermine the Africological enterprise.

— Daryl Zizwe Poe

FURTHER READING

- Asante, Molefi Kete. (1998). *The Painful Demise of Eurocentrism*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press. This is just one of the many works that Asante has written to explain the nature of the Africological project.
- Asante, Molefi Kete. (2003). *Afrocentricity*. Chicago: African American Images. (Original work published 1980) This is a later edition of Asante's first book on Afrocentricity.
- Mazama, Ama (Ed.). (2003). *The Afrocentric Paradigm*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press. This book has become one of the standards for Afrocentric discourse. Mazama brings together the major voices in the field.

AFRICOLOGY

Africology is the Afrocentric examination of phenomena related to African people. It conflates subject matter discipline and institutional discipline. As a subject matter discipline, it is the oldest of all disciplines, given the origins of *Homo sapiens* in Africa; as an institutional discipline, it is of more recent vintage, generally related to the rise in the 1960s of Black Studies departments and programs in the American academy and elsewhere around the world. As a subject matter discipline, Africology entails normative and empirical inquiry and discourse concerning the life histories and life prospects of peoples of primary African origin and their descent transgenerationally, transmillennially, and universally. Given the enormous scope of its subject matter, and the widespread absence of institutional structures through which the subject matter of Africology could be scrutinized in the form of an institutional discipline (i.e., a discipline that disseminates knowledge and establishes reputations in the academy), many have claimed, erroneously, that Africology is not an academic discipline. This error, both of commission and omission, has been, and continues to be, grounded largely in a failure to recognize that Africology does not require a one-to-one correspondence between subject matter discipline and institutional discipline.

Fortunately, at the outset of the 21st century the subject matter of Africology is increasingly spread around the globe through institutional structures, which serve six basic purposes: (1) to educate and train scholars who will discover, recover, construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct knowledge pertaining to Africology's subject matter; (2) to reposition Africa and its significance in the evolution and development of human life, societies, and civilizations; (3) to open new paths in the advancement of societies and civilizations; (4) to provide a rigorous and substantively rich education, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels, for those who desire to pursue careers and establish reputations outside of the discipline; (5) to command the respect of competing disciplines through the conceptual rigor and empirical soundness of Africological scholarship; and (6) to bring distinction to their institutions through the research, instruction, and service of scholars, the broad value of Africological scholarship, and the work of the students that is produced.

All academic disciplines are grounded in values—which may be articulated and recognized openly or hidden and suppressed in claims of value neutrality—and serve a range of interests and purposes. Since there is no value-neutral or value-free interest or purpose, the question arises, what sorts of interests and purposes do given disciplines serve? And more specifically, how do the interests and purposes served by other disciplines compare to those fostered by Africology?

Most fundamental in regard to Africology is the discovery and recovery of laws, and the positing of empirical generalizations, pertaining to congeries of historical processes that Africans and their descendants globally can put to use to advance and sustain their well-being, good, and interests. Tough-minded critical inquiry and discourse concerning seven crucial defining attributes of culture—species life, species being, language, religion, literature-art-science-technology, institutions, and transgenerational memory—and the complexities as well as laws and empirical generalizations of political economy are thus essential to Africological scholarship. Such scholarship requires this grounding in order to serve well the interests and purposes that animate it, and out of which the paradigms of Africology emerge and contest for primacy.

Competition among paradigms to offer sound descriptions, explanations, evaluations, predictions, and justifications concerning the phenomena and

behaviors that constitute the subject matter of Africology is now livelier than it has ever been. The flourishing of paradigmatic competition in Africology is particularly healthy regarding the discipline; for only the paradigms that are able to withstand the most stringent intersubjective testing and corroboration will endure, since such competition generally has the effect of weeding out weak and unsound claimants to the status of paradigm.

Among the candidates now competing for the status of paradigm in Africology are Afrocentricity, Kawaidea theory, cultural nationalism, pan-Africanism, Africana womanism, and Négritude, to mention but a few. Of these, Afrocentricity is perhaps preeminent at present. It has had to withstand a considerable number of broadsides, which is a commonplace for any paradigm that is ascendant in a given cross-section of historical time. Should Afrocentricity be superseded by one or more of its competitors, it will not cease to be of value and influence in Africological scholarship, though its status will have changed.

THE AFRICOLOGICAL PARADIGM

Paradigmatic competition fosters intellectual stringency, though it is often accompanied by rancor and acrimony. Intellectual stringency inclines Africologists toward a continuous expansion, sharpening, and refinement of the contents of their discipline, as each generation of scholars transmits its knowledge, wisdom, and understanding to the next. There is in such intellectual stringency a striving purpose, which impels Africologists to engage in instruction and research in the interest of serving peoples of African origin worldwide as they strive to (1) recenter Africa in regard to the rise, growth, and development of societies and civilizations; (2) reposition Africans and their descendants as subjects rather than mere objects in the evolution and revolution in ideas and societal structures from the agrarian age through the beginning of the postinformation age; and (3) redirect the consciousness of those who have by commission or omission acted to marginalize Africa and her progeny in the diaspora.

As a subject matter and institutional discipline, Africology necessitates clear-sightedness, levelheadedness, fearlessness, self-confidence, and composure by those who would advance the discipline. Africologists cannot evade the problem of Egypt or any other intellectual, cultural, or moral issue. Their moral arithmetic must be sound and moral compass set correctly, for

Africology does not countenance moral flaccidity. The moral and ethical categories of Africology afford no justification for behaviors that wrongfully diminish the self-respect, self-esteem, dignity, integrity, freedom, and well-being of the individual qua individual. The imperatives of moral clarity and intellectual stringency necessitate that scholars of Africology take risks in advancing the interests and purposes of the discipline—risks that could be personally costly in regard to their institutional standing.

The matter of risks notwithstanding, Africology has begun to come into its own as an institutional discipline, and it will grow and flower in this century just as sociology did in the previous century. Accordingly, it is obligatory that Africologists become the very best that they can be in regard to the subject matter of their discipline, so that they are positioned to execute well the transgenerational responsibilities of their roles in scholarship, instruction, and service.

— *Winston A. Van Horne*

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- Asante, Molefi Kete. (1999). *The Afrocentric Idea* (2nd ed.). Philadelphia: Temple University Press. Asante provides a new approach to phenomena based on recentering African thought to a subject position and away from an object position. The book is important for graduate students in Black Studies.
- Mazama, Ama (Ed.). (2003). *The Afrocentric Paradigm*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press. Mazama's excellent book brings together the best works of the Afrocentrists as standards in the field of Black Studies. She identifies the principal attributes of the paradigm in the introductory chapter.

AFRICOLOGY: OPPOSITION

Africology as a discipline contended with several common oppositions during the last decade of the 20th century. In some ways it was to be expected that a new discipline would confront numerous challenges as other disciplines sought to assert their orthodoxy. However, the opponents of the discipline sought to

discredit Africology in three strikes: (1) political association, (2) false attribution, and (3) intellectual dismissal. If they could get three strikes against Africology, then they could put Africologists out of the field. Strike one was to avoid a discussion of Africology or Afrocentricity, the theory that supports the discipline, by focusing instead on naive and extreme black nationalist spokespeople at the height of their popularity and calling them, as well as other blacks who articulated strictly antiwhite positions, Afrocentrists. The objective was to make those who challenged the dominance of white racial ideologies in the academy appear to be irrational.

Africology did not guarantee the racial characteristics, religious choices, or sexual leanings of its practitioners and adherents any more than sociology, literary criticism, or philosophy guaranteed theirs. The claim that any antiestablishment person who speaks against anti-Africanism is an Africologist or Afrocentrist was thought by Black Studies scholars to show intellectual ignorance at worst and intellectual dishonesty at best. An orator may be pro-African American, but being pro-African American does not make the orator an Afrocentrist. If it did, then all members of the NAACP's board would be Afrocentrists.

Since Africology is a discipline, it demands rigorous training and severe critiques. A person cannot assume that he or she is an Africologist by virtue of expressing a willingness to support Afrocentric approaches to phenomena. It is necessary to master the language, orientation, techniques, research methods, and concepts of the field of Africology in order to declare competence in the discipline.

A second strike against Africology was false attribution, that is, claiming something to be Africology that was not. For instance, claiming that melanin theory (which espouses the essentialist value of biology) and Africology are the same is false attribution. The melanists believe in some special or particular chemical or spiritual power that is inherited through the genes and glands and that affects African people differently than it affects others. The Africologist, who is a person looking at phenomena from an Afrocentric point of view, would admit that people have inherited different combinations of chemicals but would argue against attributing any special advantage to individuals because of biological essentialism. Africologists believe that the power equation in society relates to the aggregates of human political and economic relations over a period of time.

Nevertheless, in addition to linking Africology to melanin theory, the opposition has made other false accusations against Africology whose principal purpose was to undermine the discipline.

The third strike against Africology was meant to be its intellectual dismissal. This was the tactic chosen by the English writer Stephen Howe, the American writer Mary Lefkowitz, and the half-English and half-Ghanaian writer Anthony Appiah. But those of the intellectual dismissal school have found it difficult to simply dismiss the Afrocentric study of African phenomena, because the theory finds its source and strength in the historical and cultural realities of African people. Africologists generally seek to create opportunities for solid scientific advances by basing ideas on sound social principles. Thus Africology, as a relatively new discipline, has retained the energy of its founders and has become an increasingly powerful tool for analysis.

— *Molefi Kete Asante*

FURTHER READING

- Asante, Molefi Kete. (1990). *Kemet, Afrocentricity and Knowledge*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press. This is the book in which Asante proposed the idea of Black Studies as a discipline.
- Marable, Manning. (2002). *The Great Wells of Democracy: Reconstructing Race and Politics in the Twenty First Century*. New York: Basic Books. Marable's book is a pioneering effort to understand how we can reconstruct race and politics.
- West, Cornel. (1992). *Race Matters*. Boston: Beacon Press. West provides an ethical argument, rooted in Christianity, against racism and white privilege.

AFROCENTRIC CREED

“The Afrocentric Creed” is a document created by Molefi Kete Asante in 1994 as a part of a general project to infuse Afrocentric content into the public schools. “The Afrocentric Creed” has been adopted by scores of urban schools and become identified as one of the rituals of the Asante Afrocentric Curriculum Infusion model. Some elementary school students are asked by their principals to memorize “The Afrocentric Creed” at the beginning of the school year. The creed is then used subsequently by the teachers and principal as a way to discipline students. Students’ behaviors are evaluated by examining the actions in the prism of “The Afrocentric Creed.”

The Afrocentric Creed

I have faith in myself
 I have faith in my teachers
 I will accept my duties and responsibilities
 I respect others and seek their respect
 I have self-respect
 I have self-control
 I can learn if I study hard
 I will learn because I will study hard
 I love myself, and loving myself, I will be myself and know myself
 I am the one who is talking

El Credo Afrocentrico

Creo en mi capacidad
 Tengo confianza en mis maestros
 Acepto mis responsabilidades y tareas
 Tengo auto-respeto
 Si, puedo controlar mis emociones
 Si, puedo aprender si estudio mucho
 Aprendare porque me dedico a mis estudios
 Me quiero y en mi amor para mi mismo, me realizo y me conosco
 Hablo yo en esta oracion

AFROCENTRIC CRITICISM

Afrocentric criticism is an evaluative field that uses the position of African agency to determine the location of a text or situation. For the Afrocentrist, criticism—whether of a literary, cultural, ceremonial, presentational, or personal narrative—relates wholly to the question of the centrality of the African person in the context of the narrative. If the African person is not centered, the Afrocentric critic applies all the elements of Afrocentric criticism to the narrative.

There are two dimensions to consider in determining centrality in a text: (1) the writing, that is, what is written about, and (2) the writer, who is doing the writing. It is only in capturing both the writing and the writer that Afrocentric criticism can discover the total centrality of a text. Thus this is different from a post-modern reading, for example, where only what is written matters. Since the goals of Afrocentric criticism are different from the goals of postmodern and

other types of criticism, the acts of criticism are also different. The Afrocentric critic's objective is to obtain a holistic reading by precisely locating a text that emanated from a person who is writing in the context of oppression, colonialism, racism, persecution, and denial of freedom.

For the Afrocentric critic, all legitimate criticism must engage the writing and the writer, the signature and the signer. Determining what the signer intended is often impossible, but by examining both the signature and the signer, the critic is able to come closer to this intention than by simply concentrating on the text. Various writers have used the text as a cover for personal grudges, prejudices, lies, and political chicanery. How is the critic to have some ability to make a judgment about the nature of literature if not by juxtaposing the signature and the signer with each other? While it is possible to make some suggestion about the meaning of a text without knowing anything about the writer, clearly the task is much easier if the critic knows both the signature and something about the signer. Using the principal components of the Afrocentric idea, particularly the notions of agency and centeredness, the Afrocentric critic is able to ascertain the role of a text within the political or social environment of its creation.

— Molefi Kete Asante

FURTHER READING

Blackshire-Belay, Aisha C. (Ed.). (1992). *Language and Literature in the Black Experience*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press. The articles in this book are useful for understanding the way critical theory is developed within the framework of language and culture.

Mazama, Ama (Ed.). (2003). *The Afrocentric Paradigm*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press. This book provides the most comprehensive collection of methodological and critical essays in Afrocentricity.

AFROCENTRIC EDUCATION

Afrocentricity is the interpretation and/or reinterpretation of reality from an African perspective. Thus *Afrocentric education* is the process through which African culture and the knowledge and skills needed to maintain and perpetuate it are developed and advanced in present generations and transmitted to future generations.

AFROCENTRICITY AS FOUNDATIONAL

Afrocentric education is grounded in and proceeds from the Afrocentric worldview, which includes beliefs regarding the fundamental questions on the existence and organization of the universe and societies. These questions are central to education. J. A. Sofola, in *African Culture and The African Personality*, advanced several ideas about the optimum attributes of formal and informal Afrocentric education, including the following:

1. the family as the epicenter of African social existence, giving the individual family member his or her identity and frame of reference
2. a support system of love, care, responsibility, and justice for each individual from the rest of his or her family and the community at large
3. wholesome human relations providing each individual a stake in the community and balancing the individual's development with the development of the community
4. community land tenure and ownership, providing everyone access to land
5. the peaceful coexistence of different peoples through the philosophy of live and let live
6. respect for elders and the old as a common feature of governance
7. generosity and hospitality toward the "stranger," the "visitor," the "foreigner"
8. an optimistic disposition to life's mission

It can be said that restoration of the Afrocentric worldview exists as a project because African culture has been the target of systematic acts of destruction by proponents of Western European cultural imperialism and white nationalist supremacy. It must be added that national consciousness arises out of a people's culture.

AFROCENTRIC PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION AND WORLDVIEW RESTORATION

Afrocentric education proactively addresses the imposition of cultural alienation and the transformation processes associated with restoring African people to the center of their own story by means of the Afrocentric worldview. While the Afrocentric worldview has existed since antiquity, Afrocentrism has

not. Afrocentrism is a concept that was constructed to enable Africans to use the strengths of enduring cultural unity as weapons for liberation and tools for building a new world order. The need for such a concept was created by African experiences with invasion, conquest, enslavement, colonization, and neo-colonization. Concomitant with these acts of aggression and violence against African people, there have been systematic efforts to destroy African culture through the imposition of European culture on Africans everywhere. The three examples below illustrate how the methodology of Afrocentric worldview restoration as a process of personal transformation has been treated by contemporary scholars.

Afrocentricity is a transforming agent for the restoration of the Afrocentric worldview. The process by which this transformation is to be effected is guided by *Afrology*, a term coined by Asante to refer to a comprehensive Afrocentric philosophical statement with attendant possibilities for a new logic, science, and rhetoric. It is precisely this possibility of individual transformation that makes an Afrocentric collective consciousness viable.

The ideological function of Eurocentric culture can be understood through the systematic analysis of Western culture's deep structure and the uses of its logic. This essentially means learning how to demystify the universalistic claims of Western cultural imperialism by treating them as manifestations of ideology. When Western culture is made visible in this way, it is possible for Africans to transcend the Europeanization of thought and redefine their thinking in African-centered terms. Deconstruction and reconstruction must thus occur in tandem. Given the extent of Western encroachment on African understandings, the employment of constructionist approaches is necessarily anteceded by deconstruction and reconstruction—a relationship between the three approaches that Daudi Azibo deems ideal in his work on African Psychology.

AFROCENTRIC EDUCATION AND THE AFRICAN WORLDVIEW

What sets Afrocentricity apart from other theories is its intrinsic embodiment of an ongoing process of recovery and restoration of the African worldview as a means of locating and centering present conceptions of reality and analysis of phenomena within the African worldview continuum. Afrocentric education, as a corollary of Afrocentricity, must necessarily share these qualities.

Schools are among the institutions through which the process of cultural assault upon Africans has been facilitated. African students are taught to think in non-African ways using Western orientations to knowledge as the foundation for learning. Afrocentric education is therefore part of the same process of cultural restoration and promulgation that is inherent to Afrocentricity. Thus, when it is perceived as a part of the body of human sciences, some of the major assumptions underlying Afrocentric education are as follows:

- it acknowledges African spirituality as an essential aspect of Africans' uniqueness as a people and makes education an instrument of Africans' liberation
- it prepares Africans for self-reliance, nation maintenance, and nation management in every regard
- it provides support for re-Africanization, to counter the cultural alienation imposed through conquest, colonization, and enslavement
- it aims to build commitment and competence in present and future generations to support the struggle for liberation and nationhood
- it facilitates participating in the affairs of nations and defining (or redefining) reality on Africans' own terms, in their own time, and in their own interests
- it emphasizes the fundamental relationship between the strength of African families and the strength of African nationhood
- it ensures that the historic role and function of the customs, traditions, rituals and ceremonies—which have protected and preserved Africans' culture, facilitated their spiritual expression, ensured harmony in their social relations, prepared their people to meet their responsibilities as adult members of the culture, and sustained the continuity of African life over successive generations—are understood and made relevant to the challenges that confront Africans now
- it emphasizes that African identity is embedded in the continuity of African cultural history and that African cultural history represents a distinct reality continually evolving from the experiences of all African people wherever they are and have been on the planet across time and generations
- it builds commitment to the struggle for liberation and to the nation-building process through the exercise of each individual's thought processes

- it embraces the traditional wisdom that “children are the reward of life” and is an expression of Africans’ unconditional love for children, thus it uses educational methods that best serve African children by reflecting the best current understandings of how they develop and learn biologically, spiritually, and culturally

Afrocentric education, then, is, at one and the same time, complex and straightforward. It facilitates preparation for African life; self-determination; a link between spirituality, liberation, and nation building; a bond connecting family and nation; and intergenerational transmission of culture. Moreover, Afrocentric education facilitates recognition of the continuity of African cultural history and commitments to personal transformation.

AFROCENTRIC SCHOOLS

Afrocentric education is clearly dependent upon human perception and interpretation. Thus education can be Afrocentric only to the extent that the persons responsible for the curriculum and instruction in schools consistently apply Afrocentric interpretative frameworks and methodologies to facilitate and evaluate teaching and learning. These persons must be consciously engaged in Afrocentric personal transformation themselves. It follows then that a curriculum or any other artifact of schooling cannot be Afrocentric independent of the human capacity to perceive and interpret it in an Afrocentric manner.

The black power movement in the United States from the mid-1960s through the early 1970s produced perhaps 50 to 75 independent schools in African communities across the country. Although independent schools controlled and operated by Africans had existed in the United States since the 1790s, the schools that came out of late 20th-century progressive politics were radically different from the other schools. This difference was the result of the movement that produced them having learned critical lessons about the politics of education and the role of schools in imposing the ideology and worldview of the politically dominant Eurocentric culture in the United States on African people. The planners and organizers of these schools referred to them as “Independent Black Institutions” and laid out clear objectives for them.

The Council of Independent Black Institutions, founded in 1972, is an umbrella organization of

independent African-centered schools that embody a commitment to reclaiming the African worldview and restoring sovereignty for African people. From the mid-1990s into the early 21st century, the academic successes of the cultural focus of the African-centered independent schools have led to attempts by some public, private, and charter schools, particularly in urban areas, to emulate their model. These efforts have focused on the cultural symbolism and rituals developed by the independent African-centered schools. Their reliance on public funds and the differing ideological commitments of these schools, however, do not lend themselves to the emphases on the self-reliant, institution-building strategies and cultural nationalist goals that characterize independent African-centered schools of the type represented by the Council of Independent Black Institutions.

— Mwalimu J. Shujaa

FURTHER READING

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- Ani, Marimba. (1994). *Yurugu: An African-centered Critique of European Cultural Thought and Behavior*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press. This is a solidly developed analysis of what is wrong with the Eurocentric conception of knowledge.
- Asante, Molefi Kete. (1994). The Afrocentric Project in Education. In M. J. Shujaa (Ed.), *Too Much Schooling, Too Little Education: A Paradox of Black Life In White Societies* (pp. 395–398). Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press. This book discusses some of the most important assumptions behind the Afrocentric movement in education.
- Shujaa, Mwalimu J. (1992). Afrocentric Transformation and Parental Choice in African American Independent Schools. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 61(2), 148–159. This essay analyzes some common motivations and thoughts of African American parents about schooling issues.
- Sofola, J. A. (1973). *African Culture and the African Personality*. Ibadan, Nigeria: Oyo Books. This book provides a useful analysis of common and basic African cultural features.

THE AFROCENTRIC IDEA

The Afrocentric Idea is Molefi Kete Asante’s second salvo in a trilogy of books that includes *Afrocentricity*

(1980) and *Kemet, Afrocentricity, and Knowledge* (1990). In *The Afrocentric Idea* Asante articulates his simultaneously critically acclaimed and vigorously contested concept of Afrocentricity. *Afrocentricity* is, essentially, a critical theoretical framework that advocates analysis of African history and culture and, more generally, world history and culture from an African perspective. Afrocentrists assert that knowledge of classical and contemporary, continental and diasporic African history and culture is inextricable from and indispensable to any analysis or proper interpretation of Africa and Africans.

In a later book, *The Afrocentric Idea* (1987), Asante further develops the theory of Afrocentricity that he initiated in *Afrocentricity* (1980) by bringing it into critical dialogue with the Eurocentric tradition. This tradition extends from Greco-Roman civilization and culture through to contemporary thinkers such as Karl Popper, Edmund Husserl, Claude Lévi-Strauss, and Thomas Kuhn. It is characterized, albeit often clandestinely, by the belief that the European way of viewing phenomena is not only the correct way to engage history and culture but also somehow universal, neutral, and normal. Asante asserts that Afrocentricity does not question the value and validity of the Eurocentric tradition within its context, within the life-worlds and limits of European culture and civilization. However, what Afrocentricity does take issue with is what European imperial expansion efforts have historically done and currently continue to do—obliterate and erase, censor and systematically deny African (and other non-European peoples') humanity and history, their culture and contributions to civilization. At the heart of the Afrocentric idea, then, is a radical rejection and constant critique of the established European imperial order. It is a view that critically assesses the past and present monocultural reality with the intent, literally, of creating a new, multicultural, multiperspectival, and multidimensional reality.

The Afrocentric Idea opens with a gentle nudging by Asante for his readers to come to terms with the fact that there are a multiplicity of views from which to analyze and experience phenomena, not only the European view, and certainly not the European *imperial* point of view. According to the nature of paradigm shifts pointed out by Popper and Kuhn, among others, Asante argues that the next great paradigm shift will involve the issues of cultural specificity and positionality. The Eurocentric paradigm theorists

write and speak of changes in science and scientific culture without considering the sociohistorical reality of their perspectives, which are based on race, gender, and class.

According to Asante, human beings' *historicity*, their consciousness of their own and their ancestors' lived experiences and life struggles, is never neatly checked at the door like an overcoat at a dinner party, but it more often than not has a deep and abiding impact and influence on their thought and behavior (i.e., their concepts and categories of culture and their life practices). Because of the protracted and often hidden nature of European hegemony in modern life, that is, what scholars such as Maulana Karenga and Molefi Kete Asante have called the progressive Europeanization of human consciousness, many European and European-trained theorists are conceptually incarcerated. To combat conceptual incarceration and the internalization of imperial thought and practices (e.g., racism, sexism, capitalism, and colonialism, among others), Asante advances *centeredness* and *agency* as the two central categories of the Afrocentric idea as a conceptual system and method.

AFRICA AS SOURCE AND CENTER

For Asante and the Afrocentrists, Africa is as much a cultural paradigm and crucial point of departure as a continent. For diasporic and continental African people to center themselves in Africa is, first and foremost, to dialogue with African history and culture, to be conversant with its spiritual, philosophical, and axiological systems and traditions. Centering entails asking Africa crucial questions and seeking critical answers; it involves utilizing Africa's contributions to culture and civilization in a current and ongoing effort to address the crisis, conflicts, and contradictions of the contemporary moment. Malcolm X, among others, believed that a psychological, cultural, and philosophical migration back to Africa would solve the problems of African loss of centeredness. This idea resonates deeply within and reverberates sonically throughout *The Afrocentric Idea* and Asante's other works. In *The Afrocentric Idea*, the notion of centering includes placing African ideals at the center of any analysis that involves African culture and behavior, as well as asking crucial cultural questions in categories such as location, place, and stance.

LANGUAGE AND LOCATION THEORY

An Afrocentrist locates a text by studying its language, attitude, and direction. Language is the cornerstone of location theory because it most easily manifests its author's conceptual incarceration or conceptual liberation. For example, a writer who calls Africans "primitives" or "pygmies" or a text that refers to an African or Native American nation or cultural group as "a tribe," "bushmen," or any other pejorative term demonstrates that the writer and her or his text are caught within the confines of European imperial culture and philosophy.

The writer's attitude toward African history and culture also is an important indicator of the writer's perspective. For instance, how does the writer describe and explain decolonization? Which is to say, how does the writer theorize African anticolonial social and political practice? Does the writer theorize from a European colonial vantage point, which employs all manner of imperial euphemisms and pejoratives? Or, does the writer theorize from a point of view internal to African history, culture, and struggle, which displays an in-depth understanding of African epistemology, sensitivity to the subject, and understanding of Africans' right to live self-determined and dignified lives? In addition, the Afrocentricist asks to whom the text is directed or, put another way, who is the intended audience? Is the text affirming of African and universal human dignity, or does it deny, denude, and degrade the humanity of Africans or others? In this sense, the Afrocentricist is also a radical humanist and is critically and constantly concerned about the aim of the text—who it is intended for and what it is intended to do. At the core of these questions, then, is the Afrocentric concern with the overarching perspective of the writer and purpose of the text he or she has produced.

AGENCY AND LIBERATION THEORY

In Afrocentric theory, the concept of agency is given pride of place. Nowhere, perhaps, is this more apparent than in *The Afrocentric Idea*. According to Asante, *agency* entails Africans' self-conscious action. Further, it is one of the aspects of Afrocentricity that distinguishes it most from the Négritude theorists' concept of Africanity, which is primarily concerned with African identity and ontology (i.e., being). The Afrocentric concept of agency extends and expands

history and epistemology by offering new and alternative paths for interpretation of African and human experience. It simultaneously challenges and points to the hegemonic character of Eurocentric interpretations of African history and culture by highlighting and accenting Africans' self-assertions and life struggles to demand their long-denied human dignity. *The Afrocentric Idea* is concerned, perhaps more than anything else, with widening our understanding of what it means to be both African and human in the fullest and most expansive sense.

— Reiland Rabaka

FURTHER READING

- Asante, Molefi Kete. (1980). *Afrocentricity*. Buffalo, NY: Amulefi. This was Asante's first book on the subject of Afrocentricity, the third edition of which was published in 2003. It was meant for a popular audience and therefore is written in a passionate, engaging style.
- Asante, Molefi Kete. (1990). *Kemet, Afrocentricity, and Knowledge*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press. Written with the purpose of laying a foundation for actual Afrocentric research, this work is the major essay on the methodological issues surrounding the Afrocentric enterprise.
- Asante, Molefi Kete. (1998). *The Afrocentric Idea* (rev. ed.). Philadelphia: Temple University Press. This is Asante's principal statement on the theoretical idea of African agency in textual, intertextual, and phenomenal approaches to research.
- Asante, Molefi Kete. (1999). *The Painful Demise of Eurocentrism: An Afrocentric Response to Critics*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press. Attacking the arguments of those who claim that Egypt is not a part of Africa, this work asserts the Africanism of ancient Egypt, the primacy of African chronology, and the fact that Egypt is to Africa what Greece is to Europe.

THE AFROCENTRIC PARADIGM

The Afrocentric Paradigm (2003), edited by Ama Mazama, a Temple University professor of African American Studies, has become the most significant text in Afrocentric discourse since the publication of Molefi Kete Asante's second edition of *The Afrocentric Idea* (1998). Indeed, *The Afrocentric Paradigm* has quickly become the most definitive theoretical collection in the brief history of Afrocentric research or Afrocentricity.

What makes *The Afrocentric Paradigm* particularly valuable is that it details the evolution of the



Dr. Ama Mazama, Afrocentric theorist and scholar

Afrocentric idea. In her introduction, Mazama points out that Afrocentricity was not produced in a vacuum and has several important antecedents. She credits Marcus Garvey, Cheikh Anta Diop, Frantz Fanon, Aimé Césaire, Maulana Karenga, Léopold Sédar Senghor, Négritude, black nationalism, pan-Africanism, and Kawaida with providing Asante with a theoretical foundation to develop the Afrocentric idea. What also makes *The Afrocentric Paradigm* brilliantly unique is Mazama's clarity in defining Afrocentricity.

In her introduction, the editor indeed convincingly argues that Afrocentricity is the foundational and necessary paradigm for the discipline of Black Studies. She then proceeds to analyze thoroughly its metaphysical dimension (with its affective, cognitive, and conative aspects), as well as its structural and functional dimensions. Her emphasis is clearly on the metaphysical dimension, however, as the book addresses itself to an academic audience. Thus Mazama deals with Afrocentric epistemology, methodology, and methods and reviews many Afrocentric theories.

Mazama has pulled together a collection of scholars who represent the core of Afrocentric scholarship. These major scholars in the field of Africology/Africana/African American/Black Studies have also contributed to the Afrocentric idea and are coming from

various areas of specialization. The book is divided into two sections: the Metaphysical Foundations and the Sociological Dimension. The Sociological Dimension includes three categories: (1) Africology as the Afrocentric Disciplinary Matrix; (2) Afrocentric Epistemology, Concepts, and Methodology; and (3) Afrocentric Theories.

The first section of the book, the Metaphysical Foundations, begins with the article "The Afrocentric Idea" by none other than Molefi Kete Asante, who articulates the idea with clarity and purpose. Maulana Karenga, another giant in the field, concludes the section with his essay "Afrocentricity and Multicultural Education: Concept Challenge and Contribution." Also included in this section is Danjuma Sinue Modupe's "The Afrocentric Philosophical Perspective: A Narrative Outline."

In the second section of the book, the Sociological Dimension, Asante's article "African American Studies: The Future of the Discipline" stands alone in the first category, Africology as the Afrocentric Disciplinary Matrix. In Asante's article, he explores the need for further development of the discipline. The second category, Afrocentric Epistemology, Concepts, and Methodology, includes the work of Asante in addition to articles by Norman Harris, Linda James Myers, and Na'im Akbar. Each article provides a solid framework with which to engage Afrocentric research by providing the proper methods and methodologies. These scholars understand that a cohesive and coherent set of philosophical assumptions is necessary in developing an Afrocentric frame of reference.

The final category, Afrocentric Theories, explores several such theories that further our understanding of African phenomena. This category opens with two articles, one by Clenora Hudson-Weems and one by Nah Dove. These articles are crucial because they address the significant role of African women in the overall struggle for liberation and identity for African people. The category also includes Jerome H. Schiele's ideas on Afrocentricity and social work, Ama Mazama's Afrocentric approach to language planning, and Kariamou Welsh-Asante's articulation of African aesthetics, as well as Molefi Kete Asante's position on examining texts through an Afrocentric lens, Mwalimu Shujaa's examination of the role of Afrocentricity in the education of African children, and Asa Hilliard's review of pedagogy in ancient Kemet.

This edited volume is a must read for anyone interested in the discipline of Africology, as well as for

those interested in understanding the Afrocentric idea. Ama Mazama has provided a text that effectively dispels all misrepresentations and preconceived notions of Afrocentricity. Her choice of scholars to assist in further establishing the idea is part of the genius of this monumental work.

— Adisa A. Alkebulan

FURTHER READING

- Asante, Molefi Kete. (1998). *The Afrocentric Idea* (rev. ed.). Philadelphia: Temple University Press. (Original work published 1987). This was the first major work to define Afrocentricity as an intellectual agent within the academy with special reference to the area of public discourse and communications.
- Asante, Molefi Kete. (1990). *Kemet Afrocentricity and Knowledge*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press. In this work, Asante further defines Afrocentricity as an intellectual idea within the academy in general. This text also helped shape the scope of the discipline of Africology.
- Asante, Molefi Kete. (2003). *Afrocentricity: The Theory of Social Change*. Chicago: Third World Press. This book was originally published in 1980 under the title *Afrocentricity: The Theory of Social Change*. Asante's aim was to introduce the general public to the idea of Afrocentricity, thus this book is valuable in the practical application of Afrocentricity to Africans' daily lives rather than as a guide for conducting Afrocentric research.

THE AFROCENTRIC SCHOLAR

The Afrocentric Scholar, which was later renamed the *International Journal of Africana Studies*, is the primary journal of the National Council for Black Studies (NCBS). It was first published in 1992 by the Center for Black Culture and Research at West Virginia University under the editorship of William A. Little. The mission of the journal has from its inception been to encourage scholarly research that explores and analyzes the history of African people in Africa and the diaspora from an Afrocentric perspective. The overall goal of the journal is to provide an alternative and relevant framework for the study of African world people, their history and culture. The journal supports the mission of NCBS to promote academic excellence and social responsibility; it also provides Black Studies (also called Africana Studies and African Studies) scholars with their own space for intellectual debates about content and pedagogical

approaches and to publish articles relevant to the field and to African people's lived experience. The journal therefore supports the intellectual growth of the discipline by publishing scholarly articles that provide teaching and learning materials for Black Studies courses.

The journal solicits articles on relevant issues confronting African world societies and written from the perspective of African people's experience. The journal's emphasis is on generating and promoting new ideas regarding the nature of the challenges confronting African world societies, as well as the causes of and solutions to those challenges. The journal's guiding philosophy is the principle of respect and appreciation for African world indigenous and contemporary knowledge systems.

The journal was published as *The Afrocentric Scholar* until 1996, when its name was changed to the *International Journal of Africana Studies*. The change of name reflected the controversy within NCBS regarding whether Afrocentricity was the defining paradigm for African American Studies. In 1999, Loyola Marymount University became the institutional sponsor of the journal. The *International Journal of Africana Studies* publishes articles by major African leaders and thinkers in the African world.

— William Little

FURTHER READING

- Karenga, Maulana. (2002). *Introduction to Black Studies*. Los Angeles: Sankore University Press. This work discusses at length the emergence of Black Studies.
- Mazama, Ama (Ed.). (2003). *The Afrocentric Paradigm*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press. The essays in this book provide a solid understanding of the paradigmatic role of Afrocentricity for Black Studies.

AFROCENTRIC SCHOOLS

Afrocentric schools were developed during the 1980s as African American educators demanded that schools center children within their own cultural context. There had been a strong independent school tradition in the African American community prior to this time, but in the 1980s the movement gained momentum from the articulation of the Afrocentric philosophy by leading intellectuals. Many of those persons became

consultants for the new schools being designed on the basis of the transformative ideas generated by the Afrocentrists. There are now over 300 of these schools devoted to the proper education of African children.

One of the first Afrocentric schools was started by Freya Rivers in Lansing, Michigan. This school, Sankofa Charter School, was a model during the time of Rivers's leadership. The school based its content and form on the principles in the works of Maulana Karenga, Harriet McAdoo, Asa Hilliard, and Molefi Kete Asante. Consequently, the school flourished and the students demonstrated outstanding academic leadership. Children were learning four foreign languages in elementary school and mastering mathematics by the fourth grade. Other schools across the nation followed the Sankofa model, and although many of the administrators were hampered by a Byzantine system of rules and regulations, they were able to make progress.

Most Afrocentric schools adhere to the following ten basic tenets of the centered school, which developed out of the movement to attach children to the subject matter being taught to them in urban schools.

1. A centered school takes each student's culture into account in every subject and at every grade level. Where there are many cultures, the teacher must seek to demonstrate during the school term that she or he has an interest in centering these students of many cultures in the subject.
2. A centered school seeks to create lessons, strategies, and goals that reflect the concept of authentic voice, which means that the material in the classroom must reflect the cultural experiences of the children. Centering is the centerpiece of the classroom process, and it is pursued by the teacher's seeking all the ways to attach the student to history, concepts, mythology, science, mathematics, nature, motifs, and the personalities that pervade the lessons.
3. A centered school operates on the principle of scientific generation, where the school principal is a generator for the building and the teacher is a generator for the classroom. A generator is one who energizes. Thus, the principal energizes the faculty and the faculty energizes the students.
4. A centered school is a positive school, in which the environment reflects the centeredness of the students. The school is clean, brightly painted, and centered to reflect the student population. It is filled with color images, posters, and slogans of achievement. There may be also proverbs. Each classroom is an invitation to learning.
5. A centered classroom is a laboratory for creative discussion, discourse, debate, and critical thinking. The idea is to make every significant concept live by discussion. The classroom teacher corrects false information and irrational views with sensitivity. This means that the centered classroom is one where discussion is embraced.
6. A centered school's discipline is based on respect for knowledge in both the bringer and the seeker of knowledge. The principles of Maat (order, balance, harmony, justice, righteousness, truth, and reciprocity) are uppermost in the classroom. Teachers may also employ the Nguzo Saba, seven principles of community, for maintaining discipline. This means that the students are taught to respect themselves, the search for knowledge, and the teacher and other students. Discipline is based on knowledge and thus on the willingness of the teacher to listen to and accept questions.
7. A centered school celebrates the culture of its students. Teachers feel comfortable wearing the fashions of the students' cultures, present speakers and performers from the culture, and use illustrations and lessons from the culture. A student in such a school understands the historical role his or her people have played in world events.
8. A centered school involves the parents in the process of centering the students. However, it may be necessary for the school to first center the students' parents, so that the parents understand how to center their children in the culture. Therefore, at public meetings held at the school, the principal or designee reviews the ideas behind the centered school, providing the parents with a brief history of the Afrocentric school concept and its applicability to centered schools.
9. A centered school is a high-achieving school where the principal, teachers, and students meet regularly to repledge themselves to academic and professional excellence. A high-achieving school always has an academic and cultural goal. The academic goal is to succeed in being the best school possible on the basis of the credentials of the students as demonstrated by their learning.

10. A centered school asks the question, Who are my students? In answering this question each day, the centered school applies the principles of learning styles, relational attributes, oral presentation, personality, aesthetics, and cultural symbols to the issues of environment and achievement.

The teachers and administrators who establish centered schools use these principles as departure points in developing the schools. Thus centered schools reflect the unique characteristics of the best quality education possible within a given school community.

— *Molefi Kete Asante*

FURTHER READING

- Akoto, K. A. (1992). *Nationbuilding Theory and Practice in Afrikan Centered Education*. Washington, DC: Pan African World Institute. This is a powerful pan-African statement of the need for independent African institutions.
- Kambon, Kobi. (1998). *African/Black Psychology in the American Context: An African-Centered Approach*. Tallahassee, FL: Nubian Nation. From a theoretical point of view, this is one of the best works to date on the educational, cultural, and economics issues confronting the African American population.
- Lomotey, Kofi (Ed.). (1990). *Going to School: The African American Experience*. Albany: State University of New York Press. This is an excellent collection of articles by outstanding scholars that covers the entire school experience of African Americans.
- Shujaa, Mwalimu (Ed.). (1994). *Too Much Schooling, Too Little Education: A Paradox of Black Life in White Societies*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press. Shujaa's book is a dynamic work that speaks to the contradictions inherent in the way black children are educated in America. It is a very sobering work.

AFROCENTRIC SOCIAL WORK

Afrocentric social work is a culturally specific paradigm that embraces an African-centered worldview as the basis for theories and models of practice. Afrocentric social work draws on the principles, values, and local knowledge for models of practice. The hallmark of the social work profession has been its emphasis on promoting humanitarian values. These core values of social work are firmly grounded in a historical foundation of social justice, as demonstrated in the profession's commitment to equality and

self-determination for all as an integral part of its professional ethos. The general purpose of social work operations and practices has been subject to numerous and profound changes over time. One of these changes is the addition of specifically Afrocentric social work, which seeks social change through empowering blacks to address their own needs and the pressing needs of their communities.

Recent developments in critical theory, which have identified the various ways in which Western forms of knowledge dominate social work models and approaches, have clarified the necessity of Afrocentric social work. These understandings strengthen the need to examine the knowledge base of social work to locate its intellectual hegemony as the source of its explanatory theories and therapeutic ideas about human behavior. It is in this way that scholars and researchers challenge hidden sources of oppression within social work knowledge and create new models for practice.

Thus a new generation of black scholars and researchers is engaged in developing theoretical and practice models that encompass the values and cultural heritage of black people as action-oriented strategies for social change. This heritage includes belief in the interconnectedness of all things; the spiritual nature of human beings; the interdependence of collective and individual identity; the inclusive nature of family structure; the oneness of mind, body, and spirit; and the value of interpersonal relationships as the source of interpretative frameworks of human behavior.

Afrocentricity as a theory of social change is in accord with social work's mission to promote humanitarian values and empower oppressed communities. Afrocentric social work gives voice to the cultural values, philosophies, experiences, and interpretations of black communities regarding the causes and resolutions of social problems. These cultural elements and themes become the source of knowledge and interpretative frameworks used to design social work interventions as a means of black empowerment, community regeneration, and spiritual renewal.

Historically, social welfare activities in black communities have been closely connected to social, religious, and political organizations, which have been major sources of support for black families and individuals in the struggle for survival and resistance to deep-seated racism and oppression. These unique historical experiences provide the background and

context in which contemporary black led organizations have asserted black rights through which the needs of black people have been addressed. One of the first black groups to call upon black social workers was Marcus Garvey's organization during the early part of the 20th century.

Social welfare activities have been shaped and defined by forms of solidarity, mutuality, and reciprocity grounded in the cultural antecedents of African personhood and community. Thus black communities, scholars, and professionals have been engaged in reconnecting with an African cultural matrix in their quest for community regeneration and revitalization and cultural renewal. Cultural knowledge provides an important resource base for black individuals and families engaged in affirming their spiritual, emotional, and intellectual experiences and potential and in creating new visions and futures in the diaspora.

Community-based rites of passage programs have become an established framework for social work practice in black communities. There are various forms of rites of passage that support major transitional relationships in families and facilitate the regeneration of communities. Life-cycle development (i.e., rites of passage) programs use cultural values as the central feature in guiding social work interventions. This action-oriented approach is an effective tool in responding to the needs of many young black people. An African-centered worldview is articulated within the program through the value system represented by the seven pan-African principles known as the Nguzo Saba. Each principle of the Nguzo Saba provides the focus for program objectives and activities. These social work interventions have made important inroads in serving the growth needs of young black people and their families and communities. Codifying African cultural values in explanations of human behavior enables Africans' empowerment to be realized through a culturally centered approach to social realities.

— Mekada Graham

FURTHER READING

Graham, Mekada. (1999). The African-centred Worldview: Developing a Paradigm for Social Work. *British Journal of Social Work*, 29(2), 252–67. This was one of the first articles to apply the Afrocentric concepts developed by Asante to the social problems of Britain.

Graham, M. (2002). *Social Work and African-centred Worldviews*. Birmingham, UK: Venture Press/BASW. This is the first work written on the nature of Afrocentric social work. It deals with the cultural-specific issues surrounding the welfare of African people in the United Kingdom.

Schiele, J. (2000). *Human Services and the Afrocentric Paradigm*. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press. This award-winning book has become the standard by which many other social welfare works are judged.

AFROCENTRICITY

Afrocentricity: The Theory of Social Change, the first edition of which was published in 1980, was Molefi Kete Asante's initial thrust toward a critical theoretical framework that advocates analysis of African history and culture and, more generally, world history and culture from an African perspective. Such an Afrocentric critique situates the analysis of phenomena in the cultural agency of African people. The Afrocentrist asserts that knowledge of classical and contemporary, continental and diasporic African history and culture is inextricable from and indispensable to any analysis or proper interpretation of Africa and Africans.

Though the theory of Afrocentricity has antecedents and borrows from several social and political theories, it was not until the publication of *Afrocentricity* that the theory received its first sophisticated and systematic treatment. This book became the signature work in the field. It signaled a new adventure in intellectual activity and lifted the work of scholars in African American Studies (also called Black Studies) to a more theoretical plane and provided a basis for an Afrocentric critique of Western culture. A second, revised and expanded edition of *Afrocentricity: The Theory of Social Change* was published in 2003 by African American Images of Chicago. Asante has observed that although Afrocentrists often harbor varying intellectual agendas and interests, which reflect their training in diverse academic disciplines and their radically different political persuasions, what makes them Afrocentrists is their conscious utilization of a historically and culturally grounded African approach to and analysis of knowledge and experience.

The book *Afrocentricity* builds on the thought and practice of many activist-intellectuals and highlights key areas for developing Afrocentric critique. Thus the

central tasks of a serious discussion of Afrocentricity, as both a critical theory of contemporary society and a cultural consciousness-raising movement, are (1) explaining its core characteristics, concepts, and basic categories of analysis; (2) bringing to the fore the major moments and the often shrouded meaning of its discourse and debates; and (3) seriously and soberly delineating the criticisms of *Afrocentricity*.

Afrocentricity sought to provide a coherent conceptual framework. This framework in Asante's view takes culture to be simultaneously crucial and critical with regard to efforts aimed at the mental and physical emancipation of Africans in particular and humanity in general. Asante argues in *Afrocentricity* that culture is precisely what enables one to locate a theorist and his or her text, deciphering whether the language, attitude, and direction, among other aspects of the text, are anti-African and therefore anti-human. Upon locating an anti-African text, the Afrocentrist critiques the text by radically rereading it, that is, locating it in light of African historical and cultural experience.

Afrocentricity considers the historical fact that the European imperial impulse has led to Native American holocaust and almost absolute physical and cultural decimation of Native Americans; African Holocaust (*maangamizi* in Kiswahili), enslavement, and colonization; and the domination and colonization of various Asian peoples. Therefore, *Afrocentricity* argues, Africans should cease imitating Europe and its mores and offer ethical and egalitarian alternatives to the established imperial order by asking Africa questions and seeking from African history and culture answers to the major issues of the modern epoch.

This line of thinking, that Africa and African peoples have a powerful message for humanity, and that all methods of fighting white supremacy must be embraced at the dawn of the 21st century, resonates deeply with many of the most radical theorists and activists of the Afrocentric movement. Some of the central figures in this intellectual movement are Molefi Kete Asante, Maulana Karenga, Ama Mazama, Marimba Ani, Tony Martin, Leonard Jeffries, Linda James Myers, Theophile Obenga, Oba T'Shaka, Wade Nobles, Chinweizu, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Danjuma Modupe, Runoko Rashidi, Clenora Hudson-Weems, Bobby Wright, Amos Wilson, Na'im Akbar, and Kobi Kambon. This type of thought also put a premium on the Afrocentric pantheon of intellectual ancestors, usually intellectual activists who consciously asserted African agency and self-determination in their specific

time and circumstance. A short list of ancestors would surely have to include W.E.B. Du Bois, Cheikh Anta Diop, Frantz Fanon, Anna Julia Cooper, Edward Wilmot Blyden, Martin Delany, Ida B. Wells, Mary Church Terrell, Marcus and Amy Jacques Garvey, Carter G. Woodson, Mary McLeod Bethune, Léopold Sédar Senghor, Aimé Césaire, Ella Baker, Malcolm X, Fannie Lou Hamer, Kwame Ture, and Walter Rodney.

Afrocentricity demonstrates that after 500 years of the progressive Europeanization of human consciousness, it is not only European imperial thought and texts that stand in need of Afrocentric analysis but also African history itself. African peoples have been systematically taught to view and value the world, and to think and behave, from a European imperial frame of reference. This means that many contemporary Africans have internalized not just imperial but also anti-African thought and practices. It is in this sense that Asante positions his work, *Afrocentricity*, as both a critique and a corrective.

AFROCENTRICITY AS CRITIQUE AND CORRECTIVE

Afrocentricity allows dislocated Africans, that is, Africans moved off of their cultural territory and who have an imperial relationship with African cultural theory and traditions, to relocate, return to, and reclaim their long denied humanity, history, and heritage. As critique, *Afrocentricity* locates the anti-African and other antihuman elements of a particular thought and practice—whether rendered under the guise of religion, science, art, or even long-held tradition—and by reading these elements against the backdrop of African historical and cultural experience, offers an ethical and egalitarian alternative to the imperial impulse. Further, as a corrective, *Afrocentricity* radically relocates and recenters, providing both its adherents and the subjects (as opposed to objects) in question with mutual ground upon which to engage and exchange with one another. In this book, Asante poses a major challenge to the crude classical Western scientific dichotomies.

Although Asante has sometimes been criticized as essentialist, there is nothing in *Afrocentricity* that argues biology alone. Afrocentricity has nothing whatsoever to do with general discussions, by persons of African descent or others, of Africa and African peoples' history, culture, societies, religions, political organizations, and so forth. And, further, it should not be confused with melanin theory, which is biologically

determined and extremely reactionary and, therefore, harmful to both Africans and humanity as a whole.

Afrocentricity revolves on an axis of African agency and asks questions concerning historical and cultural accuracy and interpretation based on its four basic categories of analysis: cosmology, epistemology, axiology, and aesthetics. Asante is therefore against not European thought and culture but European *imperial* thought and culture. In addition, it is a monstrous misinterpretation to claim that Afrocentricity is Eurocentricism in blackface or reverse racism, because Afrocentricity is not a biologically determined ideology but a radical sociotheoretical framework, as evidenced by its epistemic openness and inherently humanist posture, a posture Asante has illustrated in many articles and essays.

Afrocentricity continues to be widely read and understood by the masses of African people, and it demonstrates how an idea can become theory, political practice, and social movement. This is true because the book is part and parcel of a larger and long-standing effort by people of African descent and others to liberate themselves, both physically and mentally, and bring into existence new human beings and a new world.

— Reiland Rabaka

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AFROCULTURAL THEORY

Afrocultural theory aims to explain the various phenomena associated with African cultural practices and behavior. Thus Afrocultural theory is dedicated to understanding how the behaviors, traditions, customs, and rituals of African societies affect the development of consciousness in the African person. It seeks to explain cultural consciousness in terms of certain events or processes the African person has adapted from his or her cultural reality. When a person has internalized the phenomena of the African cultural world, there is the possibility of consciousness, more than awareness in a popular sense, of the phenomena, meaning essentially that the person views the phenomena from inside what is happening. A person who is raised within the context of an African cultural world where there is a ritual associated with puberty, for instance, will normally have a different reaction to additional ritualized situations than a person who has never experienced the situation. This is to be expected in the course of activities that involve what is often referred to as *Africanity*. This is the process of participating in the activities that are usually analyzable by Afrocultural theory.

In *The Afrocentric Idea*, Molefi Kete Asante applies Afrocultural theory to an analysis of African oratorical and rhetorical behavior. Asante contends that the idea of an African cultural reality that locates oratory in the traditional values of the African world—where oral tradition, speech, and the generative power of the spoken word had value in themselves—is fundamental to

appreciating the privileging of oratory in the African community. Other scholars apply the concepts of Afro-cultural theory to language, call-and-response activities, and rituals. Afro-cultural theory suggests that the use of African traditions, customs, and rituals might help to explain the contemporary behaviors and attitudes of people of African descent. This is to suggest not that there are no other influences on contemporary Africans but that one cannot forget the cultural origins of African activities when examining African lives.

What Asante and other scholars have attempted to do with Afro-cultural theory is to open the door to a new way of assessing the multiple experiences of Africans. Like the metatheoretical idea of Afrocentricity, Afro-cultural theory places a considerable weight on the issue of location. Thus, an Afro-cultural analysis seeks to discover where the parties being analyzed are located culturally. This is a feature of determining consciousness, as it is easy to see whether a person is coming from the inside of a process or from the outside in an interpretation or an expression. The researcher therefore *places* the various parties in an investigation in order to obtain an adequate assessment. In Afro-cultural theory, the researcher also realizes that the parties to be investigated have automatically placed themselves by their own activities. Thus it is possible for a person to look black phenotypically but to be devoid of any hint of Africanity, that is, affiliation with custom, traditions, or rituals of the African culture in any form. Or, a person may not look black phenotypically yet may be deeply involved in the African cultural world. Thus, the Afro-cultural theory adjusts for the infinite variations of the African cultural world.

— Molefi Kete Asante

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AFRONOGRAPHY

Afronography is a method of recording and writing the African experience from an Afrocentric perspective.

As a method of ascertaining the condition or state of an event, person, or text related to African people, Afronography projects both an ethical and an evaluative dimension. In its ethical dimension, it is concerned with the nature of what is in the best interest of the African community specifically and the world community generally. The evaluative dimension allows the Afronographer to discern the usefulness of an event, person, or text in the search for truth. In both dimensions, Afronography seeks to understand the characteristics that accompany certain positions, hence, *positionalities*. The idea is that all positions carry with them certain obvious and not so obvious characteristics that allow a viewer, reader, locator to determine the extent of the influence of those characteristics on the position. In one sense this is a utilitarian function. Utility in an epistemological sense is related to the character of the proof discovered in the qualitative environment.

Establishing the nature and extent of social, critical, and cultural positionalities by employing such terms as *dislocations*, *distortions*, *simplifications*, *blurs*, *distances*, *omissions*, and *misidentifications* within the context of ethics and evaluation creates opportunities for stating more clearly and precisely the role of Africans in a given situation. Each movement away from Afrocentricity is considered a way of being out of location, and the Afronographer grapples with this in the writing of any particular experience.

Afronography seeks to determine what it is to know something. There are four approaches used by Afronography: historical, experiential, textual, and social. The aim of these approaches is to engage phenomena in such a way that it becomes possible to determine the location of the agent, creator, operator, or subject. Thus, examples from history, science, art, and various other disciplines compete to mark the location of a phenomenon.

Among the questions being raised by Afronography are what forms of legitimation are necessary for this new method of viewing reality and what the nature is of any legitimacy that does not privilege the people who are being studied. Thus the questions naturally arise as to how to expand the work being done by Afronographers gratis, and what types of institutional structures would ensure the legitimation of this perspective. Clearly the established institutional fields do not support granting legitimacy to a methodological form that questions their lack of diversity. What then is the task of the Afronographer? The Afronographer says that it is to demonstrate that the African narrative

can be understood within the context of any given situation so long as the African is not deprived as subject.

The Afronographer seeks to discover, argue, analyze, prove, challenge, describe, justify, or clarify some situation. This is done within the context of seeking what is true, describing human actions and products, and being respectful of all human situations. Respect is demonstrated in the Afronographer's accurate depictions, direct quotations, and highlighting contradictions. In Afronography, all analysis is based on the idea that explicit abstraction and generalization of data should concentrate on the issue of location. As the Afronographer is interested in understanding the role of the analyzed, the goal of Afronographic analysis is not antihumanist as it is in most purely statistical analyses (which seek to establish reliable frequencies and generalize from them to predict behavior).

Afronography is important because of the value it places on knowing. It is a method that seeks to dispel myths, construct valid identity, and readjust typification. Inasmuch as the myths and stereotypes surrounding African positionalities have been negative and have sustained the marginality of African people, Afronography, using a centered perspective on situations, seeks to recenter the discussion about African people by allowing for the subject place of Africans to reveal all varieties of opinions. Afronography is therefore not a system designed to replace Eurocentric analysis for the sake of replacement, but rather, a method that seeks to elicit the positionalities, ideas, themes, and information that have always escaped Eurocentric analysis in which Africans are marginalized. Thus the aim is for scholars to have better judgment by using methods that include face-to-face approaches, total awareness, surrogacy, and empathy to arrive at conclusions. The value of surrogacy is in its nonreflectivity, its immediacy, and its reality. If the researcher cannot know all Jamaicans, what should he or she do to learn something about Jamaicans? Of course, the first thing the researcher should do is to look for reasonable stand-ins or surrogates for all Jamaicans, such as individual Jamaican filmmakers, novelists, reporters, tourists, and so forth. What Afronography allows the researcher to do is to discover in time, place, religion, environment, myths, taboos, customs, habits, and behaviors a measure of what is true, from the standpoint of the African as subject, in a given situation. Ultimately, this is the value of Afronography.

QUALITATIVE METHODS AND ORIENTATION IN AFRONOGRAPHY

In many ways, Afronography is akin to what in sociology is called *ethnography* or *case studies*, but Afronography begins from a different place and has objectives that are often at variance with those of ethnography. While ethnography was developed as a Eurocentric way of acquiring information about people other than Europeans, Afronography is a method of gaining access to information about Africans from the standpoint of African culture itself. This trend in scholarship must be seen as research in its proper context, where researchers have a reasonable handle on the issues confronting students in the discipline of Africology.

A key factor in being a researcher in the contemporary world has to do with appreciating the centrality of human agency. No researcher understands this more than the adequately trained Africological researcher who seeks to explore the best ways to know something and then to be able to explain what he or she knows. The Africologist, however, wants to know about things from the standpoint of Africans as agents. This means that all things are not within the purview of the Afronographer, just as the economist does not seek to apply her methods to physics. Using Afronography, the Africologist wants to be able to discover, through direct methods over a period of time, some particular answers to human problems. The aim of Afronography has to be to cope with the persistent distortion of the African presence in the world.

There are always more possibilities, potentialities, and problems of agency than researchers expect. However, it is by directly knowing some of the issues that researchers are able to properly explain them. A researcher might ask, is there an illusion of conscious will? The answer to this question throws light on the question of what it is a person actually does when that person does something. All action is created by the mind, and will itself is a creation of the mind. Thus it is difficult to speak of anything other than the feeling of free will. What constitutes agency on the part of a researcher? Is it the actual conscious will to do something or the process of doing it? Whatever answers to these questions the research discovers, it is clear that the Afrocentrist working in Africology must be attuned to finding ways to make sense out of unexamined types, stereotypes, and repetitive actions and forms in ordinary life.

THE MOST RADICAL EMPIRICISM

The Afrocentrist accepts personal knowledge as the most radical form of knowing. Personal knowledge is divided into two parts: (1) intense self-knowledge and (2) outside knowledge. In the first instance, people are interested in what they know about themselves. This is usually seen as identity types of knowledge, that is, who people are in terms of their origin, birth, education, parents, domicility, and culture. Outside knowledge refers to what people know when they are face to face with objects, events, and other people. This is the purview of Afronography.

In the contemporary world, it is necessary for people to know about much more than themselves. People's personal knowledge must include information about those they cannot possibly get to know and events that they will not be able to see, thus Afrocentrists must create ways to approach this quandary. Afrocentrists do this by establishing a methodology that has nonreflectivity and immediacy. Afronography helps researchers to make sense out of the complex, multilevel, urban and rural environments where human interactions occur in a heterogeneous nation where African people have historically been marginalized. It is one of the ways that humans can reorient knowledge and create conditions for effective human interactions within the context of heterogeneity.

To be an Afronographer, then, is to be aware of the multifaceted nature of human existence in the world, not merely the existence of mind, or social institutions, or economic processes. But since any researcher is really only one individual who neither can be in every place nor represent every human condition, researchers must depend upon reasonable surrogates for their radical empiricism. The value of knowing is that it dispels myths, helps to construct valid identity, readjusts types, and helps people to make better decisions. In the final analysis, real (i.e., concrete) usable knowledge helps with face-to-face, empathic, holistic, and surrogate consciousness.

— Molefi Kete Asante

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ALL-AFRICAN PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

The All-African People's Revolutionary Party (A-APRP) is the brainchild of Ghana's first president, Kwame Nkrumah (1909–1972). The first published call for an A-APRP was in Nkrumah's *Handbook of Revolutionary Warfare* (1968). This call was a clear indication of the shift in focus of African freedom fighters from nonviolent positive action campaigns and regional approaches to all out continent-wide armed revolution and pan-African nationalism. This evolved posture was necessitated by the increased repression of colonial regimes and their internal neocolonialist allies.

In an effort to reduce his influence, Nkrumah was overthrown in 1966 by the collaborative forces of the Ghanaian military and police in cahoots with foreign intelligence forces. Nkrumah's original handbook was confiscated in that coup d'état. He rewrote the book while serving as co-president with Sékou Turé in Conakry, Guinea. As co-president, Nkrumah's responsibility was mentoring and managing the African freedom fighters in the Guinea. Freed, albeit forcibly, from the day-to-day responsibilities of running the civil government of Ghana, Nkrumah immersed himself in creating the strategy for what he viewed as the inevitable all-African war for liberation, unity, and socialism. He believed that this goal would only be successfully accomplished through the scientific organization of human forces on a global scale.

Included in Nkrumah's plan was a provisional government made up of liberated zones and liberation

organizations. This provisional government would be known as the All-African Committee for Political Coordination (A-ACPC) and would have a parallel military component, the All-African People's Revolutionary Army (A-APRA). Both configurations, however, were to be preceded by a political organization that would do the groundwork, the All-African People's Revolutionary Party (A-APRP). The A-APRP's tasks were (1) to organize a cadre into a monolithic group committed to carrying through the remainder of the strategy, (2) to link all liberated territories and struggling parties under a common ideology to smooth the way for continental unity, and (3) to assist in the execution of an all-African people's war against colonialism and neocolonialism.

There has been debate as to whether the A-APRP and A-ACPC were expected to coexist or the A-APRP was expected to evolve into and replace the A-ACPC. Nkrumah wrote more about the A-ACPC than he did about the A-APRP. The A-ACPC appears to have from the start been the more formal of the two groups, comprised as it was of the central committees of organizations as coalescing members. This membership approach was different than that of the A-APRP, which was to be catalytic and thus was comprised of dedicated working-class cadres.

KWAME TURÉ'S LEADERSHIP

After Kwame Nkrumah, Kwame Turé (1941–1998) was the most memorable advocate and recruiter for the A-APRP. He and a relatively small group of committed members kept Nkrumah's plan alive and recruited thousands of college students to study Nkrumah's ideology and plan for the all-African people's war. Turé was well known for his work in the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee and the Black Panther Party and as coauthor, with Charles Hamilton, of the book *Black Power* (1969). With the assistance of Shirley Graham-Du Bois (1896–1977), Turé met Kwame Nkrumah and Séku Turé (1921–1984) and was invited to work with Nkrumah and the Democratic Party of Guinea (PDG). Turé went on to become a major propagandist and central committee member for both the PDG and the A-APRP.

THE OBJECTIVE OF THE PARTY

The objective of the A-APRP is *pan-Africanism*, which it defines as the total liberation and unification

of Africa under scientific socialism. The A-APRP views its ideology as the necessary path to the objective of pan-Africanism. The ideology of the A-APRP was originally Nkrumahism and later amended to Nkrumahism-Turéism. This ideology was derived from a scientific analysis of conditions in the African world, as well as from the revolutionary principles found in the works of Kwame Nkrumah and Séku Turé, two of the foremost advocates of pan-Africanism.

The A-APRP's program consisted of the following points:

- recruiting and training cadres from among the ranks of the African intelligentsia, especially students and women
- consolidating principled relations with revolutionary organizations around the world
- building coalitions to smash bourgeois political parties and the military-industrial-police-intelligence complex
- smashing Zionism by working to build a worldwide anti-Zionist front
- building the African United Front and the All-African Committee for Political Coordination
- organizing and institutionalizing African Liberation Day worldwide

The A-APRP is organized along the general lines of a socialist political party. The organization uses a democratic centralist model with regional and chapter structures. It currently has two internal wings: the All-African Women's Revolutionary Union (A-AWRU) and the Young Pioneers Institute (YPI), which like Nkrumah's earlier party, the Convention People's Party (CPP), caters to the children of the organization's members and initiates. Full members are known as cadres and membership usually requires a rigorous process of political education and propaganda work.

THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE PARTY

The nature of the A-APRP makes reliable data on membership numbers scant. Its membership has increased and decreased in line with the developments of pan-Africanism in world affairs. When the African Liberation Movement was at its height in southern Africa in the 1960s, so too was the membership in the A-APRP. Since that time, its membership has

grown across Africa, Europe, and South America. The A-APRP's membership in the United States has either held constant or decreased since then. Though the A-APRP admits that currently its membership is in the hundreds, it is clear that many thousands of college students of African descent have trained, at least temporarily, in the organization's political education process. This process often takes place on college campuses. The prime activity of the political education program is referred to as a work-study process, which involves small circle discussions, with 5 to 13 persons, around a uniform reading list, discussion of geopolitical topics, and affairs of the organization.

Since the passing of Nkrumah, the A-APRP has been successful at keeping the concepts of African identity and African union in the discussions of the African intelligentsia. The organization has also developed forums for anti-imperialist organizations to speak to the African intelligentsia. These forums were traditionally organized during the A-APRP's African Liberation Days (ALDs). In this way, the A-APRP has sought to internationalize the consciousness of the African intelligentsia and youth.

The personification of the A-APRP as "Kwame Turé's organization" brought significant challenges for the organization after his passing. Turé's lifelong struggle for blacks brought him fame, fame he used for the A-APRP's benefit. No one else in the organization had the public familiarity that Turé had earned as a leader in the civil rights, black power, and pan-African movements, so it was not possible to replace him in the organization. Thus the organization Turé helped to build continues to exist and is organizing with new tactics that reflect the post-Turé era. Chapters are still being built and relations with other pan-African and liberation organizations are being consolidated.

— Daryl Zizwe Poe

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AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY

The American Anti-Slavery Society (AASS) was the most prominent organization in the fight against enslavement in the history of the United States. When the U.S. Constitution was written in the late 18th century, a debate over congressional representation resulted in a clause designating enslaved Africans as three fifths of a white person. Thus out of every 100 blacks, only about 60 would be counted for the purpose of congressional representation.

Free individuals, black and white, registered their opposition to the institution of slavery from the nation's founding. Quakers were in the forefront of this early antislavery struggle, which generally advocated the gradual emancipation of enslaved persons. This approach is distinguished from the later abolition movement, whose adherents emerged in the mid-19th century and insisted on immediate emancipation. The abolition movement surfaced in part in response to an organization called the American Colonization Society (ACS) that was founded in 1816. This organization was led by wealthy Southern planters who believed that free Africans jeopardized the institution of slavery. They claimed, however, to support gradual emancipation and insisted that the colonization of manumitted slaves would ultimately encourage slavery's dissolution.

Some white antislavery supporters initially endorsed the American Colonization Society because they believed in its mission. Free African Americans in the North were not duped by the ACS and pleaded with white abolitionists to abandon colonization. They persuaded prominent abolitionists like William Lloyd Garrison to denounce the group. Although whites who opposed the institution of slavery did not necessarily believe in equality of the races, when the antislavery activists withdrew their support from the ACS, some began calling for immediate emancipation. The organized movement for abolition began in local communities where groups of individuals formed antislavery societies. These groups distributed pamphlets, hosted speakers, raised funds, and aided fugitives. They were

often interracial, but they remained segregated by gender until 1840.

In 1833, 62 male abolitionists representing local antislavery societies in 11 states met in Philadelphia and organized the first national association dedicated to abolition. Among the African American men in attendance at this meeting were James Forten and Robert Purvis. The American Anti-Slavery Society endorsed the Declaration of Sentiments, written by leading abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison, which attacked enslavement as immoral, blamed Northerners as well as Southerners for its perpetuation, proposed a strategy of nonviolent resistance, and condemned the emigration schemes of the American Colonization Society. Garrison was to become the leading figure in the AASS and serve as president of the organization from 1843 to 1865.

Garrison was born in 1805 in Massachusetts, where he was indentured to a newspaper owner at the age of 14. He became an expert printer and joined forces with Benjamin Lundy in 1829 to publish an antislavery newspaper known as *The Genius of Universal Emancipation*. Like many antislavery agitators at the time, Lundy favored gradual emancipation, but Garrison grew increasingly impatient with this approach. He soon parted ways with Lundy and launched his own newspaper, *The Liberator*, in 1831. *The Liberator* became one of the most influential means of attracting support for abolition and was published until the close of the Civil War.

The abolition movement spread its message not only through the emerging abolitionist press but also by sponsoring lecture tours. Free-born Charles Lenox Remond was among the earliest African American speakers on the abolitionist lecture circuit. Eventually abolitionists found that fugitives, like Frederick Douglass, were the most effective public speakers for abolition. Douglass escaped enslavement in 1838, published a narrative of his life in 1845, and eventually became the most well-known black abolitionist. African Americans were strong supporters of Garrison in the 1830s and 1840s. Garrison attended a number of the period's national black conventions, which endorsed his work and influenced his ideas.

Garrison was a strict pacifist who believed that enslavement must be abolished through a strategy of moral persuasion (this later became known as Garrisonianism). He criticized the Christian clergy for their failure to condemn slavery, and he was a strong proponent of women's rights. He opposed involvement in politics and eventually proclaimed the U.S.

Constitution to be a proslavery document, publicly burning a copy of it in 1840. It was in this year that the AASS elected a woman, Abby Kelley, to serve on the organization's business committee at its annual convention. A few delegates led by Lewis Tappan walked out in protest. They were frustrated by Garrison's radical tactics and opposed coupling abolition with other reform efforts, such as women's rights. The men went on to form a rival abolition association called the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. This group placed greater emphasis on internationalizing the abolition movement, but it failed to gain significant support. In general, black abolitionists held Garrison in high regard, but they were annoyed with white abolitionists' squabbling and believed it harmed the cause.

Black abolitionists came together during this period in national and state conventions to formulate their own autonomous agenda. For Africans, abolition was more than just a charitable cause. Many had family or friends who were enslaved, and abolition was intricately linked to the improvement of living conditions for free Africans. African women also played a significant role in the abolition movement and the ensuing struggle for women's rights. Some notable figures among them were Sojourner Truth, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, and Sarah Parker Remond. Black women abolitionists were able to draw special attention to the unique suffering that the institution of slavery imposed on black women.

Over time, blacks grew disillusioned with the AASS and Garrison's refusal to support political agitation. This became especially poignant after the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 that threatened the freedom of all blacks in America. Douglass and other black abolitionists promoted the election of Abraham Lincoln, which sparked the outbreak of the Civil War. In the end, the Republican North was victorious and enslavement was abolished with the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1865. Garrison asserted that the American Anti-Slavery Society had achieved its mission, and the organization was disbanded. However, others believed that the struggle for blacks' civil rights was far from over.

— Michelle Rief

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AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

The American Civil War began in 1861 when a Confederate general fired on the Union outpost at Fort Sumter, South Carolina. The war ended in 1865 with the Confederate surrender at the Appomattox courthouse in Virginia. It was the bloodiest and most bitter conflict in American history to be fought on American soil. More than 600,000 men and women were killed or mortally wounded while the country sustained billions of dollars in property losses. However, the most notable event to result from the Civil War was the abolition of slavery and the freeing of those who had been enslaved. Between the 1600s and 1865, there had been more than 4 million Africans held in bondage in America.

CAUSES

At the center of the controversy was the issue of slavery and its expansion into the Northern and Western territories that were acquired as a result of the Mexican American War from 1846 to 1848. In addition, the 11 Southern states that would ultimately make up the Confederacy felt that the enslavement of Africans was a vital part of their economy and especially essential in the growth and exportation of cotton. Northern economic interests, which mostly depended on manufacturing and did not require slave labor, were affected because the South, which had to import its own products from abroad, favored lower tariffs on imported goods. This meant that the North faced competition against cheap foreign imports. Moreover, those tariffs helped pay for the improvement of roads and the expansion of railroads, as well as for expansion of the

Northwest territories of Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota.

As the United States began to expand thanks to both the Mexican War and the Louisiana Purchase, the question of slavery in the newly acquired territories produced a firestorm of controversy. In 1818, Congress passed the Missouri Compromise, which allowed Missouri to be admitted into the union as a slave state, so long as slavery was not included in the newly organized territories and above the line 36°30'N latitude. That quelled the dispute over slavery until 1850, when Congress voted to admit California as a state, but in the Compromise of 1850 stipulated that people in the territories seized during the Mexican War be allowed to decide for themselves whether or not they would allow slavery. When Congress decided to organize the territories in Kansas and Nebraska, it passed the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which allowed settlers to extend slavery into the newly acquired territories. The passage of this act plunged the Kansas territory into a 4-year cycle of violence during which the state came to be known as “Bloody Kansas.” Although the antislavery proponents eventually won their fight to keep slavery out of the territory, it added to an already embittered rivalry between the North and the South.

The Dred Scott Case and John Brown’s Raid on Harper’s Ferry

In 1857, an enslaved African, Dred Scott, sued for his freedom when his master took him to a free territory. Scott argued that his presence in a free territory meant that he was no longer a slave. However, the Supreme Court argued that Scott had no right to file suit in a state or federal court because he was a slave and considered property. Thus, he was not a citizen of the United States. The justices’ decision also declared the Missouri Compromise along with other legislative limits on slavery unconstitutional.

In 1859, John Brown and a band of his followers, some of whom were Africans, attacked and seized a federal arsenal in what is now Harper’s Ferry, West Virginia. Brown’s plan was to liberate the slaves by force. Brown and his followers were eventually executed. A large number of Northerners, mostly abolitionists, regarded Brown as a martyr and considered his attempt to liberate the slaves as a noble act. The North’s praise of Brown fueled Southern suspicions of Northern abolitionists, who they felt were threatening their way of life in the South.

The Southern Secession and the Beginning of the War

When Abraham Lincoln was elected the 16th president of the United States in 1860, the South was fearful that it would mean the end of slavery and thus decided to secede from the Union. In a special session, the South Carolina Legislature unanimously voted to leave the union in December of 1860. Other Southern states followed South Carolina's lead in 1861, and in February of that year the states formed the Confederate States of America. Jefferson Davis was elected president of the Confederacy by the Confederate congress and held that position until the eventual defeat of the South by the Union Army in 1865. Meanwhile, President Lincoln, concerned with preserving the Union, pleaded for the Southern states to rejoin the Union. But Lincoln also vowed to protect federal properties seized by the South and sent a relief vessel to resupply a Union Army outpost at Fort Sumter, South Carolina on April 6. Five days later, Fort Sumter was fired upon and eventually surrendered to the Confederate Army, thus beginning the Civil War.

THE WAR AND UNION VICTORY

Despite early Confederate victories at Bull Run and on the western front in Missouri in 1861, the Union Army's vast resources—of leadership, military might, and economic power—would ultimately overwhelm the Confederate Army and spell defeat for the South, which surrendered to Union forces in 1865. President Lincoln's signing of the Emancipation Proclamation ended Confederate hopes for foreign intervention, because countries like Great Britain and France had abolished slavery years earlier and did not want to become embroiled in a conflict that defended the institution of slavery.

President Lincoln was assassinated shortly after the war ended in 1865. The war itself cost the U.S. government over \$6 billion. It devastated the economy of the South. The Confederate states lost two thirds of their wealth, with the most devastating loss coming with the end of slavery. For the enslaved, the end of the Civil War meant freedom. As a result of the Union victory, both houses of Congress passed the Thirteenth Amendment, which outlawed slavery. The Thirteenth Amendment was ratified by three fourths of the states and came into effect in December of 1865.

THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

On January 1, 1863, President Lincoln, at the urging of abolitionists like Frederick Douglass, and buoyed by the Union Army victory at Antietam 4 months earlier, signed the Emancipation Proclamation that freed all slaves in all the states that had seceded from the union. Although Lincoln's decree did not immediately free enslaved Africans, it did make the Civil War into a war not only to save the Union but also to end slavery. In the court of international public opinion, sympathy with the Confederacy meant identifying with slavery, thus there was no foreign international intervention on behalf of the South in the Civil War.

African Soldiers in the Union Army

A very important outcome of the Emancipation Proclamation was that it enabled African males, both free and runaway slaves, the opportunity to join the Union Army. Frederick Douglass gave a speech in support of blacks joining the Union cause. In all, approximately 186,000 blacks, in 163 units under white commanding officers, served in the Union Army during the Civil War. By all historical accounts, black soldiers fought bravely and helped to win some key battles during the war, dispelling white notions of black inferiority on the battlefield.

Among the black units that performed well for the Union Army during the Civil War was the 1st Kansas Colored Volunteers, which turned back an attack by the Confederate Army at the battle of Island Mound, Missouri. The most well-known battle that black soldiers fought was the assault on Fort Wagner by the 54th Massachusetts in July of 1863. During the campaigns of 1864 to 1865, black soldiers participated in every major battle except for Sherman's March through Georgia. But despite proving their worthiness as soldiers, black soldiers faced discrimination in pay and other areas. Black soldiers received \$7.00 per month, plus a clothing allowance of \$3.50, while whites were paid \$13.00 per month. Some regiments refused pay blacks at all until Congress passed legislation that granted equal pay to all soldiers.

Near the end of the war, when the South found itself losing battle after battle, the Confederate Army attempted to raise a regiment of black soldiers. With the promise of freedom, a few black Confederate companies were raised, but the war ended before they could be deployed in battle.

For blacks, the Civil War and the period of Reconstruction provided freedom from enslavement, but it did not provide equality with whites. Despite the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments guaranteeing blacks' rights, and the elections of black public officials to political office, blacks were relegated to second-class citizenship. That this was the intention of many became clear when in 1877 the federal troops protecting blacks were ordered out of the South and Southern states instituted Jim Crow laws to legally establish the color line.

— Christopher Murray

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AMERICAN COLONIZATION SOCIETY

The American Colonization Society (ACS), which was originally called the American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Color in the United States, was founded in 1816 in Washington, D.C. The society was started by Robert Finley, a white Presbyterian minister from Basking Ridge, New Jersey, who like many white Americans of his time believed that the African presence in the United States threatened the welfare of the nation and the quality of life for white people. Therefore, the primary aim of the ACS was to assist all free Africans in the United States in emigrating to a colony established in Africa. Liberia was created for that purpose, and Sierra Leone was created by Great Britain for similar reasons. Some within the ACS thought that emigration was a viable alternative to emancipation. However, the members of the ACS varied considerably in their beliefs. Some sincerely supported free Africans. They

insisted that colonization would put an end to enslavement. However, there were others who wanted to maintain enslavement, as well as eliminate the free Africans they believed threatened the institution of slavery and could potentially encourage insurrections among enslaved Africans.

As early as 1714, a New Jersey man had suggested sending Africans back to Africa. Soon after the Revolutionary War, a Virginia legislative committee led by Thomas Jefferson devised a plan of gradual emancipation and deportation. Other organizations also pursued the idea of colonization. Paul Cuffee, a free African and accomplished businessman and seafarer, was the first to actually succeed in relocating Africans from the United States to Africa. In 1815, using his own resources, he transported 38 Africans.

The philanthropists, abolitionists, and clergy wanted to free enslaved Africans and their descendants, and give them the opportunity to emigrate back to Africa, whereas the slaveowners and their sympathizers, fearing that free Africans threatened the institution of enslavement, wanted to rid the nation of these "troublemakers." It was difficult for the latter group to imagine a society in which whites were integrated with blacks. Nevertheless, the ACS included both of these groups. Many whites believed that Africans were inferior and maintained that the African presence was an obstacle to American progress and development. For these reasons, they supported colonization.

In December 1816, Finley traveled to Washington, D.C., where he secured the support for the ACS from prominent white Americans. Among the early founders were Finley's brother-in-law, Elias B. Caldwell, clerk of the Supreme Court; attorney Francis Scott Key (author of "The Star Spangled Banner"); Supreme Court Justice Bushrod Washington, the nephew of George Washington; Henry Clay, the Speaker of the House; and Charles Fenton Mercer, a member of the House of Representatives. Soon after adopting a constitution, the group spent several years fundraising for the society. To that end, the society lobbied Congress and James Monroe, the president of the United States. In 1819, Congress granted the ACS \$100,000 in funding. Some white-owned companies believed that they could profit from the ACS venture. To raise funds for the enterprise, the ACS dispersed agents. Thousands of dollars were collected to purchase and charter ships. By 1832, several legislatures had given the ACS official approval. Even slave-holding states had colonization organizations. The ACS was the largest of such

organization but was by no means the only organization committed to colonization. Southern newspapers also contributed to the cause of colonization of free Africans.

In January of 1820, the ACS sailed its inaugural voyage with 88 Africans and 3 whites. However, 22 Africans and all 3 whites died of yellow fever within 3 weeks. In spite of several conflicts between emigrants and the local populations, within 10 years, more than 1,400 Africans emigrated to Liberia with the assistance of the ACS. By 1838, approximately 2,500 Africans had made the journey from the United States to Liberia. The society hired mostly whites to govern the colony. In 1847, the capital of Liberia was established and named Monrovia after President James Monroe. In all, the ACS settled more than 12,000 Africans in Liberia.

The response of Africans in the United States to colonization and the ACS varied. The ACS membership began to decline in the mid 1800s, but the colonization movement did not. Prominent Africans in the United States who supported the idea of colonization included Paul Cuffee, Alexander Crummell, John Russwurm, Martin R. Delany, Edward Blyden, and Bishop Henry McNeal Turner. These advocates believed that full equality in a racist America could never be achieved and that colonization was the best alternative. Thus Delany advocated colonization, but he denounced the ACS and Liberia as a “mockery of a government” because of its close relationship with the ACS.

Many factors militated in favor of colonization, including Christian nationalism and trade, the Christian mission to “civilize” Africa, the acknowledgement of Africa as a land of riches and black regeneration, and the economic depression in the United States. Only Blyden, a Christian himself, rejected the notion of Christian nationalism and civilization. He respected the indigenous traditions of African people and recognized the damage that Western “civilization” and Christianity had done to Africa and Africans. Many Africans were rightly suspicious of the ACS. Cuffee was skeptical of the ACS, but he continued to support it despite his reservations.

The ACS and the idea of colonization were not without their critics. Many abolitionists, black and white, opposed the goals of the ACS and questioned its motives. Chief among them was Frederick Douglass, who believed that colonization supported the false notion that Africans were inferior. He

referred to colonization as “the twin sister to slavery.” He was adamantly opposed to state or national resources being used to support such a venture. Other prominent Africans who opposed colonization were Samuel Cornish, David Walker, Maria Stewart, Richard Allen, and James Forten. Two of the most famous white abolitionists, William Lloyd Garrison and Albion Tourgee, also opposed the aims of the ACS and argued bitterly against colonization.

By the mid 1820s, most African abolitionists believed that the ACS was a proslavery effort to rid the United States of free Africans. Many in the African community were loud and passionate about their opposition to colonization. In 1817, in Philadelphia alone, Richard Allen and James Forten led 3,000 African voices in opposing colonization. The ACS was not an abolitionist organization, they maintained, but a proslavery organization with the sole purpose of forcing free Africans to choose between reenslavement and banishment. These Africans said they felt entitled to everything it meant to be American, regardless of the reality of their day. Many of them believed that America was their homeland and asserted they knew nothing of Africa. By far, there were many more Africans who rejected colonization than there were Africans who embraced it.

— Adisa A. Alkebulan

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AMERICAN NEGRO ACADEMY

The American Negro Academy (ANA) was founded on March 8, 1897 in Washington, D.C. The academy was the brainchild of the Reverend Alexander Crummell (1819–1898), who was the son of an African prince, as well as an intellectual and an Episcopal priest. Crummell had met with four men on December 18 of the previous year to discuss his idea of an association of

the most eminent African men with the purpose of raising the consciousness of African people. The four men were John Wesley Cromwell (1846–1927) and Walter B. Hayson (1822–1905), two Washington public school teachers; Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872–1906), a poet; and Kelly Miller (1863–1939), a mathematics professor at Howard University. Subsequently, Crummell increased his effort to put together a group to protect, promote, and advance the African people by calling together 18 of the greatest African minds of his day to meet at Lincoln Memorial Church.

By the end of the first meeting, the men had set the organization into motion. The membership was to be 40 elected men who had distinguished themselves as college graduates, professors, artists, or writers. The group, under the leadership of Crummell, adopted and signed a constitution and named the first national scholarly organization dedicated to the advancement of African culture the American Negro Academy. The number of elected men was soon increased to 50. Their mission was to defend Africans against vicious assaults, foster higher education, publish scholarly works, and help cultivate intellectual taste by promoting original literature, art, and science.

The American Negro Academy was the first organization, and the only organization in America at that time, to gather black scholars and artists from all over the world. It was the first learned society created by black Americans. During its lifetime, the academy published more than 20 scholarly papers written by some of the finest minds of the black community, such as Alexander Crummell's "Civilization: The Primal Need of the Race and Attitude of the American Mind Toward Negro Intellect," J. L. Lowe's "Disfranchisement of the Negro," and William Pickens's "The Status of the Free Negro from 1860–1970."

The contributors to the American Negro Academy included W.E.B. Du Bois, Carter G. Woodson, Alain Locke, John Mercer Langston, and Francis J. Grimke. These scholars were interested in advancing the work of the race in such a way as to defy the racist categorization leveled against African people. The academy worked hard to strengthen the intellectual life of the black community, improve the quality of black leadership, and protect the black community from the effects of racism. The American Negro Academy lasted into the 1920s. By the end of its lifetime, the academy had reached most of its goals by educating African Americans and providing an outlet for the black intelligentsia to publish their works. However, it

did not quite reach the masses of black people the way it had hoped, because many black people were so preoccupied with the daily battles of life that they hardly took notice of the academy.

In 1924, Crummell's ANA ceased to exist. Decades later, in 1968, poets, historians, artists, and scholars took up the banner of the ANA—including Julian "Cannonball" Adderley, Margaret Walker, James Baldwin, Harry Belafonte, John Hope Franklin, Ossie and Ruby D. Davis, Nina Simone, and Lerone Bennett, Jr. In March of 1969, after a series of meetings, these dedicated individuals founded the Black Academy of Arts and Letters (BAAL) to carry on the work of the American Negro Academy.

— *Del-Zola Moore*

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AMISTAD RESEARCH CENTER

Amistad is a manuscripts library and archival repository that documents the history and culture of America's many populations, Africa, and the African diaspora. Founded in 1966, the center takes its name from a significant incident in American history, the Amistad Schooner Revolt of 1839. Singbe Pieh (later called Cinque) led Africans illegally taken from their land and destined for slave plantations in Havana, Cuba, in a revolt on a Spanish schooner called *La Amistad*. While attempting to return home, the Africans were tricked instead into steering toward the United States, where they were captured and put on trial. A group of Christian abolitionists took up their cause and paid their legal costs. The Africans' case wound its way through the U.S. court system, but it was not until former U.S. president John Quincy Adams argued on their behalf before the Supreme Court that the Africans finally won their freedom.

THE AMERICAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION

This same group of abolitionists later formed an interracial organization called the American Missionary

Association (AMA). The AMA founded hundreds of churches and schools for African Americans, Native Americans, Puerto Ricans, Appalachian whites, Asian Americans, and Hispanics. Distinguished colleges and universities that emerged from these efforts include Atlanta, Berea, Dillard, Hampton, Houston-Tillotson, LeMoyne-Owen, Piedmont, Talladega, Tougaloo, and Fisk, where the Amistad Research Center was established under the guidance of Clifton H. Johnson.

Johnson, after completing the arrangement of AMA papers, recognized the need for an institution that would document the lives and activities of those ethnic groups with which the AMA had historically worked, specifically African Americans and other ethnic communities. Initially under auspices of the AMA's Race Relations Department at Fisk, the center was later incorporated as an independent institution with a permanent board of directors. The Amistad began with its core collection—the AMA papers, which include over 350,000 documents—and then went on to collect other important records.

During the turbulent years after World War II, the AMA established their Race Relations Department to address racism and pluralism in American society. The Race Relations Department records, incorporated into the Amistad Research Center's holdings, were among the first documents to address the issues of civil and human rights. These records give Amistad the distinction of being one of the first institutions to actively document the modern civil rights movement.

THE AMISTAD'S HOLDINGS

Amistad arguably has the nation's premiere holdings on those participants and organizations that helped shape its progress. The collections encompass the activities of attorneys, politicians, artists, writers, and others who often placed their lives on the line. Some notable collections include the papers of New Orleans's first black mayor, Ernest "Dutch" Morial; Mississippi activist Fannie Lou Hamer; the Race Relations Information Center; U.S. Congressman William Jefferson; Michigan Senator Carl Levin; the National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing; the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) of New Orleans and Memphis; the original Montgomery Bus Boycott participant interviews; NAACP attorney A. P. Tureaud; former NAACP executive director Benjamin Hooks; the Urban League

of Greater New Orleans; the Southern civil rights litigation records; Mississippi businesswoman and activist Clarie Collins Harvey; and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

Amistad's literary and musical collections are unprecedented in size and scope. Researchers come from around the world to examine the papers of poet Countee Cullen, writer Chester Himes, scholar and activist W.E.B. Du Bois, poet and human rights activist Frank S. Horne, playwright Tom Dent, and musicians Harold Battiste, Anne Wiggins Brown, Harold Swanson, William Warfield, and Camilla Williams. Amistad's holdings on Africa are also impressive in their breath and scope. They include the papers of the first organization to report on the inhuman apartheid system in South Africa, the American Committee on Africa. Established in 1948, this organization went on to document political struggles all over the continent of Africa. The center's other holdings include the papers of Operations Crossroads Africa, an organization used as a model for the Peace Corps; sociologist Victor Du Bois; and U.N. Press Corps journalist Marguerite Cartwright.

In 1994, under the direction of Clyde Robertson, director of Africana Studies for the New Orleans Public Schools, Amistad collaborated in the development of the first Afrocentric Archives in this country. Housed at the Amistad Research Center, these manuscript collections represent the leading scholars within the Afrocentric paradigm. They include the work of Molefi Kete Asante, considered the father of the Afrocentric movement, lecturer and writer Runoko Rashidi, and sociologist James L. Conyers, Jr.

Amistad also has an art collection universally accepted as the finest collection of art in the Deep South. The collection consists of 19th- and 20th-century artists such as Edward Mitchell Bannister, Richmond Barthe, Selma Burke, Elizabeth Catlett, Claude Clark, Aaron Douglas, Vivian Ellis, Palmer Hayden, Malvin Gray Johnson, William H. Johnson, Lois Mailou Jones, Martin Payne, William Pajaud, William E. Scott, Henry O. Tanner, Hale Woodruff, and Frank Wyley. The most celebrated pieces in the collection are *Funeral Procession* of 1940 by Ellis Wilson and the 41 paintings in the Toussaint L'Ouverture series by Jacob Lawrence. Of these individuals, Amistad also holds the personal papers of Catlett, Ellis, Pajaud, Barthe, Woodruff, and Wyley.

The center also houses an excellent collection of African textiles made during the late 19th and early 20th centuries by artisans from the Kuba kingdom in Zaire. Other African objects at Amistad are from West, Central, and East Africa and include masks, carved figures and posts, musical instruments, calabash art, utilitarian and sacred containers and vessels, basketry, ceremonial clothing, cast metal objects and figures, and iron currency.

This is only a cursory description of the treasures housed at the Amistad Research Center. Currently residing on the campus of Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana, the center continues to collect, preserve, and make accessible its holdings through onsite research, public forums, publications, audio- and videotaped personal histories, digital online exhibits, and collaborative projects. With over 10 million primary source documents dating from 1780 to the present, more than 20,000 books, 1,000 runs of periodicals, 30,000 pamphlets, 1½ million news clippings, 74,000 reels of microfilm, over 300 works of art, over 600 pieces of African art, and more than 400 audio- and videotapes, Amistad can truly say it documents America's diversity.

— Rebecca Hankins

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AMSTERDAM NEWS

The *Amsterdam News* is one of the oldest and most well known African American–owned newspapers in the United States; and perhaps the most well known African American newspaper in the world. The *Amsterdam News* was established by James H. Anderson on December 4, 1909. Anderson settled in Harlem, New York, and decided to embark on creating a newspaper that would reflect the lives of those in the Harlem community. The *Amsterdam News*, named after Amsterdam Avenue, the street that Anderson lived on, served as a forum where members of the Harlem community could give voice to their thoughts, fears, hopes, and aspirations. The African Americans in Harlem saw the 2-cent, 6-page newspaper as a place where their community was the focal point, as the *Amsterdam News* covered local events such as black community organizations and the local political and social issues of the time. In less than a year the *Amsterdam News* had become a success. As a result, Anderson decided to expand his newspaper and partnered with Edward A. Warren, an African American businessman. Some years later, in 1921, when Warren died, Anderson sold his share of the newspaper to Warren's relatives and turned to satisfying other goals. Anderson became a civic leader, served as a Boy Scout commissioner, and ran for alderman, while the paper he had founded continued to prosper.

In 1930, the *Amsterdam News* became the first African American newspaper to join the Audit Bureau of Circulation. Even when the Great Depression created many financial challenges for the newspaper, the *Amsterdam News* made history and became the first African American–owned newspaper to have a fully unionized African American staff. However, as the Great Depression continued to wreak havoc on the world economy, the Warrens' financial difficulties compelled them to sell the *Amsterdam News* for \$5,000 to C. B. Powell and Philip M. H. Savory. Powell and Savory recreated the *Amsterdam News*, changing it from a community-based newspaper that mostly dealt with local issues in Harlem into a newspaper that represented the collective voice of African America. Thus the *Amsterdam News* began to deal with national politics that affected the African American community.

During the 1960s, the *Amsterdam News* was the premier newspaper for the civil rights and black nationalist movements. The *Amsterdam News* gave a platform to both the Judeo-Christian nonviolence of the civil rights movement, which was under the leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr., and the black nationalist movement of Elijah Muhammad and Malcolm X. Malcolm X even wrote a column in the newspaper titled “God’s Angry Man.” Despite this prosperity, in 1971 the *Amsterdam News* was once again sold, this time for \$2.3 million to a group of African American businessmen that included Wilbert Tatum, who was to become important at the paper. With the leadership of this group, the *Amsterdam News* went through another transformation, moving away from its radical and militant stance and becoming a more liberal newspaper. As the result of a strike in 1984, Tatum became not simply an investor but also the publisher and editor of the *Amsterdam News*. Under the guidance of Tatum, the *Amsterdam News* returned to a more militant and progressive position. In 1997, Tatum’s daughter, Elinor Tatum, became editor-in-chief of the newspaper, and under her supervision the *Amsterdam News* continues to be an avenue where the issues, concerns, and voices of African America are expressed.

— Kiera Hope Foster

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www.amsterdamnews.org This is the official Web site of the *Amsterdam News*, which provides the history of the newspaper, full text articles, and other relevant information.

AN APPEAL TO THE COLORED CITIZENS OF THE WORLD

David Walker, a free black man, published a militant antislavery pamphlet, *David Walker’s Appeal in Four Articles; Together with a Preamble to the Coloured Citizens of the World, But Particularly and Very Expressly to Those of the United States*, which became known as *An Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World* and was distributed widely throughout the Eastern seaboard of the United States. Walker may have been the first black militant to write against the

institution of slavery. Definitely no one prior to him had ever distributed a pamphlet as incendiary as *An Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World*.

It is believed that Walker was born in North Carolina in 1785 of a free mother. At an early age, he left North Carolina and settled in Boston, where he became a barber. The discussions Walker had with clients in his barber’s chair fueled his opposition to the system of enslavement that had trapped Africans in perpetual bondage. Walker became increasingly angered by the system that defined Africans as inferior to whites—and especially by the hypocrisy of white Christian Americans, whom he said were the most brutal people on the face of the earth.

In the 1820s, most African people were not as convinced as David Walker was that the only way Africans would be free was for Africans to free themselves. This belief, which was the beginning of the school of thought that has been called nationalism, influenced the thought of the most electrifying intellectuals and political activists in African American history. Walker predated Henry Highland Garnet, Bishop Henry McNeal Turner, Martin Delany, Alexander Crummell, and Marcus Garvey.

Walker was fed up with the fact that the abject conditions of the African community did not cause more revolution. He was familiar with Thomas Jefferson’s *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785), as well as with the revolution in Haiti, Gabriel Prosser’s 1800 conspiracy, and Denmark Vesey’s 1822 attempted revolt. Walker’s education and passion enabled him to produce the most challenging document written by an African in America until that time. *An Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World* consisted of a direct call to the enslaved Africans to rise up against their masters in a violent revolt.

In addition to being a barber, Walker had a small tailoring business in Boston. His shop was very likely a gathering place for those who engaged in antislavery activities, as his pamphlet was distributed as far as the Carolinas by black Bostonian seamen. Walker was a member of the Massachusetts General Colored Association that was organized in 1826 to petition the Massachusetts government in the interests of African Americans. In addition, Walker was a representative for *Freedom’s Journal* from 1827 to 1829.

Walker’s speech to the 1828 convention of the Massachusetts General Colored Association was a preview of his pamphlet. In the speech, he admonished the Africans in his audience to work toward self-determination and self-help. It was clear that

Walker did not believe that dependency on whites was the solution to the problems of Africans in Massachusetts. It would be seen later in *An Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World* that what he believed about Africans in Massachusetts he also believed about the masses of Africans everywhere. Walker stressed that only Africans' active efforts in their own interest would change their situation.

When Walker's appeal came out in September of 1829, it was one of the most politically explosive works ever written in America. Walker's appeal was pointed, historical, biblical, and prophetic. It was a call for action and an argument for the humanity of African people. According to Walker, only the self-determination and self-definition of Africans themselves could raise African people from slavery and the inequality handed out by whites. Walker believed that if to achieve Africans' freedom there must be violence, then there must be violence, as God could not want Africans to be enslaved against their wills.

It is no wonder that the legislatures of several Southern states offered a reward for Walker's head. South Carolina and Georgia wanted Walker so intensely that they were willing to offer \$10,000 if he were delivered alive, or \$1,000 if dead. In the North, white abolitionists who were nonviolent in their philosophies, such as William Lloyd Garrison and Benjamin Lundy, criticized Walker for being too forceful in his rhetoric. Nine months after the publication of *An Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World*, Walker was found dead under unknown circumstances. Many historians have conjectured that he was assassinated, although it has not been possible to prove this theory conclusively.

— Molefi Kete Asante

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ANCESTOR VENERATION

Africans have long believed that the ritualized propitiation and invocation of dead kin could influence the fate of the living. This is not exclusively an African practice, but it has probably been brought to its most complex and elaborate levels by Africans. The Chinese, Melanesians, and Japanese also have constructed system of ancestral veneration. In Africa, the relationship between the living and the dead is a manifestation of the continuity of community in a specific familial way. When a society passes concepts, art forms, and myths from generation to generation, those ideas are enshrined in the society's memory as worthy of emulation.

Everything must be approached through the ancestors. This means that in classical African religion (CAR) there is always ancestral priority, presence, and power. The ancestral spirits are the most intimate divinities and must be consulted on important occasions. Africans regard the ancestors as the keepers of morality. One of the ways descendants of the ancestors maintain a balanced society is by avoiding the activities that were considered immoral by the ancestors. Sudden deaths are often thought to be attributed to punishments inflicted by ancestors. Therefore, the living must do everything they can to avoid crossing the moral path laid down by the departed ancestors. The social fabric of African communities is woven together by ancestor reverence. It is the source of many domestic and institutional relationships. It is not a reflection of any supernatural world, but rather, a part of the world in which Africans who practice CAR live. Thus the manner of reverence of African people is relatively similar, making it possible to speak of the commonalities of ancestor reverence among Africans.

THE LINE OF DESCENT

The descent line is the basic structural component for all groups that practice ancestor reverence. Africans know who to revere by knowing to whom they belong. Constant ritualizing reverence of the First Ancestors helps to reinforce the appreciation for a particular descent group. Sometimes the main descent group can be augmented by other ethnic or clan groups. For instance, the Ndebele people of Zimbabwe were originally a royal clan of the Zulu of South Africa, but during their migration and conquest northward out of

South Africa they acquired new clans and ethnic groups who now appropriate some of the same ancestors.

For many African people, the descent is through the mother, that is, matrilineal. Thus the ancestor to be revered would come from the mother's side of the family. The father would be a part of this family line by virtue of his marriage to the direct descendant. In some cases, the father would also revere the ancestors of his father. The idea is that the ancestor revered must be within the family structure. If the structure is patrilineal, then the ancestors are from the father's side and the mother may participate in the reverence as a member of the family.

A RELIGION OF THE ANCESTORS

CAR is preeminently a religion of the ancestors. Thus the Swazi king appeals to the ancestors on behalf of the nation, showing himself to be the chief priest. This pattern of royal intercession is followed by many other African groups, though it is not universal. What is common and extensively practiced is sacrifice. For the Swazi this means that each year an animal must be dedicated to a specific royal ancestor and may only be eaten by the direct descendants of that ancestor.

While it is true that ancestors are revered, it is also true that not all ancestors are revered in the same way. A congregation, that is, a kinship group, so to speak, does not provide ritual service or respect to every ancestor in all situations of worship. The ancestors who are accorded respect in a given situation are primarily those who are exclusive to the worshipping group. This helps Africans to distinguish between collateral groups, perhaps in the same ethnic group. On the other hand, some ancestors are more than family, they are national, that is, all families in the ethnic group are derived from them.

The complexity of the practice of ancestor reverence varies among ethnic groups. However, in most groups the connections between the religion and property, marriage, birth, death, and titles to membership and leadership of the group are clearly tied to *geneonymy*, the commemoration of the ancestors by name. Everyone who calls the name of the ancestors must use the accepted sequence, because that is the way the group establishes itself as a congregation. Geneonymy is also important for its establishment of a focus on the ancestors. Every member of the congregation knows exactly to whom he or she belongs. There is no confusion about this in the ethnic group,

because the calling of the names of the ancestors makes clear the lineage of groups and individuals.

CAR ancestor reverence or worship should not be confused with cults of the dead. In and of itself, death has no divine qualities in CAR. African people worship something far more significant than merely the dead. Practitioners of CAR believe that in actual fact those who have lived among us affect our lives after death. The deification of the ancestral spirit is essential to the religion, and death must occur for the process of deification to take place. Ancestor reverence, therefore, is not the same as practices dealing with ghosts and spirits and hobgoblins. The ancient Greeks believed in such ghost and shade cults but did not have ancestor reverence.

There is a widespread practice of ancestor reverence on the continent of Africa; therefore the practices are varied. The Ga of Ghana and the Nuer of the Sudan, two of the several groups without an elaborate system of ancestor reverence, still have a strong belief in the veneration of ancestors on special occasions. The Ga have ritualized libations in the name of the honored dead during naming ceremonies, marriages, and the Homowo Festival. Their practice, and that of the Nuer, may be somewhat like the practices of the Jews and Catholics, both of whom name ancestors on special occasions. The Jews name ancestors on the New Year and Day of Atonement, and the Catholics have masses in the names of the ancestor saints. The Ibo of Nigeria believe that the ancestors profoundly influence all actions in society. Rather than kings ruling their towns, the Ibo have a group of elders who govern the community. The Ibo venerate ancestors in a very significant, elaborate way, which has a far-reaching importance in their society. The Ibo people offer sacrifices regularly, and no one eats or drinks without giving a portion to the ancestors.

The spirits of the dead are the ancestors, and the forces of nature represent their activities. The powers behind the storms, rain, rivers, seas, lakes, hills, and rocks are the spirits of the ancestors. They are not just the rocks or water but the spiritual powers capable of manifesting anywhere. There is no separation between religious activity and other activities. The relationship between the living, the dead, and the Supreme God is one of mutuality and connectedness. Humans are intertwined with the divine; there is no seam in the relationship. The spiritual world is interrelated with the natural world. Thus, according to the Shona of Zimbabwe, the Supreme God, Mwari, is

connected through the ancestors and spirit mediums to the living. The natural world, the world of trees, rocks, rivers, and so forth, has a direct connection to the spiritual world by way of moral geography. When all people look at the natural world, they can identify forest, birds, mountains, rivers, hills, and insects; this is a biological or ecological system. But when practitioners of CAR view the natural world through the lens of moral geography, they see sacred mountains, sacred trees, sacred hills, and sacred rivers.

THE IDENTIFICATION OF ANCESTORS

To become an ancestor, death is necessary, but it is not enough. Most practitioners of CAR make a distinction between the dead and the ancestors. The Tallensi people believe that those who die without offspring live a ghostly existence because they have no one to provide reverence for them. The Fon of Dahomey say that the dead (*chio*) are not the same as the ancestors (*tovodu*). Dahomey, which is now called Benin, is the African nation with the largest proportion of its population practicing CAR, and thus it also has the most complex ritual system for deifying the dead and turning them into ancestors.

Clearly Africans' practice of ancestor veneration involves a pantheon of deities, but although such a pantheon exists in all of these congregations, it is most often a judicious and limited one. Africans do not have thousands of deities, as the Hindus do, or even scores of deities, as the ancient Greeks did; they have only the robust ancestral spirits that have been properly called into service by ritual. These spirits have been brought home again and have manifested themselves in the service of the community. Through prayers, rituals, sacrifices, and incest prohibition and other taboo injunctions, the community acknowledges the dead person as joining the cosmography of the ancestral world.

The Akan of Ghana have developed an ancestor reverence based on kinship. The matrilineal forbears can become ancestors and receive veneration. The Akan people's system is connected to their philosophy that every person is comprised of the *ntoro*, the *sunsum*, the *mogya*, and the *abusua*. The father transmits the *ntoro*, personality, to the child, but the *ntoro* does not survive death. The *sunsum* is the spirit of the child that exists always. The mother transmits the *mogya*, the blood, and the *abusua*, the family lineage. What survives and is transmuted to become the ancestor is the spirit, a name attached to certain ritualized relics

such as a stool that represents the validation of the proper ancestral lineage. For the Akan, ancestor veneration is more than a filial relationship to the father or mother; it is a kinship event rooted in their political and philosophical system. Those members of the lineage who are heads of households or holders of office may become enshrined as venerated ancestors. What is true for the Akan matrilineal system is also true for the patrilineal system in terms of the rules of selection and veneration.

ETERNAL LIFE

As ancestors, people are able to prolong their legal existence through their heirs. Those who become ancestors may have been people with bad tempers or poor judgment, but it becomes the inescapable duty of their heirs to venerate them because the ancestors continue to live effectively in the world. Accordingly, it does not matter what a person's relationship has been with the ancestors, once these people have become ancestors, it is necessary for that person to venerate them regardless of their successes or failures as people. All ancestors have equal standing, as they have all been ritualized into ancestorhood and this carries with it the power to influence lives and intervene in activities of their descendants.

The Tallensi people believe, along with many other Africans, that if a man has no sons, he cannot become an ancestor, regardless of his virtue and success in life. Without an heir to venerate him, he is in danger of a grievous travesty. What holds for the ancestor, holds for the descendants. The eldest son must officiate regardless of his moral condition or his intellectual capacity. No one can take away from him his right to lead the veneration of the ancestors of his parents. He alone has the lifelong responsibility to carry out the functions of libation and sacrifices for the ancestor. If he fails to do so, he will be in grave peril. Should others try to take away his right to fulfill his responsibility, they will be in peril.

Similarly, all of the ancestors behave the same way toward their descendants, irrespective of the ancestors' characters in life. Ancestors who had been good people behave just like those who had been bad people. In addition, they intervene in the lives of their heirs regardless of the character of those heirs. An heir could be trifling or upright and thrifty, and yet the ancestral intervention will make no distinction based on this difference. The ancestors exact ritual service

and veneration in accordance with the rules of intervention, which are the same for all heirs.

ANCESTOR VENERATION HOLDS BACK CHAOS

None of this is a matter of good or evil; it is a matter of holding back chaos in the world. In fact, the ancestors do not punish or persecute their descendants for wickedness or reward them for goodness. However, the ancestors may harass or trouble the descendants for their failure to provide religious submission or service. The ancestors are not punishing authorities but judges who are concerned with the prosperity of the lineage. They are attuned to the needs of the people and provide corrective intervention when necessary. Thus to the practitioner of CAR, ancestor veneration or reverence is a body of religious beliefs that are aligned with rules of conduct for designated authorities in the social system of most African societies. Attending to the rites of ancestors is one way to continue to bind the people together in one community, because ancestors show the continuity of the society and compel communal action when it is necessary.

Death represents a separation, but always a separation that is provoked or brought about by something. Death does not happen for no reason. The Swazis believe that no one dies without some sort of sorcery, that people do not die from sickness or old age and no one dies a natural death. The Lovedu believe that the life of the Rain-Queen does not end with her death because she becomes divine by taking her own life. She takes poison, which contains the brain and spinal cord of a crocodile, among other things. The queen is then buried in a deep grave standing upright and facing north from whence came her ancestors. The body is wrapped in cloth and ox skin. It is buried with beads, water, a firebrand, a mat, and, in the ancient days, a male corpse. The grave is gradually filled up and is only completely covered after 6 months, when the head has decomposed. A year later the fires are put out and then ritually relit and a new queen is installed. Like the language of death in other African ethnic groups, the Lovedu's references to death are indirect. They say "the house is broken," "the king is busy," "the mountain has fallen," "the mighty tree is uprooted," or "the queen is elsewhere."

In the past, when an Asante king died, he was laid out and the seven openings of his body filled with gold dust. The body was put in a coffin over an open pit for

80 days so that the flesh decomposed, and then charms were fastened onto the skeleton. The Swazi specialists squeezed the fluids from the body to prevent rapid decay. The Swazi king, divine in life, was apotheosized in death and entered the ranks of the ancestors.

CAR believers accept that ancestors are ever living. This is not worship in the Christian sense. Ancestors do not replace the supreme deity. Ancestors have powers that the living do not have, and to obtain their blessings the living must avert their anger and win their favor. Since humans are in the midst of primal struggle between good and evil, they need all the assistance they can gather. Who better to provide people with assistance in this struggle than their own ancestors who have a stake in their survival? Every person is involved in the struggle for continuity, not just political heroes. There are different approaches to this among African people.

It was a common practice for the Asante army to call upon famous Asante warriors during battle. The names would be spoken, shouted, and sung as the army went into battle. The Yoruba called upon a mythical god of war. With war comes death. The general attitude of Africans toward the dead is one of respect. There are specific taboos about death in some African ethnic groups. Some groups do not even speak the word *death*. However, most African taboos are not about death but, rather, involve prohibitions against sexual relations with certain people and under certain circumstances. The incest taboos apply to a larger range of people in Africa than in Europe. In Africa, the taboos apply not only to members of the same family but also to members of the same clan or lineage. Taboos against marriage tend to be stronger and stricter than those against copulation. The rules of exogamy (i.e., marriage outside of a specific group), which are the direct result of these taboos, influence the social structure of African societies. The rules regulate the exchange of women and marriage compensation and maintain the society's cohesion. There has, however, been ceremonial violation of incest taboos by some of the royal families of Central Africa.

The taboos concerning death vary. The Akan people of Ghana have taboos against speaking of death at all and would never say that the king is dead. These taboos are so serious that people who violate them have to make restitution in some ritual propitiation. Although in all societies there are those who are terrified of ghosts and those who have *thanatophobia* (the fear of death), in Africa taboos regarding death

involve a different sort of fear. The taboo and the fear concern the community, not just the individual person, and a person who breaks such a taboo actually violates the fabric of the society. It is like tearing a hole in a beautiful blanket. It must be repaired or else everyone suffers.

Respect for the dead is a given among CAR believers. The Asante have ceremonies every 3 weeks for the ancestors. The ancestors are given water to wash their hands and soul food, that is, food for their souls. The Gikuyu elders put a little food on the ground for the departed spirits. Africans do not pray to ancestors; they pray to gods, but they ask ancestors for intercession. Africans would no more pray to an ancestor than to a living parent, as prayer is reserved for the gods. A person may pour libations to the ancestors to ask the ancestors for a special favor. In addition to being asked favors, ancestors may also be scolded, "You so and so, why do you treat us like this? Why did you give us this problem? What must we do to appease you?" This scolding does not consist of insults so much as of conversation that people hold with the spirits to express their disappointment over failures.

As the African world is continuous, united, conscious of no distinction in quality between its members on earth and its ancestors, then this may look like worship. The Catholics have solved this problem by providing specialized levels of respect, consisting of *latria*—worship of God, *dulia*—reverence for the saints, and *hyperdulia*—special homage to Virgin Mary. Africans do not debate whether or not the ancestors are gods; they know that they are ancestors and that this involves a particular type of belief. While the Catholics have appropriated some of the ideas of the African people the religion conquered, Catholics do not see ancestors in the way that Africans see them.

Africans believe in reincarnation as strongly as do some other religions, especially Buddhism and Jainism. African reincarnation is based in the religion of ancient Egypt in which the priest says that people shall come back millions and millions of times. However, although reincarnation is a firmly held belief in most of Africa, the African conception of reincarnation differs from the Indian conception. Unlike Africans, Indians believe in rounds of existence, the cycles of rebirth from which people can escape only through nirvana, or enlightenment; in reward or punishment by rebirth into a higher or lower state (which is also found in Plato); and that the nature of the present world is suffering and illusion. The African

conception of reincarnation is world affirming, not world renouncing. Souls that are reborn in children may be grandparents returned. The ancestors do not create the child, God does. The ancestral name is renewed in the family, revitalizing the people. Ancestors may be born in different children at the same time. Humans can return millions and millions of times.

— Molefi Kete Asante

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ANCIENT EGYPTIAN STUDIES MOVEMENT

The call to research, recover, and bring forth the legacy of ancient Egypt as a paradigm of achievement and possibility has a long history among African Americans. An early interest in Egypt as a classical African civilization is evident in the 19th-century works of African American activists and writers such as David Walker, Hosea Easton, Martin Delaney, and

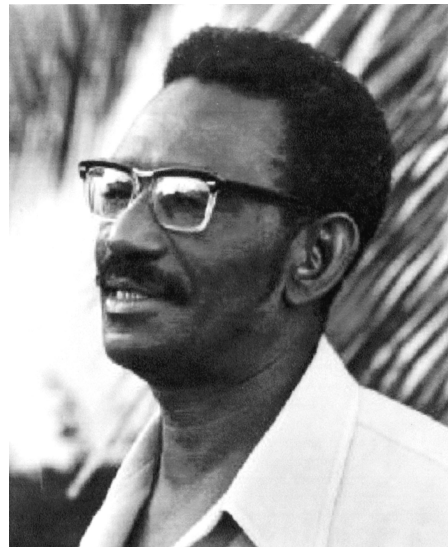
Henry Highland Garnet. References to Egypt as a model of African achievement appear continuously and in varied sources in the early and mid-20th century. However, the flowering of interests and activities in classical African Studies that resulted in an ancient Egyptian studies movement in the mid-1980s had its roots in the black power movement of the 1960s and the Afrocentric initiative that began in the 1980s. The ancient Egyptian studies movement, in its academic and community dimensions, borrows from and builds on the ongoing cultural nationalist project of the recovery and reconstruction of African culture. This cultural movement is often called by the Akan word *sankofa*, meaning “to return and fetch it,” and it is a project of continuous research of the past in search of paradigms of thought and practice useful in understanding and improving the present and enhancing the future. It thus became a central aspect of the Africana Studies project, which stresses the interrelatedness of knowledge and practice, intellectual and political emancipation, and the ongoing need for grounding in African culture in all projects of depth and value.

WHY EGYPT?

The stress on the study of ancient Egypt in particular, and classical African Studies in general, then, grew out of several processes within the Black Studies or Africana Studies movement. Since the 1960s this movement has emphasized a return to the source, that is, to African culture, to extract and engage paradigms of excellence and possibilities and use them to enhance African understanding and assertion in the world. This focus on the study of ancient Egypt and related activities evolved as a movement as a result of several factors. First, it evolved from the intensification of the study of works focused on classical African Studies in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Part of being both educated and informed was to be conversant with works such as George James’s *Stolen Legacy* (1976), John Jackson’s *Introduction to African Civilizations* (1980), Yosef ben-Jochannon’s *Africa: Mother of “Western Civilization”* (1971), Chancellor Williams’s *The Destruction of African Civilization* (1974), and Cheikh Anta Diop’s *The African Origins of Civilization: Myth or Reality* (1974). The study of such works was conducted in both the academy and the community and reflected an increased interest in ancient Egypt and in classical African civilization generally.

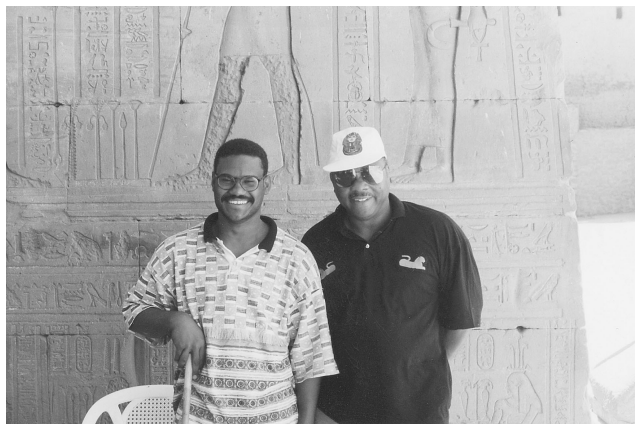
THE AFROCENTRIC INITIATIVE

Also important to the development of the ancient Egyptian studies movement was the emergence of the Afrocentric initiative put forth by Molefi Kete Asante. Asante outlines his intellectual thrust first in *Afrocentricity: The Theory of Social Change* (1980), then in *The Afrocentric Idea* (1987), and finally in *Kemet, Afrocentricity and Knowledge* (1990). In these and subsequent works, Asante argues that Africans must be understood and approached as the subjects of their own history, that African ideals must be placed at the center of any analysis that involves Africa, and that these ideals must be gleaned from African culture—starting with classical African culture, especially but not limited to ancient Egypt, or Kemet. This philosophical initiative, offered as a methodology and theoretical framework for critical research, evaluation, and exchange, created a national and international dialogue in the academy, community, and society. Moreover, Asante evolved as a major Diopian scholar and adherent, and thus contributed not only to the discourse on ancient Egypt but also to the embrace and critical understanding of Diop’s work and its emphasis on Kemet as Africa’s major paradigmatic civilization.



Cheikh Anta Diop

Another major factor in the flourishing of ancient Egyptian studies was the increasing reception and study of the works of the premier African ancient Egyptian studies scholar Cheikh Anta Diop. At first, English-speaking Africans did not have ready access



Mohammed Gabre (on left), an Egyptian Egyptologist, with an unidentified African American

to Diop's works, which were originally written in French. But as Diop's works were translated and made available, they became a central focus of discourse on ancient Egypt and greatly influenced African scholars and lay persons in the United States and the diaspora in general as well as on the African continent. Diop pioneered the African scholarly focus on Egypt as a classical African civilization that not only demonstrated African genius in the world but also provided a source of paradigms for African renewal and continued contribution to world civilization.

Diop's major works translated into English include *The African Origin of Civilization: Myth or Reality* (1974), *Black Africa: The Economic and Cultural Basis for a Federated State* (1980), *Precolonial Black Africa* (1987), and his last work, *Civilization or Barbarism: An Authentic Anthropology* (1991). His major works that are currently available only in French are *Nations Nègres et Culture* (1954) and *Anteriorité des Civilisations Nègres* (1967). These works have made their way into the discourse, however, through the conversations and literature of diasporic scholars who read French. Diop's student and colleague, Theophile Obenga, contributed to this discourse when he was invited to the United States in 1992 by Molefi Asante, who was then chair of the Department of African American Studies at Temple University. Obenga's major works are at present available only in French and include *L'Afrique dans l'Antiquité: Egypte Ancienne—Afrique Noire* (1980) and *La Philosophie Africaine de la Période Pharonique, 2780–330 Avant Notre Ère* (1978). His *Ancient Egypt and Black*

Africa (1992), which he wrote in English, has also contributed to the discourse on ancient Egypt.

Diop inspired the ancient Egyptian studies movement to flourish and spread in both the academy and the community. In his major works, the *African Origin of Civilization* and *Civilization or Barbarism*, he outlined the basic arguments for the African character of ancient Egypt and its importance to African and world history and civilization. His detailed proofs include cultural, linguistic, anthropological, artistic, and contemporary eyewitness evidence. He concluded that it is a conscious and concerted falsification of history rooted in the rationale and practice of European imperialism that has denied and obscured the African character of ancient Egyptian civilization. In *Civilization or Barbarism*, Diop argued for the value of ancient Egyptian studies in achieving the following three purposes: (1) reconciling African civilization with history (i.e., ending the great falsification of African and human history), (2) enabling Africans to build a body of modern human sciences, and (3) renewing African culture.

Diop understood that far from being a diversion to the past, a look back toward ancient Egypt is the best way to conceive and build the African cultural future. Diop imagined a recovered Egypt playing the same role in a reconceived and renewed African culture that the Greco-Latin ancient past plays in Western culture. It is this conception of the role of ancient Egypt in African history and culture and in civilization that has informed and guided the flowering of interest in and activity around the project of Egypt's recovery, as well as the founding of professional associations and processes to contribute to this project.

INTELLECTUAL INITIATIVES

Kawaida Institute of Pan-African Studies and Kemetic Institute

The increasing interest in and activities involving ancient Egypt began in the early 1980s, when a variety of intellectual initiatives around ancient Egyptian studies began to take concrete forms and coalesce. Central to these efforts was the work of the Kawaida Institute of Pan-African Studies (KIPAS) in Los Angeles, which is part of the organization Us, and the Kemetic Institute in Chicago. The Kemetic Institute was headed by Jacob Carruthers, who was a professor of inner city studies and political science at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago, and had dedicated itself to the

recovery of ancient Egypt's legacy mainly by teaching the Kemetic language, history, and philosophy in the Chicago community. The institute also has developed a ritual service and a priesthood to conduct it. The Kawaida Institute of Pan-African Studies is led by Maulana Karenga, who is a professor of Black Studies at California State University, Long Beach, and it serves as the educational and research arm of the organization Us. Us played a vanguard role in the black freedom movement and continues to have national and international influence through its philosophy of Kawaida, its continued organizing activities, the pan-African holiday Kwanzaa that Karenga created, and Karenga's writings, lectures, and teaching.

In the early 1980s, KIPAS began teaching courses on ancient Egyptian history and ethical thought, as well as on the works of Diop and later ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs. In addition, Karenga collected, translated, and wrote commentaries on Kemetic sacred texts and held discussions within KIPAS and the organization Us on these texts. The texts are called the *Husia*, and they have become a standard reference on ancient Egyptian spirituality and ethics. Moreover, it was then that it was first proposed that *Maat* be used as the name of the ancient Egyptian spiritual and ethical tradition, that Seven Cardinal Virtues (truth, justice, propriety, harmony, balance, reciprocity, and order) be posed as central to the practice of Maat, and that a *Sebanate*, a body of moral teachers, *Seba Maat* or simply *Seba*, students of Maat, be trained to teach ancient Egyptian ethics and spirituality grounded in the *Husia*.

In this period of development, Us decided to call a conference to identify and engage other scholars and laypersons in the Diopian project of the critical recovery and concrete and creative use of ancient Egyptian culture. Having been assigned the task, KIPAS planned and organized the First Annual Ancient Egyptian Studies Conference, which was held in February of 1984 at Southwest College in Los Angeles. Within the framework of the general Diopian project of recovery, the purposes of the conference as outlined by KIPAS and Us were (1) to identify and build exchanges with other scholars and laypersons interested in the critical study of ancient Egypt; (2) to provide space for presentation of research to fellow scholars, students, and the larger community; (3) to introduce the *Husia* and ideas related to spiritual and ethical recovery and reconstruction; (4) to offer publication possibilities for research on ancient Egypt through the University of Sankore Press, which joined

KIPAS in the project; and (5) to create a permanent organization of scholars and laypersons committed to the Diopian project of recovery and reconstruction.

Association for the Study of Classical African Civilizations

Having planned and organized this project, KIPAS and Us reached out to the Kemetic Institute to join the conference. Out of this conference, the Association for the Study of Classical African Civilizations (ASCAC) was founded. KIPAS gave the ASCAC its organizational origins, its name, and its logo and the University of Sankore Press published its first literature—Maulana Karenga's *Selections From the Husia* (1984); Jacob Carruthers's *Essays in Ancient Egyptian Studies* (1984); Karenga and Carruthers's edited volume, *Kemet and the African Worldview* (1980); and Karenga's edited volume, *Reconstructing Kemetic Culture* (1990). In its first 3 years, the ASCAC was instrumental in creating an international dialogue and a flurry of activity involving ancient Egyptian studies. It set up a national and international chapter structure; registered 1,000 members by 1987, whom it took to Egypt for its annual conference; began to penetrate the academy and urge Black Studies departments and programs to include courses on ancient Egyptian studies as essential to their curriculum; and established study groups in the community to expand the discourse.

However, due to differences concerning research focus and policy direction, KIPAS and its members left the ASCAC in 1989. KIPAS had established its own program of ancient Egyptian recovery and reconstruction before its initiative to found the ASCAC, which KIPAS had expanded during its work with the ASCAC, so it continued this work in the areas of research, education, writing and publication, and institution building. Eventually, the ASCAC began to shift from an exclusive focus on ancient Egypt to inclusion of West Africa, especially Ghana.

Other Groups

Another factor shaping the development of ancient Egyptian studies at the time was the activities of the Nile Valley civilization group led by Ivan van Sertima. The group held a major conference on Nile Valley civilization in September of 1984, 7 months after the founding of the ASCAC, calling together scholars and

ancient Egyptian enthusiasts. But unlike the ASCAC, the group formed no professional organization. However, Ivan van Sertima, who founded the *Journal of African Civilization*, built the journal into a major source for publication of critical research on Nile Valley and other classical African civilizations and African presence in civilizations around the world.

Central also to the continuous work on ancient Egyptian studies is the annual International Cheikh Anta Diop Conference organized by Molefi Kete Asante and Ana Yenenga. The conference brings together African scholars and other Africanists from throughout the world who are committed to the preservation and continuance of Diop's work, as well as to the overall Afrocentric study of classical African civilization, especially Kemet.

THE FUTURE

As a result of the work of the Kawaiida Institute of Pan-African Studies, the Kemetic Institute, the ASCAC, the International Cheikh Anta Diop Conference, and allied scholars and activities, the ancient Egyptian studies movement remains vibrant and productive. Classes in ancient Egyptian studies in departments and programs of Black Studies and Africana Studies have increased and include history, culture, art, language, religion, and ethical philosophy. In addition, major conferences and smaller symposia, seminars, and other forums with this intellectual focus are held regularly. In addition, universities and museums have increased discourse and exhibitions to address a heightened interest in ancient Egypt caused by the Afrocentric initiative in ancient Egyptian studies. And finally, African scholars have produced in English and French numerous works to advance research and increase and sustain interest in the project.

— Maulana Karenga

FURTHER READING

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ANTILYNCHING CAMPAIGN

African American women played a key role in the fight to stop lynchings in the United States. In 1892, following the lynchings of three of her friends, Ida B. Wells became a leader in the antilynching movement. Wells's friends—Thomas Moss, Calvin McDowell, and Henry Steward—were lynched in Memphis, Tennessee, after protecting their grocery store from an angry white mob who believed that blacks should not own a store. The store had been targeted by whites because it was successful and thus deemed threatening by some whites in the community. Wells's anger over this incident fueled her desire to push for federal antilynching legislation.

Wells used her newspaper, *Free Speech*, to speak out on the continuous lynchings of African Americans in the United States. She noted that although allegations of rape were usually cited as the cause of particular lynchings, it was in fact typically economic competition or outright racism that provoked the lynching. She also condemned lynchings as a sign of the perverted, sick mind of white America. Wells made enemies with her assertions, and in 1895 when she published a statistical analysis of lynchings in the South called the *Red Record*, an angry white mob took action and destroyed her newspaper office. Wells then moved to Illinois and continued her activism there. Beginning in 1898, Wells worked tirelessly to try and persuade the federal government to pass antilynching legislation. While this legislation was never passed, Wells did successfully pressure Illinois Governor Charles Deneen into not rehiring a white sheriff who presided over the lynchings of two blacks during the race riot in 1908 in Springfield, Illinois.

Another key figure in the antilynching movement was Mary Church Terrell. Terrell chose to use the political route to protest lynching. She was the

founder and first president of the National Association of Colored Women (NACW), an organization designed to help African American women socially, economically, and politically. Using the NACW platform of self-help and protest, Terrell encouraged black women to provide a strong moral example in their families and communities and to use that example on the world stage to combat racism and prejudice. Her own writings and public speeches garnered her respect from women in both the United States and Europe. Terrell's activism as president of NACW focused on providing information on lynchings and pressuring the U.S. government to enact legislation against lynching. Mary Church Terrell also fought against segregation and, in fact, one of her last acts was to protest segregation in restaurants in Washington, D.C. In 1950, she successfully cofiled a case against discrimination that ultimately ended with a court decision favoring desegregation of eating facilities in the nation's capital.

Although their efforts to obtain federal antilynching legislation were not successful, Ida B. Wells and Mary Church Terrell provided a shining example of the activism of African American women after Reconstruction. Their activism inspired later generations to continue the fight against racism and prejudice and to improve life conditions for the African American family in the 21st century.

— Cynthia Lehman

FURTHER READING

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- Riggs, Marcia. (Ed.). (1985). *Can I Get a Witness? Prophetic Religious Voices of African American Women: An Anthology*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. This book contains essays by African American women on the issues of lynching and racism.
- Wells, Ida B. (1899). *Lynch Law in Georgia*. Chicago: Chicago Colored Citizens. This is Wells's report on the cruelty and viciousness of lynch law in the state of Georgia.

ANTIRACIST PHILOSOPHY

Antiracist philosophy is not a formal philosophical movement but a philosophical stance against discrimination based on race. This perspective stresses that

race matters, both on its own terms and as an integral part of any critical theoretical discourse about humanity and social relations. Antiracism involves searching for knowledge, producing texts, and disseminating information as political action in the service of humanity. It is therefore imperative for antiracist work to challenge the glee of the political Right concerning the so-called irrelevance of race, the gloom of the Left about the possibilities of race discourse in progressive politics, and the postmodern despair about the politics of essentializing race.

The entry point of antiracist work is within the subject's (i.e., the individual's) personal experience, history, and social practice. The subject is a creative agent with an active and resistant voice. Thus, minoritized groups have discursive power. Critical antiracism must work with the understanding that the subaltern think, speak, and desire. Both the privileged and minoritized have working and embodied knowledge. And for members of both groups, the act of understanding the self results in an affirmation of a politics of community responsibility. The power of the "I" (as the lone subject), the product of liberal individualism, is insidiously harmful to developing community. To enact a politics of responsibility, the individual needs to be fully grounded in how the self becomes conscious of its existence within a collective. The initial process in the exercise of self-consciousness and the politics of affirmation involves acknowledging the powerful synergy of body, mind, and spirit. In antiracist work this means seeing equity work as a form of spirituality. As such, equity work is not forced but, rather, flows through individuals' actions and thoughts. It is marked by genuineness and sincerity.

Antiracism is more than a theory and a discourse. It also involves action and allowing knowledge to induce political work. Given the interconnections of soul and body, the worth of a social theory must be measured in terms of both the theory's philosophical grounding and its ability to offer a social and political corrective. Thus a key principle of antiracism is overcoming the theory/practice dichotomy, resulting in a praxis that both guides and insists on political action. Antiracism must be understood, theorized, and acted upon.

Unfortunately, many people's hearts are not open to envisaging and acting for change. Many have not taken seriously the fact that to make change calls for enormous personal and collective sacrifice,

commitment, and resources. There are risks and consequences in pursuing antiracist work. These risks involve the emotional toll and resulting spirit wounds of coming to grips with stories of pain and anger, as well as the stress of having to deal with attacks on one's credibility. Antiracist work occupies itself with assisting minoritized communities to become empowered and empowering, to be spiritually affirmed and affirming, and to heal spirit injuries. The key question, then, is not who can do antiracist work, but rather, whether one is prepared to face the risks and consequences that come with such work. Antiracism is about the search for equitable human conversation—a respectful dialogue among social groups. Antiracism holds that community is about relationships with others, about how to negotiate with and relate to each other, and about how the community is a collective.

ANTIRACISM, EDUCATION, AND SCHOOLING: ASKING NEW QUESTIONS

There are emerging questions that those who hold an antiracist philosophy must deal with. Antiracist educators must address the public disquiet and scepticism about antiracist practice and its efficacy in bringing about changes in schooling. For example, our schools are being called “communities of difference.” How, then, do antiracist educators ensure that schools respond to the multiple needs and concerns of a diverse body politic? How do such educators create schools where all students are valued, feel a sense of belonging, and have access to instruction that is responsive to the needs of diverse learners? To ensure that all students develop a sense of entitlement and connectedness to their schools, there must be a proactive attempt by educators to respond to the needs of all students. Educators must understand that the needs of students extend beyond the material realm to emotional, social, and psychological concerns. Schools have a responsibility to help students make sense of their identities, to build the confidence of all students, and to minimize the effects of social constraints that would have students confirm low educational expectations based on their identities. Thus, the contemporary challenge for antiracist education is to incorporate such diverse needs into critical educational practice.

For those in education, holding an antiracist philosophy therefore means learning about the experience of living with a racialized identity and understanding how students' lived experiences in and out of

school implicate youth engagement and disengagement from school. Antiracism inquires into and uncovers how race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, physical ability, power, and difference influence and are influenced by schooling processes. This inquiry includes how the processes of teaching, learning, and educational administration combine to produce schooling success and failures for different students. Antiracism opines that addressing questions of power, equity, and social difference is essential to enhancing learning outcomes and the provision of social opportunities for all youth.

Antiracist educators start with what students already know and then search for ways to situate the local cultural resource knowledge into the official curriculum. Such educators have a unique place in the current climate of school advocacy because of the power that critical antiracism education offers to imagine schools afresh. The shape the future itself should take is being hotly contested in schools, union halls, and community forums, and clearly antiracism has to be part of that debate. Antiracist educators have unprecedented opportunities to influence many minds and to share and engage different—dominant, privileged, subjugated, subordinated, and minoritized—perspectives. The environments in which educators work offer advantages and opportunities that depend on their subject positions and politics. Educators can work, even with the differential allocation of space and resources, to further the cause of youth education. It all comes down to a question of whether an antiracist educator wants to see current challenges as obstacles or as opportunities and openings to make change happen. The failures and resistances of the 1990s provide a springboard and impetus to rethink antiracist education in the 21st century.

Educators with an antiracist philosophy view antiracist education broadly, as more than just what occurs in schools and other formal institutions of learning. Antiracist education involves the varied options, strategies, and ways through which individuals come to know their world and act in it. Learning happens in many places, including schools, families, workplaces, neighborhoods, broadcast and independent media, the legal system, museums, religious institutions, theatres, and galleries, among other sites. Within these multiple spheres of learning, antiracist education entails drawing on the intersections of social difference in order to understand the complexities of social inequality.

Antiracist thinking poses broad questions surrounding the social organization of learning, such as those concerning what it is to be a person in contemporary society and the relation of this curriculum, garnered from the many sites of learning, to the reproduction of the knowledge that shapes and transforms the social and political world. Antiracism must investigate the harmonies and contradictions with respect to what is learned across these multiple sites, and consider the far-reaching implications of these for the fundamental issues of identity formation, human possibility, equity, and the pursuit of social justice and fairness. For example, antiracists understand that excellence and equity are complementary, not oppositional, terms and that the quality of learning environments and the scholarship produced therein increase tremendously with the recognition that equity measures are excellence measures.

Antiracism critiques conventional schooling by interrogating the way schools produce, validate, and privilege certain forms of knowledge while devaluing and delegitimizing other knowledge, history, and experience. Critical antiracist practice challenges the dominant interests involved in processes of producing knowledge and exposes and opposes how such knowledge becomes hegemonic and is disseminated nationally and globally. However, hegemony is not limited to the frame of Western knowledges and epistemologies. The notion of hegemony is therefore useful for understanding the relationship between multiple social values and complex realities. Looking through an antiracist prism makes it possible to undertake a rigorous examination of the (in)adequacy of dominant discourses and epistemologies for understanding the realities of diverse people, positioned as they are in oppressive and oppressed positions in the contexts of the asymmetrical power relations among social groups. Thus, given the current incompleteness of discourse and political practice, antiracism involves a search for epistemological diversity in the understanding of the complexity of oppressions.

To the degree that anti-racist practices seek to create the context for more complete discourse around humanity and human interests, they are in line with the broadest and most humane methods of Afrocentric scholars engaged in the practice of defining all human beings as centered within culture. Individuals cannot divest themselves of some form of culture, but those who consciously operate out of their culture may be said to exercise the discourse of greater humanity.

Critical antiracist work requires a broad redefinition of antiracism, which means looking at racism in its myriad of forms and connecting racism with other forms of oppression. This practice involves taking a critical stance, which helps antiracists to also address the saliency of specific forms of oppression. History and context are significant concepts in teaching about race and racism. Educators must equip students to understand the historical genesis and political trajectories of race and difference—the historical specificities of racist practices as well as how racism has become institutionalized and normalized in different societies.

The classroom teacher's personal experience, history, and understanding of teaching practice serves as an entry point for antiracist work. The antiracist teacher is an example of the synergy of body, mind, and spirit that allows a person to see equity work as a form of spirituality. Such a teacher recognizes that because individuals, and thus students, are creative agents with active and resistant voice, educators must engage with antiracist knowledge in ways that allow society to move forward in new and creative ways reflective of students' local knowledge, subject position, history, and experience.

The antiracist educator, and particularly the white antiracist educator, must work with the knowledge that society treats people differently based on race and that the society's racialized common sense can be exposed to dominant groups in ways that do not require the use of the label "racist." It is not helpful for antiracists to indict all whites as racists. However, there needs to be a recognition of how individuals are helped or hindered by a racist system. Starting with the self means that the white antiracist educator must acknowledge his or her dominance and privilege and assist other whites to see the privilege that accrues to them by virtue of their white identities in white racist societies.

— *George Dei*

FURTHER READING

- Bhavnani, R. (2001). *Rethinking Interventions in Racism*. London: Trentham Books. This volume argues that the meanings of many words and terminology applied in racist discourse, such as *black*, *white*, *racial*, *ethnic minorities*, *culture*, and *cultural difference*, are not easily agreed upon.
- Guttman, A. (Ed.). (1994). *Multiculturalism: Examining The Politics of Recognition*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. This is a comprehensive collection exploring the many aspects of multiculturalism.

Henry, Frances, and Tator, Carol. (1994). The Ideology of Racism—Democratic Racism. *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 26(2), 32–45. This important article makes it possible for an antiracist to ask how some whites perpetuate racism and employ a powerful racist ideology without ever feeling that they have abandoned liberal democratic ideals of social justice for all.

APOLLO THEATRE

The Apollo Theatre of New York is one of the classic venues for African American cultural performance. The Apollo Theatre has been a presence in Harlem for 89 years and the epicenter of black American culture. Originally known as an Irish Music Hall, the Jack Davenport's family enterprise took over the theater in 1919, renamed it the Hurtig and Seamon's New Burlesque Theater, and on its stage offered vaudeville, striptease, and burlesque acts to predominantly white audiences. In 1933 the theater was renamed the Apollo, after the Greek god of music and poetry. In 1934, the new management team of Frank Schiffman and Leo Brecher began presenting black entertainers to racially mixed audiences.

Through good business management, Schiffman's sense of responsibility to the community, and a respect for show business tradition, the Apollo became known as the best showcase in Harlem. Schiffman created an atmosphere that made all black performers want to play at the Apollo Theatre at least once. For his efforts, he gained respect and affection from patrons all over the country who visited the theater. Black talent flourished in Harlem like nowhere else in the city. Harlem was the place to be, because it was the one place in the entire country where black men and black women could creatively express themselves. Harlem became an oasis where millions of people flocked. As Harlem's racial makeup began to change with the addition of blacks from the South, the first entertainment to grace the Apollo stage were the big bands of Duke Ellington, Benny Carter, Louis Armstrong, Cab Calloway, and Count Basie, to name a few. *Jazz a la Carte*, featuring Benny Carter's big band, helped to garner the theater's new role as the city's premier location for African American performance.

Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, the Apollo was a mecca for legendary entertainers such as Bessie Smith, Billie Holiday, and Dinah Washington. Many careers began as a result of winning Amateur Night at

the Apollo; for example, Pearl Bailey, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughn, James Brown, and Gladys Knight were all winners. The Jackson 5 and Stevie Wonder would also enjoy their first major exposure at the Apollo. It became famous as the place where unknown performers had their talents assessed by raucous Harlem audiences. By the late 1950s, the theater was the country's top stage for established black artists and the launching point for numerous musical careers. However, the Apollo steadily lost money during the 1970s due to the demands of big acts commanding enormous increases in salary. In 1977 the Apollo was forced to close its doors. Several years later, in 1985, the Inner City Theater Group rescued the decaying landmark, refurbished it, and reopened it. The Apollo Theatre was then declared a national historic landmark, which secured the building's survival, but the efforts to restore the viable performance house largely failed. The theater was a financial disaster when in 2001, Derek Johnson, a former AOL Time Warner executive, replaced Representative Charles Rangel, a New York Democrat, as chairman of the Apollo Foundation and began turning it around. It is to be expected that the Apollo, because of its central location in Harlem, will continue to attract outstanding performances and large audiences. It remains an icon of the African American contribution to stage performances in New York.

— *Adjuia Barbara E. Adams*

FURTHER READING

- Cooper, Ralph. (1990). *Amateur Night at the Apollo: Ralph Carter Presents Five Decades of Great Entertainment*. New York: HarperCollins. This is an accessible history of the Amateur Night concept at the Apollo and provides insight into the Apollo's great history.
- Dolkart, Andrew S., and Sorin, Gretchen S. (1977). *Touring Historic Harlem: Four Walks in Northern Manhattan*. New York: New York Landmarks Conservancy. This book contains a general spatial representation of Harlem communities, as well as many historical anecdotes about Harlem life.
- Fox, Ted. (1983). *Showtime at the Apollo*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. In one of the best books written on the subject of entertainment at the Apollo, Fox reveals the pressures and tensions behind the scenes at the Apollo.
- Schiffman, Jack. (1984). *Harlem Heyday—A History of Modern Black Show Business and the Apollo Story*. New York: Prometheus Books. Schiffman's book is one of the best works on modern black show business. He writes about the general history of show business, making the Apollo a big part of the story.
- www.newyork.com/visit/attractions.apollo_theater.html This Web site has some interesting information on the Apollo.

ASSOCIATED PUBLISHERS

Associated Publishers is the oldest African American publishing company in the United States. In 1920, Carter Godwin Woodson, a professor at Howard University, organized the publishing company to conduct research, document, and disseminate scholarly writings on the life and culture of African Americans. Woodson recognized the need for the world to gain a greater appreciation for African Americans and wanted to unmask some of the distortions and misrepresentations about the history of African people. His aim was to give the African community an instrument for publishing the best scholarly documents on African and African American history. Since its inception, Associated Publishers has published nationally known and recognized authors who have written numerous articles, monographs, and books that give an accurate account of outstanding contributions African Americans have made to world society.

Woodson was born December 19, 1875 in New Canton, Virginia. He was the son of James Henry and Anne Eliza Riddle Woodson, who had survived the horrors of enslavement. As a young boy, Woodson worked in the coal mines of West Virginia. His formal education began at Douglass High School in Huntington, Virginia. After high school, he attended Berra College in Kentucky, Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, and the Sorbonne in Paris. In 1908, he received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Chicago. In 1912, Woodson became the second African American to receive a doctoral degree from Harvard University.

Woodson spoke French fluently and mastered several other languages. He served as a principal and high school teacher in Washington, D.C., a supervisor of schools in the Philippines, and as the dean of Liberal Arts at Howard University and West Virginia Collegiate Institute. On September 9, 1915, Woodson founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. As a visionary, he saw the need to research and document the many outstanding contributions of African Americans and to pass knowledge and truth to future generations. In 1916, Woodson began publishing the *Journal of Negro History*. The journal, which is still being published, features writings on African American life and culture. The publication is widely distributed throughout the United States, Africa, Europe, Asia, and Latin America.

Woodson had an unyielding spirit and will, which caused him to quit university teaching and to devote his life to the dissemination of African cultural and historical information. In 1920, he organized the Associated Publishers to serve as a means for African American authors to have their writings published. In 1926, to bring further attention to the beauty, richness, and diversity of African American culture, Woodson created the celebration Negro History Week. In 1976, the Association for the Study of African American Life and History changed the name of the celebration to Black History Month.

One of the principal difficulties Carter Woodson experienced was getting his works published by the major white publishing houses. In response, he used self-determination and ingenuity to create a publishing house and was thus able to fund and distribute the many books and monographs he wrote. In many ways, his work became the model for such contemporary publisher-scholars as Jawanza Kunjufu and Haki Madhubuti. Once Associated Publishers was established, having published 30 books authored by Carter G. Woodson, it was also capable of publishing other authors. Some of Woodson's books include *The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861* (1915), *A Century of Negro Migration* (1918), *The History of the Negro Church* (1927), *The Rural Negro* (1930), and *The Negro Professional Man and the Community* (1934). Woodson, the renowned historian and scholar recognized as "the father of black history," died on April 3, 1950. His internationally acclaimed book *The Mis-Education of the Negro* (1933) continues to be a standard by which educational authors of his generation are judged. Associated Publishers published *The Negro History Journal* and the *Negro History Bulletin* in addition to books. Noteworthy scholars such as Charles H. Wesley, John Hope Franklin, Samuel Banks, and Edgar Allen Toppin chose to publish some of their best research with the publishing house, and they have thus been major contributors to the rich heritage of Associated Publishers.

— Judylynn Mitchell

FURTHER READING

- Asante, Molefi Kete. (2002). *100 Greatest African Americans*. Amherst, MA: Prometheus Books. This book presents information about outstanding African Americans and their contributions, including Carter G. Woodson.
- Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH). (2002, January). *Black History Bulletin*,

65(1). Washington, DC: Author. This is a historical update on the work of Woodson and on the ASALH.

Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH). (2002, June). *Black History Bulletin*, 65(2). Washington, DC: Author. This issue continues the historical update on Woodson's work and the ASALH begun in the previous issue.

ASSOCIATION OF BLACK PSYCHOLOGISTS

The Association of Black Psychologists (ABPsi) was founded in San Francisco in 1968 by black psychologists and psychology students from across the country looking for a way to use their skills to benefit the black community. The association was formed to address the significant social problems affecting the black community and to have a positive impact on the mental health of the national black community through planning, programs, services, training, and advocacy.

It was as clear then as it is now that to a degree the success of mental health services for the black community depends on the ability of black psychologists to (1) act as free and independent agents in the interest of black people; (2) resist and/or inoculate themselves against the degradation and dehumanization resulting from the effects of white supremacy; and (3) advance and increase the utilization of their understanding and application of the experience, essence, integrity, and vitalism of black people. The association recognized that if the practice of black psychologists, including theorizing, did not respect and reflect the essence, experience, and integrity of black people, then everything black psychologists provided (therapy, service, treatment, and theorizing) would only disserve, dehumanize, and further debilitate black people.

The founders of the Association of Black Psychologists were Calvin Atkinson, Ronald Brown, Ed Davis, Jim DeShields, George Franklin, Reginald Jones, Roy Jones, Robert L. Green, George Jackson, Mary Howard, De Lorise Minot, Leon Nicks, Lonnie Mitchell, Bill Pierce, Joseph White, Shirley Thomas, Samuel Winslow, Joseph Akward, J. Don Barnes, Harold Dent, Russ Evans, Bill Harvey, Al Goines, Luther Kindall, Thomas Hilliard, Mel King, Walter Jacobs, Jane Fort Morrison, Wade W. Nobles, Sylvia

O'Bradovich, David Tarrell, Charles Thomas, and Mike Ward. Guided by the principles of self-determination, agency, and mutual self-interest, these women and men set about building a professional organization through which they could address the long neglected needs of black people and black psychologists. The association's founders pledged to see themselves as black people first and psychologists second.

The members of the association recognized that Western (i.e., white) psychology failed to provide a full and accurate understanding of the psychological experience, essence, and integrity of black people. Since Western psychology's theories and therapeutic practices clearly were not uncritically applicable to black people, the association decided to develop a culturally grounded discipline and field of black psychology. As an African-centered discipline, black psychology not only would include the study of the behavior of black people but also would seek to transform black people into self-conscious agents of their own mental and political liberation. In addition, the work of the radical black psychologists in the association helped to clarify the intellectual justification and application of African-centered thought and the co-emerging field of Black Studies.

From its inception, this liberatory black psychology was created by (1) engaging in severe critique and rejection of white psychology's methodology, conclusions, and ideological promise; (2) providing Afrocentric models of study, theory, and therapy; and (3) self-consciously intervening in the struggle for a more humane and just society and environment. The development of contemporary black psychology was grounded in the recognition that what was needed was a theoretical and therapeutic practice that was centered in the experience, essence, and integrity of black people. Thus the association through its African Psychology Institute defined African-centered psychology as "the self-conscious 'centering' of psychological analysis and application in African reality, culture and epistemology. African Psychology examines the process that allows for the illumination and liberation of the spirit. African Centered Psychology is ultimately concerned with understanding the systems of the meaning of human beingness, the features of human functioning, and the restoration of normal/natural order to human development."

The stated purpose of the ABPsi was and continues to be to have a positive impact on the mental health of the national black community by means of planning,

programs, services, training, and advocacy. The association's objective is to ensure that the skills and abilities of black psychologists are being used to influence necessary change and address significant social problems affecting the black community. Specifically, the formal organizational goals of the association are to (1) enhance the psychological well-being of African (i.e., black) people in the United States and throughout the diaspora; (2) promote constructive understanding of African people through positive approaches to research; (3) develop an approach to psychology that is consistent with the experience of African people; (4) define mental health in consonance with newly established psychological concepts and standards regarding African people; (5) develop international support systems for African psychologists and students of psychology; (6) develop policies for local, state, and national decision making that influence the mental health of the African community; (7) promote values and lifestyles that support the survival and well-being of the black race; and (8) support established African organizations and aid in the development of new independent African institutions to enhance Africans' psychological, educational, cultural, and economic situation.

The Association of Black Psychologists has grown from a small group of concerned professionals into an independent, autonomous organization of over 1,400 members who see their collective mission and destiny as the liberation of the African mind, empowerment of the African character, and illumination of the African spirit. ABPsi has been guided for over 35 years by a member-elected board of directors, regional representatives, and national staff. The chronology of ABPsi presidential leadership is as follows:

Charles W. Thomas, Ph.D. (1968–1969), Robert Green, Ph.D. (1968–1969), Henry Tomes, Ph.D. (1969–1970), Robert L. Williams, Ph.D. (1969–1970), Stanley Crockett, Ph.D. (1970–1971), Reginald L. Jones, Ph.D. (1971–1972), James S. Jackson, Ph.D. (1972–1973), Thomas O. Hilliard, Ph.D. (1973–1974), George D. Jackson, Ph.D. (1974–1975), William Hayes, Ph.D. (1975–1976), Ruth E. G. King, Ed.D. (1976–1977), Maisha Bennett, Ph.D. (1978–1979), Joseph Awkard, Ph.D. (1979–1980), Daniel Williams, Ph.D. (1980–1981), David Terrell, Ph.D. (1981–1982), Joseph A. Baldwin, Ph.D. (1982–1983), William K. Lyles, Ph.D. (1983–1984), W. Monty Whitney, Ph.D. (1984–1985), Melvin Rogers, Ph.D. (1985–1986), Halford H. Fairchild, Ph.D. (1986–1987), Na'im

Akbar, Ph.D. (1987–1988), Dennis E. Chestnut, Ph.D. (1988–1989), Suzanne Randolph, Ph.D. (1989–1990), Linda James Myers, Ph.D. (1990–1991), Timothy R. Moragne, Psy.D. (1991–1992), Maisha Hamilton Bennett, Ph.D. (1992–1993), Anna M. Jackson, Ph.D. (1993–1994), Wade Nobles, Ph.D. (1994–1995), Thomas A. Parham, Ph.D. (1995–1996), Frederick B. Phillips, Psy.D. (1996–1997), Kamau Dana Dennard, Ph.D. (1997–1998), Afi Samella B. Abdullah, Ph.D. (1998–1999), Mawiya Kambon, Ph.D. (1999–2000), Anthony Young, Ph.D. (2000–2001), Mary Hargrow, Ph.D. (2001–2002), Harvette Grey, Ph.D. (2002–2003), and Willie S. Williams, Ph.D. (2003–2004).

The organization has grown over the years and has an exciting future because of the many new psychologists who are entering the field with an eye toward linking African concepts with contemporary African lives.

— *Wade W. Nobles (Nana Kwaku Berko I, Ifagbemi Sangodare)*

AUSAR AUSET SOCIETY

The Ausar Auset Society is an African- and Kemetic-centered spiritual group founded by Ra Un Nefer Amen I (formerly Rogelio Straughn) in New York in 1973. The members, initiates, students, and community participants study and implement spiritual practices that Africans developed in ancient Kemet and in the Indus Kush civilization. Ausar Auset has 28 chapters and study groups across America and abroad in Toronto, Trinidad, Bermuda, St. Thomas, and England. The branches replicate the structural archetype established by Ra Un Nefer Amen I, Shekem Ur Shekem of the Ausar Auset Society in New York. The title Shekem Ur Shekem is Egyptian and is taken to mean "king of kings," and there are kings (Ur Aua) and queen mothers (Ur-t Aua-t) who reign in other regions.

In the New York Het Neter, free weekly classes are held in spirituality, meditation, qigong, vegetarian cooking, homeopathy, medicine, family relationships, health, nutrition, and business ventures. A store selling products for inner development, a vegetarian restaurant, and a school comprise the multilevel complex. Ausar Auset is an independent and functional African spiritual organization that offers, primarily to people of African descent, a way of life.

The philosophy of Ausar Auset is to awaken the sacred potentiality in men and women. Through the initiation system and the oracle, adherents of Ausar Auset experience a connection to and interaction with divine instructions specific to them individually. Through the oracle that Ra Un Nefer Amen I is said to have received, the participants obtain metaphysical guidance for life situations and problem solving. In his text, *Tree of Life Meditation System* (1996), Amen presents the 11 realms of African and Kemetic conceptions that respond to the subconscious and conscious states.

Ra Un Nefer Amen I was born Rogelio Straughn in Panama on January 6, 1944 and raised by his mother and stepfather, Guricku and Bertram Straughn. He attended the Conservatory of Music, where at age 6 he studied piano and music theory. As a child, he also read periodicals and texts to his grandfather, Panama's first dental surgeon, who had become nearly blind. He read to his grandfather *Times Magazine*, *Newsweek*, newspapers equivalent to the *New York Times*, and philosophy texts such as Plato's *Republic*. In a 9:00 a.m. third grade class, his history teacher told the students that civilization started in Egypt. Amen saw stars and awoke at 7:00 p.m. at home in bed. Neither the family nor the school would discuss what happened in those lost hours. At 14, he read Thomas à Kempis's *Imitation of Christ* and *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola*. Soon afterward, he began secretly practicing the spiritual exercises that influenced ascetic theology and monasticism.

Straughn attended a high school that produced Panama's presidents, where he studied history, political science, music, and literature. He read the works of Che Guevara, Pablo Neruda, and Jose Marti. As the youngest member of the Federation of Panamanian Students (FPS), he protested with the peasants who fought against Panama ceding land to Costa Rica. After coming to America with his parents in 1960, he protested against the Vietnam War with Students for a Democratic Society. He also continued his spiritual search. In 1962, he completely changed his diet after learning about the effects of vitamins and minerals on health. He concluded that divine spiritual potency combined with healthy living could solve the world's problems. During the 1960s, he participated in various black power organizations until he established his own group based on achieving higher realms of consciousness.

Ausar Auset members attempt to live according to divine laws from ancient theologies. Ausar Auset

schools teach standard academic subjects, spiritual culture, and meditation. Men and women in Ausar Auset are entrepreneurs, priests, priestesses, queen mothers, and skilled laborers. Through the guidance of the oracle, they have the choice to participate or not to participate in polygamous or monogamous relationships. All of the children are treated like extended family. Mothers are called *Mut* (pronounced moot), from ancient Kemet, meaning "Mother" and "Goddess." Fathers are called *Atef*, meaning "Father" and "Crown." Ausar Auset combines the names of the ancient Ausar (Osiris) and Auset (Isis).

— Regina Jennings

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THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MALCOLM X

The Autobiography of Malcolm X tells the life of Malcolm Little in a dramatic fashion that resonates with many members of the African American community. His life was lived with intensity and purpose, and in this book he describes the path that he took in a way that makes his story accessible to all. Malcolm Little was born in Omaha, Nebraska, and grew up in Detroit, Boston, and New York. He was a young man whose father had been killed by white racists and whose mother had experienced a nervous breakdown. He was a naive student in school, a hip small time hustler called "Detroit Red," and a petty criminal who became a Muslim and joined the Nation of Islam while in prison in New York.

When he came out of prison, he changed his name to Malcolm X in conformity with the discipline of the Nation of Islam. Malcolm X then devoted his life to the Nation of Islam, which had transformed him and given him a new understanding of his condition and that of all Africans in American society. He dictated

his story, which became *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, to Alex Haley during hundreds of sessions. By the time the book was published, however, its subject had been gunned down at a Harlem meeting as he was about to give a speech on February 5, 1965. The accused gunman was associated with the Nation of Islam.

The Autobiography received high praise when it was released in 1965, and it has remained one of the major works in African American letters, biography, and Black Studies ever since. The book won the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award in 1966 and was made into a film by Spike Lee in 1992. *The Autobiography* shows Malcolm X as a person who was able to confront danger, to face the white man, and to speak his mind without compromising his principles and values. This is what made him such an attractive figure to the African American community. In many ways, Malcolm X lived as a fully cultured African American and became in his living the embodiment of courage, straightforwardness, and principle.

The story of Malcolm X is historical, literary, sociological, psychological, political, and biographical. It is a treasure trove of complex information about one of the most beloved leaders ever produced in the African American community. In his book, Malcolm X outlines the pattern of his political growth from the time of his homemade education, to the insights into the nature of the American society given him by Elijah Muhammad, the leader of the Nation of Islam, to his appearances at top universities and colleges explaining the realities of the African world. Unlike Martin Luther King, Jr., who spoke often in favor of integration and nonviolent confrontation, Malcolm X articulated a philosophy of self-respect, equality, and self-defense.

In the field of Black Studies, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* remains a classic work chronicling the life of a great person, but it is also a riveting story told with authority, literary flare, and rich personal testimonies. What we see in this book is one man in a spiritual struggle to overcome the personal obstacles that confront him but also a man who metamorphoses into a representative of the collective journey for liberation.

— Molefi Kete Asante

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AXUM EMPIRE

Axum is located in north central Ethiopia near the border of Eritrea, a country bordering Ethiopia and the Red Sea. It is the capital of the Abyssinian province of Tigrè. Axum was once the center of a vital trade route connecting the rest of Africa with India, Arabia, and the Far East. Axum is famous as the site of tall steles, which were carved from single granite blocks that date to the 3rd or 4th century B.C.E. The most prominent of the remaining steles is about 85 feet tall. Axum is most famous for being the most sacred city of Ethiopia and the last home of the Ark of the Covenant.

RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS

Axum is rich in religious traditions. The original religion practiced there was a traditional African one in which the primary deity was associated with the sun and moon. Later, traders and sages from India and Asia brought religions such as Buddhism and Jainism to Axum. During the 4th century, Christianity was declared the national religion. By the 6th century, Jewish traders had introduced Judaism in Axum. There is evidence that in 627 to 628 C.E. the Prophet Muhammad sent a letter to the Axumite king, Ella Saham, seeking to convert him to Islam. King Saham replied by saying that he had definitely accepted Islam as his faith and that he was sending his son to the prophet. Afterward, a small group of Muslims who were seeking asylum fled to Axum where they found refuge and an abundance of the means of living. Axum was one of the earliest places where followers of Muhammad could freely practice their religion without fear of persecution. Traditional African, Judaic, and Islamic influences can still be seen in the architecture and cultural customs of Axum.

Axum is also thought to be Ethiopia's most sacred place, because it is the site of the first St. Mary Church, which was built in 372 C.E. to hold the Ark of the Covenant. In the early 1530s, just before the Muslim armies attacked, the Ark was moved; however, it was returned to Axum in the early 1600s and installed in the second St. Mary's Church. The Ark remained there until 1965 when Emperor Haile Selassie moved it to a new chapel, where it remains today.

In addition to Axum's rich religious tradition, it is renowned in Ethiopian tradition as the home of Makeda, Queen of Sheba. The queen left from Axum when she visited King Solomon's court in Jerusalem to discuss commerce, religion, and politics with him. The Queen of Sheba's sacred quest for wisdom resulted in the Ethiopians' possessing the Ark of the Covenant.

Arks in Kemet

Arks are very ancient spiritual commodities that have been part of African culture since the time of Kemet (i.e., ancient Egypt). Ethiopian and Jewish traditions maintain that the Ark of the Covenant houses the Ten Commandments, which are believed to be laws given to Moses by God and represents the energy of God. The Ark is said to emit a dazzling mystical aura.

According to the Bible, Moses was raised in Kemet; its influence on him can be seen in the biblical description of the Ark of the Covenant and the rituals that the Jewish people followed when they used it in religious ceremonies. It was custom for the people of Kemet to hold an Apet festival, where there was a procession in which arks were carried between the temples of Luxor and Karnak. The Kemetic arks were originally shaped like boats but eventually became shaped more like chests. The Ark of the Covenant was originally described as a rectangular, gold-plated hardwood box, about 4 feet long, 2 feet, 3 inches wide, and 2 feet, 6 inches deep. It was overlaid in pure gold within and without and round about. It rested on a mercy seat of pure gold. It had one golden cherub with outspread wings on one end and another similar one on the other end.

THE ETHIOPIAN CHURCH

According to Ethiopian tradition, the Ark of the Covenant rests in the most private part of the Ethiopian church, which is called the *mekedes*. Only

the senior priests are admitted there. The middle section of the church is called the *kiddiest*. Priests and those receiving communion use this area. The outside area is called the *kine mahlet* and is where *debtterra* (cantors) sing sacred hymns and the congregation worships. This three-part system is believed to be based on the Temple of Solomon, which itself has antecedents in the Temple of Amen at Karnak.

In the sacred text of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, *Kebra Nagast*, or *The Book of the Glory of the Kings* of Ethiopia, it is written that the Ark was taken from the Jewish people and given to Ethiopians because they were true to God's words. Its sacredness is elevated by its mysteriousness.

How the Ethiopians Carried Away Zion

The writers of the *Kebra Nagast* chronicle that the relationship between Makeda, Queen of Sheba, and King Solomon resulted in a love relationship and the birth of a child, Menelik. The Ark of the Covenant and how it came to rest in Axum is a crucial element in the love story of Queen Makeda and King Solomon.

According to *Kebra Nagast*, Queen Makeda raised Menelik in Ethiopia. When he became an adult, he and a group of priests visited his father, King Solomon. One night, while the group was in Jerusalem, an angel of the Lord appeared to Azaryas, one of the priests who accompanied Menelik, and stood over him like a pillar of fire. The angel told him to awaken his brothers (i.e., his fellow priests) and ask them to join him in taking wooden pieces to where the Ark was kept. The angel told Azaryas to pull open the doors of the temple where they kept Zion, the "Tabernacle of the Law of God," and they would be able to take it away with no problem. Azaryas arose and woke up three of his brethren. They went to the temple, which held Zion, and found the doors open. An angel was in there to further direct them. They took Zion and replaced the spot where it had been with the pieces of wood that the angel had told them to bring. They covered the wood with "coverings of Zion," then shut the doors and went back to their houses. Then the priests sacrificed a sheep, burned incense, and set Zion in a secret place for 7 days and 7 nights.

When Menelik was ready to return to Axum, he asked his father, King Solomon, to bless him, which he did. Menelik was not immediately aware that his group was in possession of Zion, but when he was told, he rejoiced. The group put Zion on a wagon piled

with a “mass of worthless stuff, and dirty clothes, and stores of every sort” and departed from Jerusalem. Even though the people of Israel were not consciously aware that Zion was on the wagon, they knew intuitively and “old men, children, virgins and widows wailed and wept.” The Archangel Michael spread out his wings in front of them and, with his protection, they were able to march across the ocean with the same ease as they were able to move across the land.

When Menelik and his party arrived in Ethiopia, they told the people that they were the custodians of Zion. According to legend, when warring groups attacked, many of the Ethiopians’ statues were destroyed and the monoliths that represented the traditional religion fell and broke into pieces. The Queen of Sheba then stepped down and her son, Menelik, ruled as the Ethiopian emperor from Axum. The text of *Kebra Nagast* says, “For ZION shone like the sun . . . they spread out purple beneath her, and they draped her with draperies of purple, and they sang songs before and behind her . . . for they saw Zion moving in the heavens like the sun, and they all ran with the wagon of Zion, some in front of her and some in back of her.” This is the Timkat, Ceremony of the Epiphany, that the Ethiopian people do today in Axum. During this joyous ceremony, a replica of the Ark is taken out wrapped in rich purple brocade and marched in a procession of priests and laypeople. On rare occasions, some privileged pilgrims are given water to drink that has been washed over Zion. Axum continues to be the holiest city in Ethiopia.

The Church Today

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church believes that

- the lawful kings of Ethiopia were descended from Solomon, King of Israel
- Menelik, the son of King Solomon and Makeda, Queen of Sheba, brought the Ark from Jerusalem to Axum, the sacred and political capital of Ethiopia
- the God of Israel transferred his residence on earth from Jerusalem to Axum, the ecclesiastical and political capital of Ethiopia

The Emperor Haile Ras Tafari Selassie was the 225th direct line descendent of a dynasty that ruled from Axum and began with Menelik, the son of Makeda and Solomon. In 1974, there was a revolution in Ethiopia and he was removed from the throne. The emperor died in obscure circumstances a year later. In spite of numerous wars and upheavals, Axum remains a site of commitment to sacred passion and opulent festivals.

— *Miriam Ma’at-Ka-Re Monges*

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B

BACK-TO-AFRICA MOVEMENT

The Back-to-Africa movement is a physical and psychological project that emerged from the desire of African people to return to their native land. Several major campaigns related to the Back-to-Africa movement have been launched in North America. They all stem from the sense of loss Africans experienced when they landed on foreign soil. How to return to the land they had left was the all-encompassing passion of the people who found themselves as strangers in an alien society. This would become the passion of some of their descendants as well, and when they could not imagine the possibility of the freedom to travel to Africa, they would sing about it or write poetry depicting it. Thus Africa became the eternal symbol of the drive of the black population toward physical and psychological redemption.

The first American movement to send Africans back to Africa did not originate with Africans, however. It came out of the intense debate among white politicians about the future of the nation. Some abolitionists had proposed sending Africans out of the country in order to lessen the possibility of racial conflict. This plan was supported by the most prominent Americans of the early 19th century. In 1816, the American colonization movement was started with the purpose of sending blacks back to Africa. The first group of Africans left for Africa in 1820, but the project failed because it was poorly planned and the people could not find a desirable place to settle. Soon, however, the land later known as Liberia was settled,

and although these settlers were initially greeted with hostility, they soon established relations with the indigenous people and created a home among them. This movement led to the creation of the country of Liberia.

A second movement was that led by Marcus Garvey (1887–1940), who preached, among other things, a Back-to-Africa doctrine. Perhaps no individual influenced African American thinking on going back to Africa as much as Garvey did. When he came to New York in 1916, Garvey had already seen the condition of blacks in the Caribbean and Central America and was certain that the only way for African people to have peace was to leave the Americas. He was convinced that white racism would never cease and that only on the African continent would Africans experience harmony, progress, and development.

Among the instruments Garvey used to disseminate his ideas was *The Negro World* newspaper. In *The Negro World*, he advanced the need for economic independence, pride of race, and a return to Africa. Garvey organized a steamship company, the Black Star Line, to provide commercial and transport links between black people; however, his method of selling stock led to his conviction in 1923 for mail fraud in relationship to the Back-to-Africa project. When he came out of prison in 1927, he was an international figure in the African world. His organization, the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League, had more than 10 million members, and Garvey, its leader and guide, was the most electric and charismatic speaker produced by the African world. Back-to-Africa remains a powerful

concept into the 21st century, although it has evolved from referring to a strictly physical return to Africa to the psychological idea of going back to Africa mentally.

— *Molefi Kete Asante*

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BEFORE THE MAYFLOWER

First published more than 40 years ago, Lerone Bennett's *Before the Mayflower* (1962), now in its sixth printing, stands as one of the most important texts exploring the African experience in the United States. Bennett's classic work begins in antiquity with Ethiopia and Egypt. The author traces the origins of Africans from West Africa through the horrors of the Middle Passage to the Americas, and then through the enslavement, Reconstruction, Jim Crow, and civil rights eras.

Bennett's narrative of the African experience is in a poetic voice, which adds to the value of this monumental text. Indeed, the author's writing style creates an enjoyable reading experience. Bennett turns this history into an epic journey that is neither a story of victimization nor an exaggeratedly triumphant documentary. It is a superb synthesis of the challenges Africans faced, their mistakes, their victories, their successes, and their failures. *Before the Mayflower* is a book about both tragedy and victory. While not romanticizing African resistance and resilience, Bennett most certainly displays a consciousness of Africans' victories and perseverance in the face of the failed and broken promises of a society that enslaved and oppressed their people for centuries.

The book is comprised of the following twelve chapters: (1) "The African Past," (2) "Before the Mayflower," (3) "The Founding of Black America,"

(4) "Behind the Cotton Curtain," (5) "Blood on the Leaves: Revolts and Conspiracies," (6) "The Generation of Crisis," (7) "The Jubilee War," (8) "Black Power in the Old South," (9) "The Life and Times of Jim Crow," (10) "Red, White and Black: Race and Sex," (11) "From Booker T. Washington to Martin Luther King, Jr.," and (12) "The Time of the Whale."

In the first chapter, "The African Past," Bennett reveals to the reader that human civilization began in Africa, and that Ethiopia and Egypt were two of the greatest civilizations of antiquity. He also documents the power and prestige of the empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhay during the golden age of West Africa. The second chapter, "Before the Mayflower," documents the first Africans to arrive in the British colonies at Jamestown in 1619, as well as the legal and political process that transformed them from indentured servants, similar to others in the colony, into enslaved beings throughout the colonies.

The next two chapters, "The Founding of Black America" and "Behind the Cotton Curtain," highlight how free Africans helped shape the United States through their political, economic, creative, and social activities while under the restrictions imposed upon them by an enslaving society. The fifth chapter, "Blood on the Leaves: Revolts and Conspiracies," draws attention to the most well-known plots and rebellions formed by Africans resisting the evil of enslavement. The next chapter, "The Generation of Crisis," revisits the activities of free Africans and their opposition to racism and enslavement. It highlights important individuals, organizations, and events in U.S. history that directly affected the institution of enslavement—in particular, both African and white abolitionists, the Compromise of 1850, and the Dred Scott case. In the seventh chapter, "The Jubilee War," Bennett charts the path to the Civil War and Africans' support of and participation in it. He also reveals Abraham Lincoln's reluctance to challenge the institution of slavery and to allow Africans to fight for their own liberation.

In chapters 8 through 12—"Black Power in the Old South," "The Life and Times of Jim Crow," "Red, White and Black: Race and Sex," "From Booker T. Washington to Martin Luther King, Jr.," and "The Time of the Whale"—Bennett documents Reconstruction, the brief period of democracy in the South, and the black politicians who emerged during this era, the end of Reconstruction, and the subsequent era of Jim Crow and legal segregation and disenfranchisement

that eradicated black political power and human rights for nearly 100 years.

Before the Mayflower is a landmark work that is still used in many universities across the country. Because it was published more than 40 years ago, it is obviously limited in its scope and most useful for study of African American life prior to the 20th century. The book also precedes the Afrocentric movement; therefore some of its language does not reflect the cultural location of many contemporary scholars. Nevertheless, *Before the Mayflower* continues to be a valuable resource for anyone interested in the African experience in the United States.

— Adisa A. Alkebulan

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THE BIRTH OF A NATION

American cinema was in its infancy when David Wark Griffith's epic saga was released in 1915. Based on the novel *The Clansman* by Thomas Dixon, the film *The Birth of a Nation* continues to be hailed as a technological masterpiece as well as a triumph of white supremacist ideology. *The Birth of a Nation* is considered by scholars and critics to be the antecedent of contemporary Hollywood feature films, as Griffith made masterful use of innovative formal strategies

such as the close-up, the iris shot, the split screen, and rapid-fire editing. The grandeur of the film swept audiences off their feet. At a private White House screening, President Woodrow Wilson exclaimed, "It is like writing history with lightning!" However, the film also succeeded in perpetuating on a massive scale the cultural myths and misrepresentations of African Americans that had originally been constructed during the era of enslavement in the United States. In the tradition of the popular minstrel show, the prominent black characters of the Mammy, Uncle Tom, the brutal black buck, and the tragic mulatto were played by white actors in blackface.

The Birth of a Nation debuted during a period of tremendous social and political change in the country. Released during the era of Jim Crowism, the film functioned to aid in the oppression of blacks by justifying the need to keep them under the control of a white racist social, economic, and political system. The constant articulation of this racist agenda in popular culture was a thorn in the side of the body politic. The great migration of African Americans from the South to the urban centers of the North threatened the country's fragile social fabric as blacks aggressively campaigned for improved opportunities in employment, education, and housing. At the same time, the arrival of nearly 25 million European immigrants into the United States posed a unique challenge to the white power structure. As economically and politically disenfranchised groups came into contact in depressed urban communities, the possibility of collective organization and action across racial and ethnic lines became a cause for concern. In order to maintain the system of white supremacy, the white ruling class needed to divest immigrants of their various ethnic identities and instill in them new identities based primarily on race. Film, with its gross caricatures of African people, became the perfect vehicle to acculturate the largely illiterate population into a racist society as immigrants aligned themselves with white supremacist ideology.

EARLY PROTEST AGAINST THE FILM

The African American community vigorously protested the release of *The Birth of a Nation*. Several civil rights and religious groups denounced the film's racist propaganda. The NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) was instrumental in organizing black boycotts of the film all

over the country. The organization picketed the theater at the film's New York premiere, and the Chicago and Boston branches also led massive demonstrations against it. Black-owned newspapers condemned the film in lengthy editorials. And race rebellions broke out in a number of cities. However, the film still enjoyed critical success, and this success is believed to have contributed to the rise in Ku Klux Klan membership and increase in lynchings of blacks during this period.

THE STORY

The film spans the Civil War and Reconstruction era of American history. The story centers around two white, upper-class families, the Camerons and the Stonemans. The Camerons of Piedmont, South Carolina, represent the wealthy, slave-holding, planter class of the Southern aristocracy. They symbolize the gentility and tradition of the Confederacy. The Stonemans are wealthy Northern industrialists who are ambivalent on the issue of slavery. The film opens with a visit from the Stonemans to the Cameron home. As the Stonemans tour the Cameron homestead, plantation life in the antebellum South is depicted as a utopian environment where rigid racial codes are strictly observed. Enslaved Africans are depicted as passive supporters of the system, and the Camerons are shown to be virtuous and benevolent slaveowners. However, several scenes later, the Civil War begins and the idyllic life the Camerons have enjoyed abruptly comes to a halt.

There are two dominant themes that run throughout the film: the threat of black social and political agency and the threat of black sexuality. The destructive potential of blacks is foregrounded in the scene commonly referred to as "the Raid on Piedmont." Led by a "white, scalawag" captain, black Union soldiers maraud through the town terrorizing whites and looting their homes. The blacks are shown as uncivilized brutes with no regard for human life, and they are juxtaposed against the civilized regiment of white Confederate soldiers who race to the besieged town to rescue the white citizens and restore peace and order. The scene functions to emphasize the inherent inferiority of black intelligence as well as blacks' dependence on white leadership.

The futility of black political advancement is demonstrated as newly freed blacks attempt to usurp political power from the white ruling class. Blacks are

seen cheating at the ballot box and illegally denying whites the right to vote. And during a meeting of the South Carolina legislature, black representatives make a mockery of the political process by removing their shoes, drinking liquor, and eating fried chicken while the proceedings take place. Finally, white legislators are appalled as their black counterparts proceed to pass a series of laws that permit marriage between blacks and whites.

Sex and Race

The danger of unrestrained black sexuality is introduced through two mulatto characters—Lydia Brown, Congressman Stoneman's housekeeper, and the ambitious Silas Lynch. The behavior of these two figures is constantly juxtaposed against that of the film's white characters, particularly the white female characters, whose sexuality is always presented as innocent and restrained. In an early scene, Lydia is shown fantasizing about the privileged life she believes will be hers when the Confederacy is defeated. When a white colleague of Stoneman rejects her sexual advances, Lydia, as a result of her black blood, goes into an orgasmic fit displaying an innate animalistic sexuality. Silas Lynch later displays this same uncontrollable nature in his desire to possess Elsie Stoneman, the congressman's daughter. Although the mulattoes are able to assume some degree of civility because of their mixed-race heritage, their primitive nature always lies just beneath the surface waiting to erupt at the slightest provocation. But perhaps the infamous scene depicting the black renegade soldier Gus lustfully pursuing the "pet sister" Cameron most clearly establishes the danger of black sexuality in the film. Rather than accept the marriage proposal of the savage brute, the young girl chooses to protect her virtue by throwing herself off a cliff and plunging to her death.

Birth of the Klan

The formation of the Ku Klux Klan dominates the third act of the film. As destruction reigns throughout the South, Ben Cameron comes up with an idea that will avenge the death of his sister and save the South from black rule. The introduction of the Klan at this narrative juncture functions to legitimize the need for violent aggression against blacks as the only method for maintaining white privilege. In the climatic final scene, its members are shown riding to the rescue of

the besieged Cameron family and their faithful black servants who have taken refuge from black marauders in a remote area outside the city. Hence, the Klan provides the clearest articulation of white supremacist ideology by acting as the repository of truth, peace, and order.

SCHOLARLY DISCOURSE ON THE FILM

Since its premiere, two distinct modes of discourse have developed around *The Birth of a Nation*. Mainstream film scholars often foreground the film's aesthetic accomplishments, giving the sociopolitical meanings imbedded in the narrative only a cursory analysis, while scholars based in the humanities and social sciences usually focus on the representation of race without a clear understanding of how the film's artistic qualities inform the narrative. However, in recent years a number of scholars have sought to close the discursive space by examining how the formal strategies or aesthetics of the film function to reinforce an ideology of white supremacy. For instance, Griffith's intertitles or title cards, as they are more commonly known, not only provide information and clarify the plot, they also convey a sense of historical accuracy to subsequent scenes. In the scene involving the newly elected black legislators, a title card preceding the visual image of the vulgar, uncivilized politicians informs viewers that the scene is a reenactment of an 1871 session of the South Carolina legislature. The purpose of the intertitles (like voiceover narration in the sound era) is to act as the authoritative voice of history. By making reference to actual historical events, their strategic placement within the film lends credibility to the ensuing fictionalized narrative that discredits the history and culture of African people. Thus, it was necessary that the role of African American scholars include correcting the images and the impressions given by negative portrayals of blacks in the movies. It is no different in this era.

— Stephanie Yarbough

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BLACK ANGLO-SAXONS

Black Anglo-Saxons is a term most commonly used to denote people of African descent who historically have been miseducated and as a result experience problems with identity formation. Those referred to as Black Anglo-Saxons have a fundamental disorder stemming from racism and global white supremacy. This disorder affects African people, predominantly in North America and Great Britain, who experience and demonstrate inordinate difficulties or maladaptive behaviors regarding their African heritage and ancestry. The term has also been used in discussing the behaviors of blacks on the continent of Africa who, as a result of their colonial and neocolonial experience, strive to become Westernized and to emulate white European and American culture at the expense of other Africans. The term has been analyzed in many areas of study beyond psychology and clinical personality assessments, such as history, education, sociology, and Africology. The term *Black Anglo-Saxons* has also been used to critique the historic role of the black elite and middle class and their relationship to the masses of poor blacks. Other, more creative terms that have been used include *Afropeans* and *Afosaxons*.

The most significant written analysis of Black Anglo-Saxons comes from sociologist and Africana Studies scholar Nathan Hare. Hare's book *Black Anglo-Saxons* has been widely discussed and cited since its publication in 1965. With respect to its impact, this text has been compared to Carter G. Woodson's *The Mis-Education of the Negro* (1933), E. Franklin Frazier's *Black Bourgeoisie* (1948), and Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* (1967). Nathan Hare defined the term *Black Anglo Saxon* as characterizing "those members of the Black middle class who have lost all sense of identity and responsibility for the Black masses." This phenomenon is the result of the racial and cultural oppression of African people, and its outcome is self-hate and the conscious or unconscious desire to cause harm to other members of African society. Author, educator, and Africana Studies scholar Julia Hare has lectured widely on the miseducation of the Black Anglo-Saxon. According to Julia Hare, in the most extreme behavioral examples of Black Anglo-Saxons, individuals deny any and all aspects of Africanity and make a concerted effort to distance themselves from the larger group of blacks. Julia Hare also notes that some of the behaviors are a

defense mechanism rooted in racial demoralization and the fear of the established order. Hare comments on how Black Anglo-Saxons fail to appreciate the impact of their attitudes on the rest of the African American community.

Since Nathan Hare established the conceptual basis for the dialogue on Black Anglo-Saxons, other writers and scholars have also addressed the issue. George E. Curry, syndicated columnist and former editor-in-chief of *Emerge* magazine, discussed the concept with respect to the recruitment and inculcation of young black journalists from colleges and universities. Citing Hare's work, Curry noted, for example, how few African American journalists actually cultivate any ties with their community and are willing to search on their own for any story related to African Americans. There are scholars who in related analyses have offered methods for addressing the problem. These include but are not limited to Frances Cress Welsing's examination of aspects of the behavior in *The Isis Papers* (1991), Amos Wilson's systematic study in *Blueprint for Black Power* (1998), Asa G. Hilliard's cultural response in *Sba: The Reawakening of the African Mind* (1998), and Katherine Bankole's observations in *You Left Your Mind in Africa* (2000).

The concept of the Black Anglo-Saxon has been both vigorously challenged and praised for providing one of the most thorough critiques of the emergence and maintenance of the black middle class since E. Franklin Frazier. It remains a viable construct in the analysis of how and why persons of African descent actively participate in the disassociation and exploitation of other Africans.

— Katherine Olukeni Bankole

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racism and journalism, pointing to the fact that many media institutions hire blacks who will not even go into their own communities.

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BLACK ARTS MOVEMENT

The black arts movement (BAM) was an intense, vocal, provocative, and serious intellectual movement devoted to exploring all and every aspect of African life—without reference to the culture imposed by Europe. Often referred to as the artistic sister of the black power movement, the black arts movement is highly regarded among African American intellectuals. The movement changed the function and meaning of literature, as well as the place of culture in mainstream America, by insisting on the right of the artists to redefine the roles and characterizations given them by white Americans.

BAM sought to challenge some of the long-standing assumptions of literary critics and historians. Thus, its writers wanted to interrogate the role of the text, art and temporality, the responsibility of artists to their communities, and oral forms. BAM was essentially critical, but it did produce some outstanding art, such as the work by Charles Fuller, Haki Madhubuti, Amiri Baraka (formerly LeRoi Jones), Ed Bullins, Nikki Giovanni, Harold Cruse, Adrienne Kennedy, and Larry Neal.

There were a number of central points made by the BAM artists. They were concerned about black identity, ethnicity, dignity, timeliness, aesthetic, cultural nationalism, and self-determination. Some of the main philosophical writers included Larry Neal, Amiri Baraka, Maulana Karenga, and Charles

Fuller—all of whom wrote detailed discussions of their approaches to artistic contribution. BAM was a dominant paradigm while it lasted, and it has shaped the way we respond to art.

— Daryl Zizwe Poe

FUTHER READING

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- Bambara, Toni Cade. (1970). *Black Woman: An Anthology*. New York: New American Library. This book remains a valuable anthology.
- Cruse, Harold. (1967). *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual*. New York: William Morrow. This monumental work chronicles the lives of blacks who experience the double struggle of trying to please whites and their social being.
- Gayle, Addison. (1971). *The Black Aesthetic*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday. This book is beautifully written and argued by a person who was one of the key figures in the BAM.

See also www.blackartsmovement.com This is an important Web site on the movement managed by Molefi K. Asante, Jr., and edited by Amiri Baraka and Ed Bullins.

BLACK ATHENA

Black Athena is a three-volume project by Martin Bernal. It is mainly concerned with ancient Egyptian and Phoenician roles in the formation of Greek civilization. While Greek is without question an Indo-European language, more than half of its basic vocabulary cannot be explained in terms of Indo-European. The linguistic argument is thus central to Bernal's hypothesis that Egypt and the Levant (East or Syro-Palestine) had a massive cultural, scientific, and religious impact on the formation of ancient Greek civilization. Classical and Hellenistic Greeks (500–50 B.C.E.) emphasized the importance of Egypt in the creation of their culture and civilization. However, modern Euro-American defenders of the Eurocentric disciplines of classics and Egyptology generally marginalize ancient Egyptian and Phoenician cultural influences on Greece. Moreover, due to racial and ideological biases, Eurocentric scholars were unwilling to trace ancient African sources of fundamental Greek words.

Bernal's work is subtitled "The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization," emphasizing his belief that the foundation of Greek civilization was Africa and Asia. He establishes his arguments on the basis of historical inquiry and linguistic analyses. There is a strong appreciation in Bernal's books for the work done by early African scholars such as George G. M. James and Cheikh Anta Diop. Although Bernal cannot be called an Afrocentrist, he is clearly one of the scholars who has assisted the Afrocentric project of critiquing the hegemonic ideas of the European world.

The first volume is his most famous work, *Black Athena*, is organized into 10 chapters and a conclusion. Each chapter is created to build toward the conclusion that the "miracle" of Greek culture is a misnomer and a fabrication of the Aryan model of antiquity. The development of Greek civilization from its earliest times with the appearance of the Pelasgians and Ionians was indebted to outside influences and it was most likely, Bernal argues, that these sources were Africa and Asia. In the case of Africa, Egypt supplied Greece with a considerable cultural trove of ideas, concepts, ceremonies, names, and material artifacts. Using the works of Greek writers, Bernal demonstrates that the early historians and geographers were clear on the debt Greece owed to Africa. Thucydides, Isocrates, Plato, and Aristotle were beneficiaries of the work of those who lived in Asia and Africa before them. To Bernal, it is clear that the ancient model of antiquity is much more plausible than the Aryan model that was created to aid the idea of white superiority. Indeed, the goddess Athena was black, which is why Bernal titled his work *Black Athena*.

Delving into the controversy over the color of the ancient Egyptians, Bernal distances himself from those who argue that the ancient Africans were white. Perhaps this is the position that creates tension between him and the classicists who cannot accept that the ancient Egyptians were black skinned with woolly hair, as suggested in the 5th-century book, *The Histories*, written by Herodotus. Nevertheless, Bernal shows how the fate of Egypt and its relationship to Greece rise and fall with different emphases on the part of European scholars. It is the work of the Afrocentric scholars that has maintained the strength of the argument that Egypt is the great contributor to early Greek civilization.

Another point in *Black Athena* that has created controversy is Bernal's view on the Egyptian Vulture Glyph. Scholars' recognition of the original *l* sound of

the Egyptian Vulture Glyph is crucial in tracing the correct Egyptian and African sources of Greek words that cannot be fully explained in terms of Indo-European. The Egyptian Vulture Glyph is conventionally represented as 3. It is an original *l* sound with an *r* variant in Egyptian and other African languages. The monoconsonantal Egyptian form *l* (3) stands for “vulture,” and for the more general category of birds. It corresponds to the Hausa (Chadic) *lalo* for “type of bird,” the Maba (Chadic) *ara* for “vulture,” the Logo (east Sudanic) *ala* for “vulture,” the Ge’ ez (classical Ethiopic) *lilo*, *lolo* for “vulture,” the Tigrinya or Amharic *lila*, *lilo* for “vulture,” and the Tigre *lilo* for “vulture.”

Unfortunately, this Vulture Glyph was erroneously presumed by earlier Egyptologists to be a glottal stop. This has misled a lot of scholars. Lost in such confusion, some Indo-Europeanists have not only accused Bernal of inconsistencies or lack of rigor in proposing different values for the letter 3 but also denied the evidence. The derivation of Greek *l* or *r* from Egyptian 3 is, according to some Indo-Europeanists, unsupported by any reliable example. Thus, Bernal’s derivation of the Greek *kar* or *ker* for “soul” from the Egyptian *k-l* or *k-3* for “soul” was rejected by certain Eurocentric scholars who proposed instead the Proto-Indo-European form *ker*, related to *keiro*, meaning “cut.” It is an instance where the adapted Egyptian loan word had been completely disguised in Greek as a regular Indo-European form with the necessary affixes and dialectal variants (*kar* or *ker*).

Within an Afrocentric orientation to data, the origin of the Egyptian conception of the soul, *k-l* or *k-3*, can be located in Africa. The Egyptian *k-l* or *k-3* for “soul” corresponds to the Hausa (Chadic) *kur(wa)* for “soul,” spirit,” the Mofu-Gudur (Chadic) *kul(ey)* for “ancestral spirit,” the Teda (Nilo-Saharan) *(a)gall(a)kal* for “spirit, thought,” the Ga (Kwa, Niger-Congo) *kla* for “soul,” the Ewe (Kwa, Niger-Congo) *(e)kla* for “soul,” the Akan (Kwa, Niger-Congo) *(o)kra* for “soul,” and the Wolof (west Atlantic) *hel* for “spirit,” among others.

Bernal’s linguistic background has enabled him to show relationships between African and Greek languages that had not been shown before. *Black Athena* is a monumental work and its achievements in history and linguistics are equaled by its contribution to the field of Black Studies. Bernal once and for all time demolishes the notion of a pure, miraculous Greece, entering the world without assistance, and particularly without help from Africa. The fact that we now know that it is reasonably plausible that Greek civilization

could not have existed without the presence and influence of Egypt makes it all the more important to teach Black Studies courses to those who study the classics.

— Mohamed Garba

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- Obenga, T. (1995). *La Géométrie Égyptienne: Contribution de l’Afrique Antique à la Mathématique Mondiale*. Paris: Editions l’Harmattan and Khepera. In this work, Obenga confronts the issue of the origin of ancient science and shows that Africa made a major contribution to the ancient world in mathematics.

BLACK ATLANTIC

Over the past decade, there has been a growing academic interest in the notion of the Black Atlantic. Indeed, it is a term that is both provocative and complex, involving the ebb and flow of millions of African descended peoples between three continents (Africa, Europe, and America) for over 500 years. In this time period, African-derived peoples have endured enslavement, colonialism, segregation, and second-class citizenship, concomitant with various forms of resistance to these oppressions. Moreover, ingrained in this experience has been the development of white supremacy and its overt and covert attempts to dehumanize, delimit, or deny African humanity. Scholars who theorize the Black Atlantic offer varied analyses ranging from historical to contemporary,

literary to political, parochial to pan-African positions. Presently there are two main schools of thought that overlap—the contemporary academic areas of post-modernism and Afrocentrism.

Paul Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (1993) exemplifies the post-modern school of thought and has been highly acclaimed in mainstream academic circles. However, from an African-centered perspective, his critical insight is suspect on a number of basic levels. For example, Gilroy wrestled with the idea that being both European and black required some special form of double consciousness. The fact that he puts European before black is informative, as it signals that he viewed being European as primary and being black as secondary as he established his Black Atlantic thesis. African-centered scholars find this problematic, as it effectively marginalizes the African aspect and thus fails to enhance African agency in any meaningful way.

Another key theme that emerges from postmodern perspectives is the hybridity within the Black Atlantic cultural experience. Through the course of European modernity, Gilroy maintains, individuals born within the Black Atlantic region have remained “locked symbiotically in an antagonistic relationship marked out by the symbolism of colours which adds to the conspicuous cultural power of their central Manichean dynamic—black and white.” Again, the African-centered school of thought finds Gilroy's Manichean dualism problematic because it sets up a framework of good and evil. It seems that Gilroy accepts a paradigm in which white is linked with good and black is linked with evil. Framing the Black Atlantic in Manichean thinking is thus detrimental to African descended peoples. That is, unless one attempts to turn the traditional Manichean logic on its head by making black good and white evil. But this merely leads to a reactionary posture, and African-centered scholars prefer instead to stand firm within an African-centered orientation to data interpretation that fosters independent analysis free from Eurocentric conceptualization.

Fragmentation of all cultural and social phenomena is the bedrock of the postmodernist pick-and-mix analyses of the Black Atlantic experience. And because there has been fluidity in this transnational cross-cultural reality, to think of commonality among black peoples is to pander to essentialism. In short, there is no way back to Africa for Africans caught up in the Black Atlantic—they have become new people as they have been integrated or assimilated into Western culture. To regard, for example, Africans in the Caribbean and

Africans in America as having common ground for organizing themselves against white supremacy is naive and akin to promoting ethnic absolutism.

In fairness to the postmodern perspective on the Black Atlantic, it is not possible to seriously deny that there has been a cross-fertilization of cultures. However, an African-centered perspective would, while acknowledging the heterogeneity of African transnational experiences, focus on both specificity and commonality. In *Black Atlantic Politics: Dilemmas of Political Empowerment in Boston and Liverpool* (2000), William Nelson offers an ideal example of a contemporary African-centered study of Black Atlantic politics. His analysis of Boston and Liverpool gives clear evidence that in these cities, separated by the Atlantic Ocean, there is a common experience of institutionalized racism that has marginalized African-descended people's chances of full citizenship in both places. Boston and Liverpool are seaport cities, have a strong Irish heritage, and have endured antiblack riots. Nelson found the similarities between Liverpool and Boston quite startling, and more research is emerging to substantiate the notion of commonality in the global African-descended world. Whether the situation being analyzed is historical or contemporary, there is little doubt that heterogeneity is an aspect of African global experience. However, this viewpoint should not be confined to the postmodern definition, as it simply splinters, divides, and misappropriates African phenomena. In addition, the postmodern perspective amounts to a trivialization of the varied historical black struggles for liberation and, more important, renders future struggles largely impotent.

The Black Atlantic as a site for the analysis of the African diaspora will no doubt continue to enrich intellectual thought and research for the foreseeable future. Contentions between postmodern and African-centered perspectives will also reflect the reality of how important the interpretation of black history and culture is and who actually benefits from such analyses. At bottom, the Black Atlantic offers much scope, and the possibilities for further research are infinite. This augurs well for both the neophyte and seasoned scholar, wherever they are located within the Black Atlantic region.

— Mark A. Christian

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BLACK CHURCH

The *Black Church* is a comprehensive term that refers to African American Christian institutions dating back to the 18th century. The Black Church is a faith-based community structure, which is characterized by spiritual, social, and communicative patterns specific to African culture that set it apart from European and Western Christian churches of the same denomination.

A mere 10% to 15% of Africans enslaved in America actually adopted Christianity during the period of bondage, with the majority of African Americans drawn to the dominant European religions after that period. Blacks on plantations throughout America secretly practiced the highly structured religious customs and faith ethics of the African tradition. Plantation owners, however, systematically and forcefully attempted to remove these traditions from the culture of the enslaved. African religious practices were forbidden and African traditions were dismissed as heathen rituals that lacked any religious function. Africans were bombarded with oppressive white rhetoric, which consistently deemed traditional African religion inferior and not worthy of the recognition of God.

HOW CHRISTIANITY JUSTIFIED THE RACIAL ORDER

Christianity, on the other hand, served as a tool for maintaining the relationship and roles of the master and the enslaved, the oppressor and the oppressed. If enslaved Africans were permitted to practice a religion, it was European Christianity only. Enslaved

Africans were in fact overwhelmed with recited Christian text and rhetoric that confirmed, justified, and made hallowed their inferior station in American life. Any faith-based beliefs that were potentially subversive and would connote racial equity, such as "love thy neighbor as thy brother" or "all Christians are created in the image of God," were not shared with the black population for fear of insurrection. Whites knew that there could be no justification for their white supremacist practices and that the structure of domination that was enslavement could potentially be compromised if they shared such sentiments with blacks.

From its inception, the Black Church provided communal respite from forceful white dominance, a sanctuary away from white enslavers' controlling and abusive behaviors. Africans in the Black Church practiced such African customs as extended family gathering and spiritual call-and-response practices during religious ceremonies. The Black Church was also a forum for discussing and planning resistance during enslavement. Nat Turner's organized coup in South Hampton, Virginia in 1831 is one example of such an event. He was a deacon in an African Baptist Church who used that structure to coordinate and lead the participants in the famed insurrection.



Eddie Glaude, former graduate student and author of several papers and a book on the Black Church, consulting Sekai Zankel, graduate secretary at Temple University, 1990

The first recorded organized Christian churches founded by African Americans were formed in South Carolina in 1773 and Virginia in 1776. The number of institutions of this type grew slowly, especially in the South, until Africans emerged from the legal constraints of enslavement in 1865. These initial churches

were offshoots of Methodist and Baptist establishments, which mirrored the denominations and practices of most plantation owners. As the Black Church evolved, however, most African Americans became increasingly dissatisfied with the tendencies of white churches. They were expected to worship according to European guidelines that were unnatural for the black members of the congregations. Often African Americans were abused, were taunted, and experienced limited participation rights in white churches. In the majority of cases, Jim Crow laws and other oppressive practices were just as prominent in the white churches as in the larger American society. For example, blacks were forced to sit in the back of the church, barred from communion rituals, and so forth.

However, rather than engaging in a critical assessment of the role of Christianity in fostering white supremacy, and abandoning the acquired Christian faith for this reason, blacks established a number of independent sects. Other than the African Baptists, some of the new sects reflected the race or nationality of church leadership and congregation in the title. The African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, founded in 1816 by Methodist deacon Richard Allen, and the Colored Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church, founded in 1870, are two that followed this pattern. With such churches, African Americans began to interpret the Christian word of God with some degree of independence and were free to worship in their own manner, based on the culture of their ancestors. The new style of worship combined the traditional religious and cultural practices with adopted Western practices.

With the period of Reconstruction, the passing of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments guaranteeing blacks' rights, and the many social and professional gains of blacks in the 20th century, came a surge in literacy and a will to define African American culture. Social and political leaders of the time guided African Americans through this process. Many leaders, like Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Marcus Garvey, who did not hold the same social, political, and educational opinions, were practicing Christians. Even their individual establishments promoted the doctrines of Christianity. By 1913, there were some 40,000 Black Churches in America. Support for the physical, social, political, and educational well-being of the black community became a standard and pinnacle function of the Black Church that lasted beyond enslavement. The Black Church became the sole social services resource

for African Americans, often providing food, clothing, and other primary necessities—and even the first formal education for many in the black community. African Americans take the education of their youth very seriously, so they created academic centers inside of their churches.

In addition, African American leaders concerned with social justice, political participation, and educational equity for black people traditionally began their activism in the Black Church, a pattern that snowballed in the 1950s with the start of the civil rights movement. Of the historical African American resistance revolutions, the civil rights movement was the largest that was based in Christianity. Most of the leaders and organizations responsible for the movement were associated with a Christian denomination. Carefully planned boycotts, sit-ins, marches, and the like were orchestrated in Black Churches, often by Christian black ministers such as Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Reverend Wyatt Tee Walker, and Reverend Jesse Jackson. The primary organization associated with this movement was the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).

Black congregations of the past filled Black Church services with emotional and spiritual interaction, and congregations of today carry on that tradition. Most of them have been consistent in incorporating drumming, dancing, and spirituals, or hymns providing response to oppression, into the Christian service. These aspects distinguish the Black Church as a unique institution. In *The Souls of Black Folks*, W.E.B. Du Bois attributes the need for those denied the protections of a society to seek a “social center,” and that center for Africans was and remains the Black Church. Influenced by African religion and spirituality, the desire for freedom from oppression, and a somewhat modified perspective on Christian religions, African Americans have created a unique construct within the European model. As a result, Black Church services are interactive, full of cultural rituals, and responsive to the social condition of African Americans.

— Myra Julian

FURTHER READING

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BLACK CODES

The Black Codes were a series of laws passed by the state legislatures of the South between 1865 and 1866. The Black Codes were patterned after the antebellum Slave Codes, and their express purpose was to restrict African American freedom. Indeed, the codes were created in response to the fact that more than 4 million formerly enslaved Africans had recently gained their freedom, and they served to keep these African people from full participation in the political, economic, and social life of the South. In fact, the Black Codes sought to define the legal place of African people as permanently inferior to whites, and thus reaffirmed the white Southerners' attitude that black people were meant to serve the interests of the white population.

Thus, the Black Codes enacted during the presidency of Andrew Johnson prevented blacks from sitting on juries, prohibited blacks' from voting, limited blacks' testimony against whites, denied blacks the right to work in certain occupations, and legislated against blacks carrying weapons. In effect, the Southern legislatures were trying to reinvent the enslavement of Africans.

On the national level, the radical Republicans in Congress advocated the passing of a civil rights bill to protect the newly freed Africans in the South from the Black Codes. However, in April of 1866, President Johnson vetoed the civil rights bill, telling Governor Thomas C. Fletcher of Missouri, "This is a country for white men, and by God, as long as I am President, it shall be a government for white men." Obviously, Johnson saw his role not as the protector of the oppressed, downtrodden, formerly enslaved, but rather, as the guardian of white privilege. He wrote in a letter to Benjamin B. French, the commissioner of public buildings, "Everyone would, and must admit,

that the white race was superior to the black and that while we ought to do our best to bring them up to our present level, that, in doing so, we should, at the same time raise our own intellectual status so that the relative position of the two races would be the same."

Nevertheless, radical Republicans were able to get the civil rights bill and the Reconstruction acts passed in 1867 and 1868. White control in Southern state legislatures made the passage of these laws almost useless, however, because the Ku Klux Klan and other racist organizations used terror and violence to prevent blacks from voting.

What occurred in Texas provides a telling example of how the Black Codes came into existence and were used to restrict the black population. It was the Eleventh Legislature that produced the Texas Black Codes in 1866. The Texas laws were meant to define "the rights of persons lately known as slaves, and free persons of color." The Texas Black Codes made discrimination legal, and barred black people from voting, holding office, serving on juries, and testifying in court (except in cases involving other blacks). Supplemental legislation required railroads to provide separate accommodations for blacks and whites, establishing the basis for segregated facilities in other services. An education law prevented blacks from sharing in the public school fund, while the state's homestead law prohibited blacks from participating in the distribution of public land.

Like similar laws in other Southern states, the Texas Black Codes intended to regulate black labor by forcing or coercing blacks to work for whites. Indeed, they gave local authorities the right to use coercive force, with the threat of prison, to get blacks to work. The apprentice law made it possible for minors, with parental consent or with court orders, to be forced into labor. The law required the employer to provide the apprentice with food, clothing, medical attention, humane treatment, and education for some trade, which would include farm labor. In return, the employer could use the apprentice's labor and be permitted, where necessary, to use corporal punishment to ensure that the apprentice worked. The employer could pursue an apprentice who ran away from the farm, and any person who interfered with the apprentice's work could be fined. The jurisdiction for the enforcement of this law was with the local courts.

To further strip African Americans of their rights, Texas, like other states, instituted a contract law that

allowed all labor agreements that involved work for more than a month to be filed with the court. Workers had to be given a lien on half a crop to ensure the payment of wages. This was almost never done. On the other hand, employers had strong guarantees for the delivery of labor. They could deduct wages for contract violations, disobedience, waste of time, destruction of property, debt, and absenteeism.

Under the Black Codes, vagrancy was a serious violation, and a black person arrested for vagrancy who was unable to pay the fine could be apprenticed. Local courts had the power to assign convicts to any type of labor until the fine was paid. Furthermore, the local authorities could put to work in any capacity a person who had been sent to the county jail for a misdemeanor or petty offense. By stealing the time and wages of black people in this way, the white farmers were able to greatly increase their wealth.

In the end, the Black Codes failed to fully bring about the reenslavement they were intended to create. This is in part because the laws galvanized the opposition in Congress and throughout the nation to the racist policies of the Southern legislatures. Although segregation remained for many years, the most onerous parts of the Black Codes only stayed in effect for a brief time. African Americans protested both the Black Codes and racial segregation, and many of the laws that legalized the racist treatment of African people were rewritten as a result of the persistent pressure placed on the South.

— *Molefi Kete Asante*

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BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT

The black consciousness movement was a political, cultural, and social movement that originated in South Africa during the same time as the rise of Black Studies in the United States, in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The leader of the black consciousness movement was Bantu Stephen Biko, a charismatic man of enormous intellectual abilities. Biko became an international symbol of the resistance against white racial domination in the late 1960s, and then he launched a conceptually clear definition of black consciousness for the youth movement of South Africa.

Biko's understanding of the black consciousness movement began with defining those who were legally, politically, economically, and socially discriminated against as a group in South African society. For Biko, people had to identify themselves as supporting the liberation struggle in order to be a part of the black consciousness movement. Since the black consciousness movement was political, Biko argued, black consciousness was not a matter of pigmentation but a reflection of a mental attitude. This argument of the black power advocates in the United States resonated with the black consciousness movement in South Africa. Moreover, what Biko saw was that if he could get the masses simply to describe themselves as black, they would be on the road toward emancipation. Thus using blackness as an identifier meant that people had committed themselves to fight against the forces that sought to use their blackness as a stamp of inferiority and subservience. For individuals to say "I am black" was to state a positive position about how they saw themselves. This was a revolutionary concept in a society where it was commonly assumed that blackness was something negative.

OVERCOMING UNCONSCIOUSNESS

The black consciousness movement cannot be fully appreciated without the understanding that South African people who were not white did not necessarily see themselves as black. Biko and others in the movement recognized that there were people in South Africa who had a nonwhite identity that would always frustrate them because the aspiration of the nonwhite is often to be white, which is really impossible. Nonwhites were

those who sought to serve the interests of white racial domination by serving in the police force or by calling the whites by honorific titles. This was madness, according to the black consciousness movement.

The movement asserted that these people should stop being nonwhite, stop being people who hated blackness and who despised their own culture. Black people were capable of standing with their heads high in defiance of oppression rather than surrendering their souls to white people. These proud people were the new people that the black consciousness movement wanted to create. Therefore, it was possible to define black consciousness as the realization by Africans of the need to rally together around the cause of liberation from oppression and to operate as a group to rid themselves of the shackles that bound them to perpetual servitude. Furthermore, it was a corrective and sought to demonstrate that blackness was not an aberration and whiteness was not normal. The aim was to get whites off of the backs of blacks. This new realization was meant to infuse the black community with new pride in the African values, culture, religion, and general outlook on life. But the critical element that made this new vision a movement was the relationship between the consciousness of the self and the emancipatory program.

OVERHAULING A RACIST SYSTEM

Biko and his allies came to realize that they could not seek reformation of the system because that would imply accepting the major premises of the racist society itself. The society had to be completely overhauled. Blacks were out to completely transform the system. The black consciousness movement wanted to ensure that Africans were convinced of the truth of their position. It was impossible for people to be conscious of themselves and yet remain in bondage. The envisioned self had to be a free self.

The black consciousness movement recognized that it was not just the liberation of Africans that was at stake but the liberation of the oppressed peoples of the world from the aggressive and exploitative activities of white culture. It must be acknowledged, however, that in countries where whites exploited each other, they never reached the level of brutality they reached in exploiting blacks. This was clearly not a coincidence but a deliberate plan to completely eliminate any attempt at freedom on the part of blacks. The unjust racial structure of South Africa, so similar to that of the

United States in many instances, in which whites had been deliberately made haves and blacks made have-nots, had inspired a confrontation between the races.

Contradictions of Workers

What Biko wanted to point out was that in South Africa there was no worker in the classical sense who was white, for even the most downtrodden white worker was invested in the apartheid system. The whites were protected by laws preventing them from having to compete with blacks. The only real workers in apartheid South Africa were black, and yet they were the lowest on the economic ladder. The black consciousness movement challenged the socialist theory that the workers would unite.

The most violent antiblacks in South Africa were the lowest class of whites. The class analysis did not seem to hold in this case because color was far more important in the apartheid system than anything else, and white workers did not see anything that allowed them to identify their lot with blacks. White racial domination was the one force that had to be destroyed because it infected everything. So long as Africans' vision remained clear and they conceived of themselves as free, freedom was inevitable. But it was important that they avoid losing themselves in an amorphous work of colorlessness. The black consciousness movement was not just a means to an end but a process meant to influence black people to regard themselves as central rather than as appendages of white people. In this respect, black consciousness as conceptualized by Biko was an antecedent to Afrocentricity.

The black consciousness movement delineated its basic beliefs in order to enable blacks to increase their understanding of how the system of white privilege worked in South Africa. The movement addressed these beliefs to the black community as follows:

1. We are all oppressed by the same system.
2. That we are oppressed to varying degrees is a deliberate design to stratify us not only socially but also in terms of the enemy's aspirations.
3. We are committed to emancipation and it is our duty to bring to the black people the deliberateness of the enemy's subjugation scheme.
4. We must have committed people who will go on and continue our program.

Stephen Biko's vision was so complete that he saw implications for correcting false images of blacks in the culture, education, religion, and economics. He was most aware of the terrible role played by religion, education, and the media in creating a false understanding of Africans by blacks as well as by whites. Although there were many organizations that used his concept of black consciousness, Biko remained the principal interpreter of the movement—until he was bludgeoned to death by white police on September 12, 1977, at the age of 30. At that time he became a martyr to the South African liberation struggle.

— *Molefi Kete Asante*

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BLACK EXISTENTIALISM

Black existentialism explores the problems of existence generated by the complex history of black peoples. The word *existence* comes from the Latin expression *ex sistere*, which means “to stand out.” When one exists, one literally emerges from indistinction or insignificance. The word today is associated with simply being, but its etymology suggests “to live” and “to be.” To exist in this sense is to become fully aware of being alive and what that signifies.

Although human beings evolved in Africa and then spread across the globe and eventually adapted in ways that transformed them into groups from dark to light, the notion of *black people* is uniquely a function of constructions that have been premised upon how lighter-skinned peoples have looked at darker-skinned ones over, at least, the past 2,000 years. Black existentialism emerges from the lived reality of such people.

In pre-colonial Africa, the African's struggle with the problems of existence primarily involved the self that emerged from theologies, ontology, and ethics, which was premised on a cosmological paradox of predestination and an unfolding future. The idea of destiny or predestination required individuals to seek out their unique calling in life. This view located much agency or responsibility in individuals, who were linked to a broad community of elders, ancestors, deities, and an ultimate being. A form of humanism resulted in which there was always something people could do about their situation. In most African systems, the past has greater ontological weight than the present, and the future has none since it has not yet occurred. This philosophical stance with regard to history is existential because it relies on individuals to invent or make the future.

In addition to these traditional existential beliefs were the developments of Judaism and Christianity in antiquity in the Eastern regions of Africa and the Middle East, the subsequent development of Islam in the Middle Ages, and the many mixtures of those religions and other African religions as various empires under their rubric spread across Africa. By the time of the Arabic, East Indian, and European slave trades, the questions of existence faced by African individuals and non-Africans included their relationship to the rationalizations of slavery advanced by non-African religions. The focus here, however, is on the black existentialism that emerged in the Americas.

The problems of existence for black peoples in the Americas stem from racialized slavery and antiblack racism. Slavery and racism created the problem of black suffering and the sustained black concern with liberation and freedom and what it means to be human. Such responses emerged not only in the many struggles fought by black people in the modern world but also through black thought, literature, and music.

All existencialisms negotiate the relationship of thought to experience. Experience is lived and precedes thought, but thought is what brings meaning and understanding to experience. The first, most influential

wave of black existentialism was in music and then literature. The quintessential black existential response in music is the blues. The blues focus on life's difficulties and brings reality to the world of feeling or black suffering and joy. As an art form, the blues defy predictability and human closure. The blues welcome improvisation, which makes blues songs and their offspring—jazz, rhythm and blues, soul, funk, reggae, samba, salsa, and some forms of hip-hop—exemplars of the existential credo of existence preceding essence and its connection to the question of freedom. What is more, the unique way in which the blues bring to life the reality of and paradoxically joyful insight into suffering—by facing it instead of avoiding it—points to an anthropology of black adulthood as a struggle against despair. This makes the blues an important adversary of antiblack racism. Racism attempts to force black people to the developmental level of children, freeze them there, and denigrate black self-value. Blues songs, by contrast, encourage maturation and growth and are life affirming. The impact of the blues is broad—it permeates nearly all black aesthetic productions. It can be found in paintings and sculptures, dramas and dance.

Black existential literature dates from the 1930s. Although existential insights can be found in the 18th-century poetry of Phillis Wheatley and the various early narratives and novels by former slaves and freed blacks in the 19th century, the first explicitly existential set of literary writings are those of Richard Wright from the 1930s to the late 1950s. Wright articulates black experience at the level of what existentialists call a *situation*, where human beings' encounters with each other create meanings that they do not necessarily intend. In *Native Son* (1940), the protagonist, Bigger Thomas, finds himself "in a situation" when he helps his employer's drunken white daughter to her bedroom after chauffeuring her and her boyfriend around town and realizes that they were at risk of being discovered. Wright provides reflections on the relationship between choice and options for the marginalized of the modern world, who find themselves constantly thrown into situations they would prefer to have avoided, and he outlines many of the classic existential problems of freedom and responsibility that follow. Why is it, he asks us, that U.S. society forces Bigger Thomases, people who in attempting to assert their humanity become its troublemakers, back "into their place" while holding them responsible for their actions?

Like all existentialists, Wright is able to criticize a system for what it does to people, while recognizing the importance of responsibility even in an unjust system as necessary for human dignity and maturation. In *The Outsiders* (1953), he expands his application of this question from North America to the modern world, which, he argues, makes demonic those who live on its underside. Wright's outsider, Cross Damon, finds himself incapable of experiencing responsibility because he lives in a world that inhibits his development into a man. The paradox of the novel is that Damon's greatest fear is realized when he dies feeling innocent after killing several people.

Other literary examples of black existentialism can be found in the writings of Ralph Ellison and James Baldwin, both of whom explored problems of black invisibility as a function of hypervisibility. Ellison laments the madness faced by educated blacks—who expected their achievements to entail their inclusion (visibility) instead of heightened exclusion (invisibility) in U.S. society—for they live in a social world in which they exemplify the impossible. Baldwin brings his insights to interracial and bisexual settings and looks at the question of suffering as a struggle to defend the possibility of genuine human relationships.

The question of invisibility takes on a unique form, as well, in the novels of Toni Morrison, particularly her first novel, *Bluest Eye* (1970). There, Morrison brings out the peculiarity of notions such as ugliness and beauty that dominate women's lives in general but black women's in a profound way through expectations of mimesis. The expectation that black women copy white females' appearance subordinates their lives because all imitations are ultimately inauthentic. They live by a standard that they can never meet. This theme of inauthenticity is taken to another level when she writes of bad mixtures—those that result from a world that bridges the gaps between adults and children with the consequence of molestation and incest—mixtures that produce madness. More recently, in *Freedom in the Dismal* (1998), Monifa Love brings many of these existential themes together through a provocative exploration of the meaning of freedom in the midst of very limited options. In the Caribbean, the most influential existential novel is George Lamming's *In the Castle of My Skin* (1970), where the characters fight against the torrents of history and the congealing force of slime that leeches on projects of humanistic struggle.

Black theoretical reflections on existence can be found as early as the writings of Frederick Douglass,

most of which constitute a constant meditation on freedom and the meaning of being human. The four most influential black existential texts are, however, W.E.B. Du Bois's *Souls of Black Folk* (1903) and *Darkwater* (1920) and Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) and *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961). Du Bois advanced the concepts of what it means to blacks to be seen as a problem and the double experience of blacks, who are forced to live publicly by what the white world believes is true while knowing the truth lived by blacks as a contradiction of white society. He also raised the existential and theodicean problem of the meaning of black suffering, and he outlined the importance of black music as life affirming.

The reflections of Douglass and Du Bois converge in the works of Frantz Fanon. In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon advanced a sociogenetic approach to the study of antiblack racism while defending human agency. He echoed Du Bois by pointing out that truly critical investigation requires identifying racism even at the level of method. This requires, paradoxically, a methodology of not presuming a *method*, which, in existential language, is the essence presumed before the existence. Thus Fanon showed how every effort to escape blackness fails because escape is in itself a form of failure. For instance, although all people articulate meaning and identity through language, the black condition is such that change of language does not entail change of being. In addition, a black person's choosing a white lover as part of denying his or her blackness has the same consequence; denial is, in the end, a false reality, and its result would be, presaging Toni Morrison, an affirmation of whites as the standard of value.

Although in most of his writings Fanon attacks the blues in favor of written poetry, his reflections in *Black Skin, White Masks* have an unmistakable blues structure. He goes through processes of repetition that lead to tears through which he is able to face the pathologies of reality, and the truth here is that Eurocentric society cannot see black adults and does not know what it means for black people to be normal. Blacks seek to become men and women, but they find themselves locked at a level below that status in the white world. In his final work, *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon explores what it means for blacks to be "the damned" (*les damnés*), for every generation to find its mission, and for every generation to be responsible for humanity's future.

More recently, black existentialism has taken a turn to pragmatism and existential phenomenology.

The leader of existential pragmatism is Cornel West, whose "prophetic pragmatism" takes on such themes as dread, despair, death, disease, and, in his most popular work, *Race Matters*, nihilism in black communities. The most well-known black existential phenomenologists are William R. Jones, Lucius T. Outlaw, Paget Henry, and Lewis Gordon. In *Is God a White Racist?* (1973), Jones argued that black suffering cannot be addressed theologically without collapsing into theodicy (i.e., thought on God's ultimate justness) rationalizing antiblack racism. He advanced a humanistic appeal in which people are responsible for history. Outlaw focused on struggles against racism, the need for black-affirming environments, and the development of an antiracist philosophy. Paget Henry, in his book *Caliban's Reason* (2000), looked at consciousness of the Afro-Caribbean self and the poetic and historical responses developed for its emancipation.

Lewis Gordon is the most explicitly phenomenological of the new wave of black existentialists, and he, Lucius T. Outlaw, and Paget Henry have argued for Africana thought as an antidote to epistemological colonialism where blacks are expected to depend on white thinkers for philosophical reflection on black experience. Africana phenomenological work has examined the relationship between consciousness and the world of meaning, and, following Fanon, asserts that colonizing processes must be fought against at the level of method. The result is an Africana postcolonial existential phenomenology linked to the lived-experience of black folk in the modern age. This existential philosophy leads to a variety of explorations of the contemporary human condition, such as theorizing oppression as an attempt to eliminate a genuinely human world and asserting the need for values premised upon ancestral obligation in the fight against nihilism and human denigration through understanding how the ancestors struggled against worse odds.

Other themes of Africana postcolonial existential phenomenology have been black existential thought as the question of black humanity, especially in race theory and theories of oppression; the importance of developing a livable mode of everyday existence; the power of black music as life affirming; the articulation of rigorous ways of studying and understanding black people; the symbiotic relationship of identity and liberation; and crises of knowledge and their impact on the formation of people in each epoch. Like West in *Race Matters*, Gordon in *Existential Africana* (2000) saw nihilism as a fundamental problem of our time, but

he added that it is symptomatic of a process of social decay. He rejected West's claim that many blacks are nihilists because they lack faith in the United States and argued that it is healthier to suspend serious attachment to a decaying society and transcend it through what he calls "teleological suspensions," where liberation requires a constant commitment to freedom and humanity and the virtues required for such devotion.

Today there is a rich array of intellectuals who can be called black existentialists. These include Stephen Haymes, who has built upon black existential phenomenology in his study of the pedagogical practices of slaves; Clevis Headley, who has produced an impressive array of essays on black aesthetics and race theory; and Tsenay Serequeberhan, who is perhaps the chief proponent of black hermeneutical existential philosophy. Other theorists have contributed essays to *Existence in Black: An Anthology of Black Existential Philosophy* (1997). Thus many philosophers are developing new areas of reflection on black existentialism.

— Lewis R. Gordon

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BLACK FEMINIST THOUGHT

Patricia Hill Collins's *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of*

Empowerment, first published in 1990 by Routledge, explores the work and ideas of black women and their conscious pursuit of knowledge and empowerment outside a white patriarchal epistemology. Collins creates a common space for scholarly and everyday dialogue about the various paradigms, movements, and aesthetics concerning race, class, and gender oppression as they relate overall to the liberation of black women and black people. She addresses how black women support, critique, and reject mainstream feminist concerns and objectives. Collins acknowledges the voices and experiences of black women who are traditionally overlooked, as well as the work done by prominent and very vocal activists, intellectuals, and artists.

Black Feminist Thought is divided into three parts: The Social Construction of Black Feminist Thought, Core Themes in Black Feminist Thought, and Black Feminist Knowledge and Power. In the first part, The Social Construction of Black Feminist Thought, Collins evokes black women's strong tradition of resistance to race, sex, and class oppression with the words of Maria W. Stewart, one of the earliest known African American women to address these issues in a public forum. She then posits six distinguishing features of black feminist thought as a model of convergence for the diverse experiences and bodies of knowledge of black women in America. Collins applies the distinguishing features to the informal work of black women whose work is simply an aspect of their survival, and to the formal work of black women activists and academics who make conscious efforts to empower black women and black people in white hegemonic power structures.

In the second part, Core Themes in Black Feminist Thought, Collins posits work and family, objectified images, self-definition, sexual politics, love relationships, motherhood, and activism as major areas for investigation of black women. Collins also uses these themes as sites to interpret black women's resistance to oppression. The third part, Black Feminist Knowledge and Power, engages readers in more academic dialogue about how mainstream politics and epistemologies are affected by the political and intellectual work of black women. Collins discusses how the collective ideology of black women challenges a political system that ignores them as black and female worldwide, and she argues for a black feminist epistemology that questions any system of knowledge that does not take into consideration the collective experience of race, gender, and class oppression. In addition,

Collins proposes a model for empowerment based on black women's responses to various domains of power.

Black Feminist Thought is very useful as an introduction to the study of black women's oppression and resistance to oppression in America. With the term *black feminist thought*, Collins establishes an umbrella under which the common themes and opposing ideologies of black feminism, womanism, Africana womanism, and unnamed forms of knowledge can be addressed. However, Collins does not have the empirical content and theoretical grounding necessary for a deep structural Afrocentric analysis and advanced scholarship on black women. Though Collins makes available historical and literary examples, she fails to include statistical information from research studies to support these observations about black women's work. Collins's six distinguishing features are a set of principles to evaluate the diverse work of black women, but they do not take into serious consideration the theoretical work that exists. Overall, however, *Black Feminist Thought* remains a very good overview of the collective intellectual, aesthetic, and activist work by black women for self-empowerment.

— Griselda Thomas

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THE BLACK JACOBINS

The Black Jacobins was written by Cyril Lionel Robert James, a Trinidadian, in 1938 and revised in 1962. James was an educator and school administrator who

later became a political philosopher and activist. His activism is reflected in his seminal work, *The Black Jacobins*, which is a call to arms for the oppressed people of African descent to fight for what they believe in. The book predates the liberation of African states and was to serve as an outline for Africans' rebellion against oppressive European rule. *The Black Jacobins* contributed to the inspiration of a generation of uprising and agency for the cause of sovereignty and freedom. This historical text records the struggles, confrontation, and successful resistance against better armed enslavers and as their collaborators.

The Black Jacobins is written from a Marxist paradigm, thus James chronicles the relentless day-to-day struggle of the people of Haiti to overcome the European oppression. *The Black Jacobins* primarily depicts the prolonged revolution of blacks in Haiti, from 1791 to 1803, and the legacy of its leader, Toussaint L' Ouverture. The text also delves into the conditions endured by the enslaved people during their capture in Africa, the Middle Passage, and life on the island. James reports the tactics used by European enslavers in their hunt for human prey that was the basis of European economic control and hegemony. He goes further to expose the collaborative role of certain classes of Africans. James cites the events that shaped the island country, the destiny of enslaved people on Saint-Dominique, as well as the struggle that made Toussaint L' Ouverture a leader.

Francois Dominique Toussaint L' Ouverture was a Haitian of African descent who was born in 1744 and died in 1803 in a French dungeon. L' Ouverture was self-educated and bought his freedom in 1789. It is not clear where L' Ouverture obtained his extensive skills in stratagem, organization, and politics, but they were all masterfully perfected. The French name the leader adopted, L' Ouverture, means "the opening" and was taken from the swift campaigns that were conducted on coastal towns of Haiti that dislocated English control. L' Ouverture, the opening, was used to describe this phase of the revolution.

L' Ouverture's generals, Jean-Jacque Dessalines and Henri Christophe, were invaluable in the capture and extraction of coastal towns from British control. They secured the removal of British influence in 1798. Dessalines was renowned as a determined, confident, and aggressive fighter against the mulatto forces. He would later have to battle the mulatto forces, which were under the direction of General André Rigaud. When L' Ouverture was captured in

1802, Dessalines became his successor as the leader of the revolution. Dessalines then went on to become the chief of state, and governor general for life, until his death in 1806.

The name Haiti was originally used by the aboriginals in reference to the island. Then the Spanish renamed the island Santo Domingo, and when in 1697 there was a division of the island and the French gained control of one third of it, they named their claimed lands Saint-Dominique. The territory of Saint-Dominique was later deposed and renamed Haiti after the revolution on January 1, 1804.

The Black Jacobins is a chronicle of the first Caribbean independent state. Haiti is in fact distinguishable as the site of the only fully successful African revolt against enslavement, a revolt that was followed by independence and sovereignty in the Americas. The insurrection began in August of 1791 and continued until November 18, 1803 at the famed battle of Vertières. After the revolution, it was on the battlefield in Vertières that the government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide erected a powerful memorial to the heroes of the revolution. The adversaries of the revolution included the white planters, mulattoes, royal commanders, and some enslaved Africans. They opposed the revolting Haitians of African descent along with periodic alliances they established with sympathetic groups, which included the Spanish Santo Domingo. In 1793 the rebels and the Spanish briefly joined forces in a quick-moving series of raids on the French settlements on the coast.

The racial perspective taken by the people in Haiti was markedly different from that of North Americans. Class, not race, was the emphasis in the Saint-Domingue colony. The European proletariat was sympathetic to the enslaved people, as they were also seeking opportunities for underclass advancement, civil liberties, and sovereignty. Class therefore was a major motivation for choosing sides during the revolution. The elite Europeans remained loyal to French rule, while groups within the white bourgeoisie and proletariat sympathetic to the ideals of the revolution of 1791 sided with L' Overture. France in the years preceding 1791 was already experiencing a revolution because the enslaved were seeking their freedom. Therefore, there was an atmosphere of rebellion against oppression among some French bourgeoisie, petite bourgeoisie, proletariat, and African Haitians. This atmosphere resulted in the emanation of liberty.

The color line was blurred, and the economic and social barriers to freedom for Africans and some of

the French bourgeois, petite bourgeois, and proletariat caused these groups to align themselves for military action. The majority of French bourgeois, mulattoes, and enslaved Africans closed ranks with the French armed forces in order to suppress the Haitian majority that had been Napoleon's cash cow. Their cause was to maintain colonial control and to continue to profit from trading the enslaved. The economics of the situation determined the actions of the French. In 1789 Saint-Dominique was the single most profitable slave enterprise in the world. The plantations that produced sugar cane—which was used to make rum and molasses, among other things—relied on the unpaid labor of the enslaved for their huge profits. This slave trade and slavery were the cornerstones of Napoleon's ambitions of domination because France's economic wealth depended upon what was produced on the plantations. Thus the Haitian revolution was a major turning point for the French offensive in the world. The French faced declining income from the Haitians and were forced to enact the Louisiana Purchase, which forfeited French claims in what is now the United States. News of Napoleon's defeat by Haitians may have had a divisive impact on the trade of enslaved people, as the 80 years following the liberation of Haiti saw the emancipation of the enslaved in the Americas.

— Gwinyai Muzorewa

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THE BLACK MANIFESTO

The Black Manifesto was a moral declaration for reparations read at the Riverside Church in New York in 1969. It was the product of an effort led by James Forman, who drafted a statement demanding reparations in the amount of \$500 million (a dollar value of

\$15 per black man, woman, and child) as compensation for the past mistreatments and capitalist exploitation of 30,000,000 African people. The Black Manifesto outlined significant reasons why white Christian churches and Jewish synagogues should support the manifesto presented to and adopted by the National Black Economic Development Conference (NBEDC) in Detroit, Michigan, on April 26, 1969. Forman presented these demands to the general board meeting of the National Council of Churches (NCC) in New York City on Friday, May 2, 1969, and again by disrupting services at New York's Riverside Church on May 4, 1969. Using the NBEDC, Forman called for NCC financial support, claiming the church was part of the vast system of controls over black people and their minds and should pay reparations. Forman's presentation outlined and designated how the \$500 million from the NCC would be spent to meet the following demands:

1. to use \$200 million to establish a Southern Land Bank to aid black farmers evicted from their homes because they dared to defy white racist practices in this country
2. to establish four major publishing and printing industries in the United States to be funded with \$10 million each. These publishing houses will be located in Detroit, Atlanta, Los Angeles, and New York to help generate capital for further cooperative investments in the black community, to provide jobs, and to alter the white-dominated control of the printing industry
3. to establish four of the most advanced scientific and futuristic television networks as an alternative to racist propaganda and to locate them in Detroit, Chicago, Cleveland, and Washington, D.C. They will need to be funded by \$10 million each
4. to establish a research center to provide reliable research on the problems faced by African people. This center will require no less than \$30 million to be operational
5. to establish a training center for teaching black community stakeholders skills in community development, with a \$10 million start-up fund
6. to use \$10 million to develop a national welfare center to work with welfare recipients and workers
7. to use \$20 million to establish the National Black Labor and Strike and Defense Fund to protect the rights of black workers and their families
8. to establish the International Black Appeal (IBA) to help produce additional capital for the establishment of cooperative businesses in the United States and in Africa, with a \$20 million start-up fund
9. to establish a black university in the South with \$130 million
10. to ensure that the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO) allocate all unused funds to implement the demands of the Black Manifesto.

Forman, who linked the history of black enslavement to the history of white supremacy in religious institutions and the U.S. government, felt that The Black Manifesto represented the black community's collective response to years of white exploitation, degradation, and brutalization of African people worldwide. Forman and other NBEDC leaders designated the following as The Black Manifesto slogan:

All roads must lead to revolution

United with whomever you can unite

Neutralize wherever possible

Fight our enemies relentlessly

Victory to the people

Life and good health to mankind

Resistance to domination by the white Christian churches

And the Jewish synagogues

Revolutionary Black power

We shall win without a doubt

The NBEDC, which included organizers John Watson, Mike Hamlin, Ken Cochran, John Williams, and 20 others, called for the mass mobilization of black people nationwide to support the manifesto. The NBEDC elected a 24-member steering committee, consisting of former Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM) members, and members of the Detroit chapter of the Black Panther Party, the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, and the Republic of New Afrika (RNA), to provide leadership for the campaign. RNA's leadership rejected the manifesto, however, to concentrate on its own work in

Mississippi—reparations, acquisition of land in five Southern states, and establishment of an autonomous black nation—claiming that the manifesto had failed them in not giving adequate consideration to acquisition and ownership of land and the large amount of start-up capital it required.

The Black Manifesto, one of the first collective demands for reparations, represented an important call for social change. It was the first such call proposed to the NCC that demanded it pay large sums of money to compensate millions of African Americans. Although the manifesto's demands were not sustainable and lacked the support of the SNCC, The Black Manifesto raised \$500,000 for African American projects. Ironically, very little of the money went to the NBEDC, which was under investigation by the FBI and the Department of Justice. With the money it did receive, the NBEDC established the publishing house Black Star Publications in Detroit and published *The Political Thought of James Forman* in 1970. The demands of The Black Manifesto were not met and there are still ongoing political discussions about reparations for African American enslavement and oppression. The text of The Black Manifesto can be found in Arnold Schuchter's *Reparations: The Black Manifesto and Its Challenge to White America* (1970), electronically for subscribers of *The New York Review of Books*, and through formal requests made to the archives of Union Theological Seminary, Harvard University, and the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

— Ronald J. Stephens

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BLACK NATIONALISM

Nationalism is the expression of a people's commitment to self-determination in all its scope and dimensions. The nationalism of Africans in America is a conscious expression of the self-determination of a people who have been forcibly abducted from their homeland without the choice and/or means to return on their own terms. The historical development of Africans and Europeans in America has involved a symbiotic relationship in which Africans have been exploited in the economic and political system of the U.S. social order. The nationalism of Africans in America can be described as the belief in and vision of independence from this exploitative relationship, and as a conscious political and sociopsychological move outside this sphere of influence. Thus, the ideas and praxis of African Americans that can be characterized as nationalist, and perhaps pan-African nationalist, are inextricably linked to the hegemonic context that gave rise to the pursuit of sovereignty and the idea that Africans in America constitute a cultural nation.

CONCEPTUALIZATIONS AND PROPONENTS

Several historians have described the convergence of distinct African peoples on plantations in the South into a common culture, which flowed from an essentially autonomous value system anchored in indigenous Africa and created a pan-Africanism that provided an identity and an ideology. It has been demonstrated that, at the time of emancipation, enslaved Africans still remained essentially African in culture. Similarly, an examination of the religious orientation, artistry, music, and statements of Africans in America also revealed that the core values of the great number of Africans in America have always been self-determination, freedom, and resistance to assimilation. The idea here is that slave ships and the plantation system of the South served not only as natural incubators of revolts but also to create a nascent pan-African nationalism that grew and assumed different forms as it was articulated by numerous proponents over the last two centuries.

Historically, the dual themes of integration or assimilation and black nationalism, at times recognized by their respective nonviolence and self-defense connotations, have been represented by proponents seemingly at odds in their ideological position relative to liberation for African people. The accommodationist nature of proponents of integration has been essentially defeatist and has not been a viable option for sovereignty in the United States or elsewhere. Despite the historical shifts from nationalism to accommodationism, or visa versa, as a result of the bankruptcy of one movement or the ability of the other to advance its cause, black nationalism has always had a significant constituency in the African community in America, which tends to expand during periods of crisis and contract under overtly oppressive conditions.

The black nationalist movement has also embodied an internal contraction (i.e., accommodation) or expansion (i.e., pan-African nationalism) in terms of pushing either for full rights for blacks as citizens of the United States and/or for a physical space that blacks would govern. Historical representatives of the dual forces of nationalist accommodation or pan-African nationalism include Martin R. Delany and Frederick Douglass in the 19th century, Marcus Garvey and W.E.B. Du Bois in the early 20th century, and Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr., in the latter half of the 20th century.

In the late 18th century and early 19th century, Daniel Coker, Elijah Johnson, and Paul Cuffee acted on pan-African ideas in advocating emigration to Africa, and Paul Cuffee used his own money to repatriate 38 Africans to Sierra Leone in 1815. The so-called club movement (of self-help institutions) of African women in the early 1800s and the national convention movement sought to address nationalist concerns in their debates over how they should identify themselves culturally. Yet, it was the appearance of David Walker's *An Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World* in 1829 that engendered a more confrontational and pan-African nationalist stance against enslavement, an institution that Walker believed affected African people worldwide. Walker's *Appeal* contained a severe criticism of the system of enslavement, a call for revolt by the enslaved Africans, and a nationalist position to accommodationist perspectives (within the national convention movement) on how Africans should culturally identify themselves.

Henry Highland Garnet published his 1847 address and Walker's *Appeal* together. Garnet, like David

Walker, viewed black nationalism as not simply a means to freedom but an eternal principle to struggle toward. The years 1840 to 1865 were Garnet's greatest period of activity and accomplishment. Garnet defended the notion of African humanity and linked the fate of Africans within and outside the United States together, asserting that it was the responsibility of the oppressed to liberate themselves. He later moved toward the idea of emigration to Liberia and cooperated with the New York State Colonization Society, but he remained opposed to the notion of involuntary emigration as a condition of liberation in the United States. Garnet studied much and was a precursor to W.E.B. Du Bois, Paul Robeson, and the scholastic tradition embodied by Cheikh Anta Diop of Senegal. In an 1848 speech delivered in Troy, New York, Garnet noted the contributions of Africans to ancient civilization while Anglo-Saxons were living in caves, and he called for ideological unity of Africans in America.

Between 1830 and 1860, the forces of accommodationism (i.e., integrationists) were countered by nationalists who articulated means by which genuine sovereignty might be attained. The integrationist movement contracted and the nationalist movement expanded during this period. The voices of 19th-century nationalists, such as Martin R. Delany, Edward Wilmot Blyden, Alexander Crummell, Bishop Henry McNeil Turner, and George Washington Williams, reflected pan-African nationalist sentiments while holding at the same time ideas that underpinned the accommodationist outlook. For example, due to their ambivalence on the question of identity, Crummell, Turner, and Delany combined a strong affection for Africa with an equally strong, if not stronger, commitment to becoming fully American. Thus Alexander Crummell attempted to Christianize Africans and introduce them to Western ideas, Edward Wilmot Blyden pioneered the concept of the African personality, and Henry McNeil Turner taught black nationalism and pan-Africanism, advocated the view that God was black, and extended his message of black pride in Africa. Martin R. Delany, a proponent of pan-African nationalism, originated and used the phrase, "Africa for the Africans" in 1859, the same year he visited Liberia. Delany called attention to the African character of Africans in the North and South of the United States and held that the strength of African culture was essential to ending black ambivalence on the question of identity.

Frederick Douglass and Martin Delany, who coedited *The North Star* publication, personified the duality in African American nationality building between the integrationist and nationalist ideologies as well as within the integrationist and nationalist movements. For instance, when Delany was calling for blacks' political independence in Africa, Douglass was demanding full citizenship for blacks in the United States; later, Douglass briefly contemplated political independence and Delany momentarily tested the path of U.S. citizenship through his participation in the Civil War and the politics of Reconstruction. With the betrayal of the promise of Reconstruction and Jim Crowism, the nationalist spirit found expression in movements in the United States to establish all-African towns and Oklahoma as an all-African state.

In 1879, Benjamin "Pap" Singleton's migration crusade out of the South, from Tennessee, toward the West mobilized thousands of Africans in America. The 19th century also saw the emigration of thousands of Africans from the United States to Haiti. Africans entered the 20th century poised for a new political, cultural, institutional direction that was not being provided by personalities such as Booker T. Washington, who himself opposed going back to Africa but sponsored programs and opportunities for Africans in America to return to the African continent. It was Booker T. Washington who inspired Marcus Garvey to come to the United States and whom Garvey wanted to meet, but Washington died before Garvey arrived.

The pan-African nationalism of the Garvey movement and the accommodationist nationalism represented by the communist-oriented African Blood Brotherhood (ABB) directly and indirectly influenced the Harlem Renaissance of the early 20th century. The African Blood Brotherhood was founded by Cyril V. Briggs in 1919 after his split from A. Philip Randolph's group over their different definitions of radicalism. In the beginning, the ABB leaned toward nationalism rather than the socialism that was advanced by the communist movement. Members of the ABB included notables such as Richard B. Moore and Hubert Harrison; it was Hubert Harrison who originated the Harlem street corner orator tradition that Malcolm X later embraced, fashioned the slogan "Race First," and provided a platform for Marcus Garvey when he arrived in Harlem in 1917. Shortly after his arrival in the United States, Garvey transferred the headquarters of what would soon become

the largest ever black nationalist organization, the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), from Kingston, Jamaica, to Harlem, New York. Garvey, a brilliant man, articulated for the first time the major tenets of black nationalism, and he is considered by most the father of modern black nationalism.

Garvey represented the sentiments of pan-African nationalism in the early 20th century, whereas W.E.B. Du Bois, a supposed rival of Garvey, discovered the black nationalist tradition in the 1890s through intense study and believed that nationalism was an effective means in the liberation struggles of Africans in America. Du Bois and Henry Sylvester Williams were the pioneers who founded the pan-African congress in London in July of 1900.

Du Bois viewed Africans in the United States as a permanent and distinct group, with specific nonnegotiable values, and as a nation filled with great possibilities of culture and an original destiny based on African ideals. Du Bois's work marked a new development in the nationalist tradition by virtue of his ability to move easily among his people and take part in the sacred settings of their lives. Though Du Bois might be considered by some to be a pan-Africanist and an accommodationist, for him, black nationalism and socialism, which he considered to have deep roots in African communalism, were actually reconcilable.

In the 1930s and 1940s, Du Bois contemplated the feasibility of spreading black nationalism in America through programs. He established connections between African culture and black nationalism and drew on indigenous values found in West African societies so that Africans in America might organize their lives in cooperative communities—a spiritual unity. These efforts derived from his vision of cooperative societies as the primary vehicles for the transformation, through trained leadership, of the majority of Africans in the United States into leaders. For Du Bois, as well as for Paul Robeson, African liberation was one that was worldwide in scope. Robeson believed that African peoples should seek out and build on their common qualities with the object of developing a more expansive and unified African culture. The relationship of culture, identity, and sovereignty was also recognized by pan-African nationalists, such as Carlos Cook and those who came after the civil rights and black power era. At a convention in Harlem in 1959, Carlos Cook, the founder of the Garvey-oriented African

nationalist pioneer movement, called for the abrogation of the term *negro*; this term went out of use in the 1960s as a result of the efforts of the pan-African nationalist movements of the black power era. In hindsight, the ultimate concerns of the civil rights and black power movements were similar, and the latter was the logical extension of the former.

SIMILARITIES AND DISSIMILARITIES OF PROPONENTS

Though integrationists and nationalists shared the same experiences of enslavement and European hegemony, the proponents of these ideological tendencies responded differently to the U.S. social order. The different, and often irreconcilable, themes represented by these tendencies have historically embodied or considered elements of each other, and within the nationalist tradition there have been proponents who have thought about and acted upon accommodationist (i.e., integrationist) ideas. Yet, more than any other period of black nationalist thought, the 1960s provided a greater articulation, through a multitude of disengaged organizations, of various strands of nationalist thought that vied for ascendancy as the most correct approach or ideological path toward liberation.

It is in this context that the black nationalist typology of cultural, territorial, religious, economic, and revolutionary nationalism can be found. The idea here, in a very simplistic way, is that cultural nationalists focus on the values and views of Africans in America, territorial nationalists focus on land (as the basis of an independent cultural nation), religious nationalists approach liberation from a religious perspective, economic nationalists operate as nationalists within the capitalist system, and revolutionary nationalism is premised on the international dismantling of capitalism and on armed resistance. Some scholars contend that revolutionary nationalism and reactionary nationalism are ultimately and fundamentally the only two types of black nationalism, in which the former believe in the potential of the masses to determine the course of liberation, while the latter fix on developing a capitalist and exploitative state in Africa.

The distant forms of black nationalism, such as cultural or religious nationalism, reflect a difference in emphasis rather than a mutually exclusive belief system. Cultural nationalists seek to restore African people's knowledge and practice of their authentic

history and culture, thus to such nationalists, a cultural revolution precedes or is a form of political revolution. According to some, cultural nationalism has reached essentially the same impasse reached by assimilationism and black neoconservatism, due to what is perceived as reactionary obsessions with demonstrating the equality of African humanity and the primal and extraordinary qualities of African history and culture. The point is that the various groups of nationalists, particularly, after the civil rights era, have approached black nationalism from their particular level of experience and expertise, and their projected approach to black nationalism has been more a matter of strategy and tactic than a goal. Indeed, while most nationalists share the goal of liberation, the incoherency of black nationalist thought is due, in part, to groups' preoccupation with their own particular strategy or tactics rather than with the goal; it is also due to a lack of clarity about history and culture.

Liberalism, communism, and trade unionism, it can be argued, became the main ideological rivals of black nationalism in the 20th century. There was a proliferation of black nationalism in the urban centers of the late 20th century, and the dynamics and ascendance of black cultural nationalism in the broader context of black nationality formation are observable. The historian Komozi Woodard lists five phases of black nationality formation: (1) the ethnogenesis of enslavement; (2) black nationalism before the Civil War inspired by principles of the American and Haitian revolutions; (3) the development of the subjected nation in the Black Belt areas of the South; (4) the great migration of 1.5 million Africans to urban industrial centers; and (5) the migration of 4 million Africans from the South between 1940 and 1970, heralded by the black power movement and the politics of black cultural nationalism.

In the final analysis, nationalism proves heterogeneous, even though no pure nationalist ideology can be identified with certainty. However, whether it be 19th-century personalities such as Maria Stewart, David Walker, and Henry Garnet, the words and works of whom reveal that language was used to establish cultural identity in ways that would advance liberation; or the Nation of Islam, which served primarily as a means for poor urban Africans to attain a national identity and a sense of ethnic consciousness, it can be asserted that the black nationalist movement, at its core, has always been concerned with liberation and national cultural identity.

THE CURRENT STATE OF BLACK NATIONALISM

Throughout its evolution, the ideology of black nationalism in the United States has lacked coherence and adequate theoretical clarity. As a result, the black consciousness and black power movements were weakened from within by opportunism, ideological conflicts, paranoia, ineffectual leadership, lack of managerial skills, and a weak financial base. Harold Cruse's observation in the 1960s that black nationalism was fragmented into sects, factions, and cliques that resembled a morass of self-inflicted immobility and frustration still holds true today. Amos Wilson also observed that black nationalists and nationalistic organizations exist and function without a consensually clarified set of goals and a working well-coordinated system of interdependent nationalist organizations, and this makes impossible the conversion of ambiguously defined nationalist sentiments into a powerful movement.

Wilson advocated the formation of a black nationalist political party to serve as the primary and legitimate leader on behalf of the African community. He envisioned the party as providing viable and workable plans and training and organizing know-how and serving as the community's primary political arm, chief negotiator, and principal agency for forming coalitions with others. Some black nationalists argue that the United States and/or its revolutionary potential is where efforts should be focused, while others argue that the African continent is the African's only true land base. Black nationalists of the latter persuasion claim five states in the South on the premise of an African land-owning majority. Yet, Africans on the African continent and in the Caribbean are overwhelming majorities on their land but still are not sovereign in that they remain conceptually and physically dependent on external thinking and goods. The black nationalists who seek to organize the masses have failed to realize that mass movements have not shown to be sustainable or a viable strategy toward liberation. Certainly the idea of fighting for compensations through legal means is not new, and the African reparations campaign is a strategy that may yield some interesting outcomes.

If black nationalism is ideally a mass or people's movement, why is its greatest failing the lack of a clearly defined creed propagated by an organized group of dedicated advocates and activists? It appears

that there is something more fundamental to the advancement of black nationalism than mass movements and a committed group of people. At the time of emancipation, enslaved Africans still remained essentially African in culture, and the core values of the great number of Africans in America have always been self-determination, freedom, and resistance to assimilation.

The greater and more substantive expression of black nationalism has been pan-African nationalism throughout the history of Africans in America. It is accurate to say that although the cultural identity of Africans in America continues to be affected by the U.S. social order, the African cultural orientation in America is still very much linked to the African historical-cultural continuum that informs that orientation. Thus, it is not difficult to find many illustrations of Africanisms in the thought, speech, social relationships, spiritual outlook, and general lives of many Africans in America today. Many are convinced that the liberation of Africans in America ultimately lies in their understanding, appreciation, and assertion of their cultural heritage. Black nationalism is inherently a cultural-ideological statement, and perhaps by drawing on pan-African nationalist conceptions unambiguously linked to culture, identity, and liberation, black nationalists will forge a coherent framework by which to achieve and sustain sovereignty in the African world.

— Kwasi Konadu

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BLACK PANTHER PARTY FOR SELF-DEFENSE

The Black Panther Party for Self-Defense was founded in 1966 in Oakland, California, by Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale. The party's founding members also included Elbert "Big Man" Howard, Sherman Forte, Reggie Forte, and Bobby Hutton. One of its early members and one of its eventual leaders was Eldridge Cleaver. Some of the party's most prominent members and leaders, at one time or the other, included Kwame Ture (Stokely Carmichael), Kathleen Cleaver, Eldridge Cleaver, Angela Davis, David Hilliard, Elaine Brown, Audrea Jones, H. Rap Brown, and Mumia Abu-Jamal.

The organization, whose name was shortened to the Black Panther Party (BPP), was formed to confront rampant acts of police brutality against blacks and to empower the black community to combat the social, political, and economic ills facing the community in Oakland and throughout the United States. One of its first missions was to be a watchdog against acts of police brutality. Thus armed members of the Black Panthers would follow police officers with cameras to make sure that the officers were not beating and abusing African Americans.

In 1967, fully armed members of the BPP, led by Bobby Seale, marched on the California state house in Sacramento to protest the state's attempt to outlaw carrying loaded weapons in public. During the same year, the party's newspaper, *The Black Panther*, was founded. By 1968, the party had begun expanding to other U.S. cities, and BPP branches were formed in

Chicago, Los Angeles, San Diego, Brooklyn, Denver, Newark, Baltimore, and New York. By the end of 1968, the BPP had grown to 5,000 members in 45 chapters and branches. Meanwhile, *The Black Panther* newspaper had grown to a circulation of 250,000.

THE 10-POINT PROGRAM AND COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS

The BPP established its agenda for black self-determination through its program calling for political and economic justice for African Americans. The 10-Point Program included demands for the following:

1. freedom and the power to control institutions within the black community
2. full employment for African Americans
3. an end to capitalist exploitation of the African American community
4. decent housing
5. black community control of education
6. free health care for blacks and all poor people
7. an end to police brutality against African Americans and all poor people
8. an end to all wars of aggression
9. freedom for all African Americans being held in state, federal, and military prisons, as well as free trials for all black people charged with crimes
10. land, bread, justice, peace, and control of modern technology for the black community

In 1969, the Black Panther Party initiated its first Free Breakfast Program at St. Augustine's Church. By the end of that year, Black Panther chapters throughout the United States had set up breakfast programs that fed over 10,000 children. The BPP also organized community programs and services such as free health clinics, as well as campaigns for community control of schools and police. In addition, the Panthers led rent strikes and organized what were called "liberation schools" for school-age children. The BPP found housing for people without homes and donated food and clothing to people in need. In cities like Chicago, the Black Panthers, under the leadership of Fred Hampton, ran five different breakfast programs, created a free medical center, and conducted blood drives and door-to-door tests for

sickle cell anemia. The Chicago branch also reached out to local street gangs and orchestrated truces between warring factions. Eventually, the federal government implemented free lunch programs and expanded Medicare and daycare programs.

POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY AND MAJOR PUBLICATIONS

The Black Panthers espoused the political views of Malcolm X (also known as el Hajj Malik el Shabazz) and the principles of Marxist-Leninist socialism that called for an end to capitalist exploitation of the black masses and a redistribution of wealth. The Panthers thought that they would win their battle for the masses by armed struggle. They believed in international working class unity across racial and gender lines, so they created alliances with other radical organizations, such as the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the American Indian Movement, and Cesar Chavez's farm workers' movement. The BPP's political philosophy also included empowering women to move into nonsubordinate roles. The Panthers advocated the need for all workers to seize the means of production from capitalist exploitation.

The Black Panthers put their political and ideological views into a variety of books. Eldridge Cleaver's *Soul on Ice* was released after Cleaver left the country in 1968. Bobby Seale's book, *Seize the Time*, which chronicled the rise of Newton and the Panthers, was published in 1970 during Seale's stint in prison. Huey Newton's *Revolutionary Suicide* was published in 1973. Years later, in 1989, when Newton received his Ph.D. in social philosophy from the University of California, Santa Cruz, his dissertation was titled, "War Against the Panthers: A Study of Repression in America."

POLICE HARASSMENT

As the Black Panther Party increased its local and national presence, the police and other law enforcement agencies started their crackdown on the Panthers and their activities. Party founder and leader Huey P. Newton was arrested and jailed for allegedly killing an Oakland police officer. Newton's imprisonment sparked the Free Huey campaign, which was organized by Eldridge Cleaver, the party's minister of information, in an effort to help fund Newton's legal defense. Newton was eventually convicted of manslaughter and

sentenced to 2 to 15 years in prison. In 1970 Newton's conviction was overturned on procedural errors.

In April of 1968, the Panthers became embroiled in a gun battle with Oakland police in which 17-year-old Panther Bobby Hutton was killed and Cleaver was wounded. Hutton, who was unarmed at the time of his death, was shot 10 times by the police after his house was set on fire. In the aftermath of the incident, Cleaver was arrested and after his release fled to Algeria.

In Chicago, two Panthers, 21-year-old Fred Hampton and 17-year-old Mark Clark, were gunned down during an early morning raid by police who had been tipped off to their whereabouts by an FBI informant. Both Hampton and Clark were shot while they were sleeping, Hampton in his bedroom and Clark in the living room. Hampton's wife, who was 8 months pregnant at the time, was also wounded in the police raid but survived. Four other BPP members were wounded as well. A federal grand jury found that the police had fired 90 shots into the building and that only one shot came from the building—from Clark. The Party members who survived the raid were arrested and charged with attempted murder of police officers. None of the law enforcement officials involved in the shooting were arrested for killing the two Panthers. In 1969, Bobby Seale, along with seven codefendants, was indicted for his participation in the protests at the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. In what became known as the Chicago 7 Trial, Seale was denied the right to serve as his own lawyer by Judge Julius Hoffman, who also ordered Seale bound and gagged during the courtroom proceedings. Seale was convicted of 16 counts of contempt and sentenced to 4 years in prison. During his stint in prison, he was charged, but not convicted of another murder. By the early 1970s, Panthers throughout the country had been charged and/or convicted of a variety of offenses. In some cases, the charges were false.

THE FBI COUNTERINTELLIGENCE PROGRAM (COINTELPRO) AND THE PANTHERS' DEMISE

In 1968, the FBI, under the leadership of J. Edgar Hoover, began infiltrating the Black Panthers in an effort to disrupt and neutralize the Party. An FBI informant provided information to the police and the FBI that enabled them to set up the assassination of Fred Hampton. In the 1970s, the FBI used a carefully orchestrated program of psychological warfare and disinformation to create dissension within the ranks

of the BPP. Some of those activities included forging letters to the Panther membership criticizing Newton's leadership and questioning the loyalty of other members. The external meddling on the part of the government that led to divisions within the Party also led to disagreements between Newton and Cleaver. In a telephone interview on a local television talk show, Cleaver, who was in exile in Algeria, criticized Newton's leadership of the Party and attacked the Party's programs. As a result of this interview, Cleaver was expelled from the Party. In response, he formed his own black nationalist organization.

The strife within the BPP eventually led disillusioned Party members to leave the Party and pursue their own interests. Before his resignation in 1975, Bobby Seale ran for mayor of Oakland and lost, despite receiving 40% of the vote. Huey Newton, shaken by the divisions within the party, became heavily dependent on drugs. In August of 1989, Newton was killed in a drug dispute in Oakland. Eldridge Cleaver and his wife Kathleen returned from exile in 1975 and became born again Christians. In 1979, Eldridge Cleaver entered into a plea bargain with the state of California in which all charges against him from the 1968 shoot-out with Oakland police were dropped. He pled guilty to assault and was placed on 5 years probation. Cleaver went on to become a Republican and an anticommunist, and he ran for the Republican nomination for the U.S. Senate in 1986 but was defeated. He had various run-ins with the law, was convicted for cocaine possession and burglary in 1988, and died at 62 in May of 1998. As the BPP gradually faded out, there were still Panther members—such as, among others, Geronimo Pratt and Mumia Abu-Jamal—who were being arrested, in many cases on trumped up charges, and imprisoned.

THE BLACK PANTHERS' LEGACY

The Black Panther Party left an indelible mark on the African American struggle for freedom and self-respect. The BPP's community service programs, such as the Free Breakfast Program and free sickle cell anemia screenings, were eventually adopted by state and federal social service agencies. The Black Panthers' attempts to combat police brutality led to better public scrutiny, through police review boards, of the way police officers carry out their jobs in communities of color.

— Christopher Murray

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BLACK PHILOSOPHY

Black philosophy is a body of intellectual reflection on and explication of the nature of Africana existence. Black philosophy makes primary use of the black epistemic and presents an understanding of diasporic African and continental African phenomena. Black philosophy is necessarily distinct, as it cannot be integrated into a generic American philosophy by including black American intellectual thinkers under the subcategorized areas of American transcendentalism or pragmatism, for example. There is a need to recognize under black philosophy particularities and schools of thought such as the Africana existentialism of William R. Jones, Paget Henry, and Lewis Gordon; the black pragmatism of Cornel West; and the Afrocentrism of Molefi Kete Asante.

Black philosophy cannot be categorized under the general field of philosophy, which is currently constructed with Western derived paradigms and the dichotomization of Western and Eastern intellectual realms. John Mbiti and Kwame Gyekye have offered the key justification for a distinct African philosophy as one that in supplying discourse on wisdom, morality,

and community maintains black and African inclusion and does not exclude dialectics on oral traditions, proverb wisdom, spirituals, and the Luo concept of time, which are all black phenomena.

The case against African philosophy has been made by Kwame Anthony Appiah, Kwasi Wiredu, and Paulin Hountondji, who have argued that the black composite cannot be considered because doing so only helps to buttress an abused homogenized entity, and such an action is ironically anchored on a racialism that has been prompted by white construction. Thus intellectualizing under a black identifier only continues to falsify and deny the multiplicity of an expansive people. Other philosophers, such as Kwame Gyekye, point out that despite the variety of African languages and cultures, there are common features intrinsic to African cultures, so it is unnecessary to break them up into separate philosophies for the Akan, Yoruba, Kikuyu, Bantu, Mende, and so on. In the midst of the various African cultures that persist, there are common features that more rightly manifest themselves in every African culture and can be seen as the underlying common thread that runs throughout African cultures. A definable inherent and pervasive substantiality appears and can be construed as essentially being a refraction of African life and thought. Moreover, the African personality is revealed and can be related. Black philosophy encompasses a humanism that regards African values and patterns of thought that relate to the African nature of things. Black philosophy makes use of traditional Westernism, but it works at a usage that always includes the sublimated African condition of existence.

Mzee Lasana Okpara and Jonathan Scott Lee point out in their perceptive introduction to the book *I Am Because We Are: Readings in Black Philosophy* (1995), a title borrowed from John Mbiti, that traditional Eurocentric Western claims of a whole humanity have always excluded Africa. Okpara and Lee point out that there is no generic philosophy because Western philosophy is the product of dominant European cultural intellectualism in which oral traditions and the misappropriation of the African as lacking wisdom and morality seemed fair.

The standard notion of philosophy (i.e., Western philosophy) begins with Plato and thus excludes the ancient African philosophers who preceded the Greeks. Aristotle's *Metaphysics* attributes the founding of philosophy to Greek knowledge of the world and originality. A generic philosophy cannot exist if

there is reluctance to accept Greek philosophy as stemming from African precursors. Black philosophy fairly considers all that Kemet had offered to such prime Western philosophers as Thales and Pythagoras, for example, two very important and pioneering intellectual thinkers of the field. Black philosophy notes how philosophical primers make little use of the Kemetic writings of Ptah-hotep, Amenemope, and Wen-Amon, which existed hundreds of years before such Greek thinkers as Anaxamander, Heraclitus, and Anaxagoras. Thus, black philosophy is an imperative in the 21st century to ensure the inclusion in world philosophy of African thinkers whose work dates back thousands of years and adds to the body of world philosophical and historical knowledge. Black philosophy exists not only to add to the black epistemic but also to appropriately reveal the long philosophical tradition and continuum based in Africa.

As in most other disciplines, there are multiple particularities and many schools of thought within black philosophy revealing interpretations of black existence. The purpose of black philosophy is to make inclusive the black epistemic and to appropriate fairly aspects of black phenomena. Some theorists believe it would be better to exclude the concept of race and not continue to see people in that harmful guise, which only validates white racialization of what it means to be black. Essentially, black philosophy adheres to the commonality of societal existence of oppressed and enslaved African peoples throughout the world rather than just the unification of one race.

Some of the modern great thinkers in black philosophy who have displayed philosophical ingenuity and maintained dialectics about the condition of enslaved and oppressed African people throughout the world are Frederick Douglass, Martin Delany, Edward W. Blyden, Alexander Crummell, Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, Anna Julia Cooper, Alain Locke, C.L.R. James, Richard Wright, Frantz Fanon, Léopold Sédar Senghor, Kwame Nkrumah, Julius K. Nyerere, Amílcar Cabral, Wole Soyinka, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr., Maulana Karenga, Imari Baraka, Haki Madhubuti, Angela Y. Davis, Marimba Ani, Toni Morrison, bell hooks, Kwame Anthony Appiah, Lucius Outlaw, William R. Jones, Lewis Gordon, Leonard Harris, Cornel West, Molefi Kete Asante, Ama Mazama, and Wade Nobles. This list is not exhaustive, but it is suggestive of the enormous role played over time by African intellectuals in formulating concepts and ideas of a black

philosophy that seeks to alleviate the burden of oppression and redefine a people.

— Jorge Serrano

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BLACK POLITICS

Black politics includes the myriad ways in which blacks work to gain influence and power in the system of government said to represent their interests. Black politics is both the philosophies held by blacks about how a representative government should work to satisfy their best interests and the strategies espoused for accomplishing this. It has been said that the more things change, the more things remain the same. This is certainly the case regarding recent political issues within contemporary African American communities. A host of new political issues confront African Americans across the United States, while they continue to grapple with the political issues that faced previous generations. It goes without saying that the general rubric of African American politics is too broad to enable in-depth treatment of every issue here. Thus the focus here is on particular aspects of black politics that have become increasingly relevant in recent years, highlighting issues regarding new problems, new perspectives on solving old problems, and where black constituencies may be headed in the

near future. Accordingly, three primary areas are the focus here—representation and political participation, ideological and public policy shifts among African Americans, and black electoral politics.

REPRESENTATION, VOTING RIGHTS, AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The essence of democracy is representation. Commonly identified democratic principles, such as fair and open elections, full adult suffrage, and officials who are responsive to the citizenry, all rest on the assumption that a small group of elected leaders represents the interests of a larger constituency. The history of African American participation winds its way through 250 years of legalized slavery, another 100 years of legal oppression and segregation, and a continuing struggle for equal opportunity and dismantlement of racist stereotypes and attitudes. Within this context, black Americans have benefitted from increased representation in federal, state, and local public offices but have been hindered by the still disproportionately low levels of representation of black interests.

The number of black members of Congress has increased dramatically since 1980, and more striking gains in numbers of blacks holding political office have been made at the state and local levels. The gains at the federal level are partly a result of race-conscious districting. Because of the constitutional requirements mandating a decennial census and several Supreme Court decisions mandating congressional districts to be equally proportioned, the process of reapportionment and redistricting of boundaries for congressional seats is necessary. Some activists for minority interests have claimed that the creation of so-called majority-minority districts is the answer to minority representation in Congress. Others disagree.

Majority-minority districts virtually guarantee that nonwhite candidates will be elected to Congress. In fact, there have been only a few black members of Congress who have represented majority-white districts or states. But the creation of majority-minority districts means the decreased presence of racial minorities in all other districts. Some have argued that this creates a situation where white members of Congress no longer need to be responsive to minority interests. Others argue that reliance on race-conscious districting limits the potential influence of minority leaders, since the practice makes it quite difficult for a minority candidate to be elected in a majority-white

district, essentially placing a limit on the number of minority members of Congress at any given point in time.

Blacks have made their greatest inroads into elected offices at the state and local levels. The number of black elected officials at these levels has increased dramatically over the past decade. The greatest increase has occurred in areas of the country where there are large African American populations. While redistricting strategies account for much of the increase at the federal level, other factors factor significantly into increases at the state and local levels. Whites are increasingly willing to vote for black candidates at these levels, especially when the ideological beliefs and party affiliations of blacks and whites are strongly correlated. Increasing numbers of nonblack minority populations have also contributed to this phenomenon.

The increased level of black elected officials in state and local offices has led, and will likely continue to lead, to increased influence. Blacks have succeeded in shaping state public policy to their benefit. In addition, this increase at the state level will likely translate into greater numbers of blacks vying for seats in federal office as lower officeholders continue moving up the electoral ladder.

While increasing levels of inclusion of blacks in federal, state, and local offices generally signals a positive trend in terms of meeting our country's ideal of equal representation, another factor—discrimination regarding voting rights—has recently revealed a serious hindrance to this ideal. The controversial outcome of the 2000 election raised significant questions about the ability of the black public to participate in elections through free and fair election and voting processes. Academic research, and that sponsored by official federal bodies, shows that for blacks and other minorities, there are significant barriers to voting, to having their votes counted, and to having them counted accurately. Inquiries into these problems have demonstrated that some of these barriers have been deliberately constructed to exert and maintain political power within the white community. Prior to the 2000 election, many of these problems were not identified or highlighted, largely because of the acceptance of the myth that blacks and other minorities choose not to participate in the political process as much as whites do.

Contrary to popular understanding, however, black Americans have not generally been found to participate in political activities less than their white counterparts. This is especially the case when participation is defined

as more than number of votes. Participation includes a variety of activities, such as community organization and outreach, protests, boycotts, and interpersonal communication, that are common forms of political activity in many black communities. Participation is affected most prominently by the psychological construct called political efficacy (i.e., the belief that one can make a difference). The most efficacious Americans are those whose financial position puts them in the middle or upper class and those who are college educated. On the whole, whites do participate at a higher level than blacks, but once demographic indicators such as income and education are controlled, whites and blacks participate at virtually the same rates.

IDEOLOGY AND PUBLIC POLICY

Black politics is characterized and driven by the “just permanent interests” that former U.S. Representative William Clay, and a variety of academic researchers, have shown dominated the political landscape of the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. However, the terrain of such interests, as well as the most available and appropriate means of attaining them, has changed and continues to change within African American populations. Furthermore, while blacks are increasingly represented in state and federal bodies, there is simultaneously a significant trend of divergence among African Americans in terms of political party affiliation, ideological stances, and public policy attitudes, levels of racial-group identification, and belief in a strategy of black political solidarity.

Research shows that blacks still overwhelmingly affiliate with the Democratic Party and largely support Democratic candidates; however, the nature of the affiliations and the degree of support have significantly waned. While there have been marginal but significant increases in the number of blacks registering as Republicans, there has been a sizable increase in the number of blacks registering as Independents and with parties other than the Democratic Party. The presence of blacks like Colin Powell, J. C. Watts, Condoleeza Rice, and others in high-ranking positions in the Bush administration has had a measurable impact on blacks' considerations of the Republican Party as a viable space for participation by black politicians and black constituencies in general.

This movement of blacks away from the Democratic Party, which traditionally supports black

causes, also results from the fact that blacks are increasingly expressing nonracial policy concerns that converge with those of whites. These factors have translated into decreased opportunities for specific black communities, and the black population as a whole, to pursue a political strategy based on some modicum of solidarity—especially as the racial group identification of African Americans is increasingly divided along the lines of economic well-being, residential situation, and levels of education. These diverging aspects of contemporary black political realities have also spilled over into the increasingly changing nature of black electoral politics, specifically the manner in which race has been used by black and white political candidates in the electoral process.

RACIAL MESSAGES IN POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS

Race is a recurring theme in campaign advertisements, even when there are no black candidates running for office. Although blacks' comparatively low levels of political efficacy and participation have decreased the risk of white candidates using racial messages that might alienate black constituents, racist messages continue to exist. Even in an era that attaches social stigma to overt racial prejudice, some messages still rely on negative stereotypes of racial minorities. In some cases, the messages are explicit, but in most cases, they are implicit. Research in this area demonstrates that implicit messages are likely to be more effective than explicit messages, because the latter violate our cultural norm of racial equality and are thus generally rejected by voters. Implicit messages, however, work on racial predispositions that exist in the subconscious minds of Americans, even those who outwardly reject such stereotypes in their day-to-day lives.

The now-infamous Willie Horton ad is a prime example of such a message. Vice President George H.W. Bush ran an attack ad against Michael Dukakis in the 1988 presidential race on the issue of crime. The ad accused Dukakis of being soft on crime because of a prison furlough program that was in place while Dukakis was governor of Massachusetts. The ad featured the story—and accompanying mug shot—of Willie Horton, a black man who committed a rape and assault while on furlough. The existence of Horton's picture, which revealed his race, was unnecessary to convey the intended message, but it likely primed negative racial stereotypes in the minds of

voters who may have rejected the message if it were more explicitly racist.

It is unlikely that we will see many explicitly racist messages in political advertising in the future. But racial messages take a variety of forms and come from a variety of sources. It is important to understand these new campaign dynamics to fully comprehend the complexity of racial politics in the 21st century.

THE NEW FACE OF ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN POLITICS

As the number of African American candidates rises, so does the potential for black candidates to compete against one another in election contests—contests that have been heretofore largely uncompetitive, as many elected officials have held office for long periods of time and then hand picked a successor. Although African American candidates are not likely to espouse racist attitudes, this does not preclude the use of race in their campaigns. The increase in the ideological diversity of black Americans inevitably translates into elections where black candidates are forced to differentiate themselves from their black opponents. One result of this is black politicians' using claims to racial authenticity as a communication strategy in their campaigns.

Candidates involved in this debate argue, in essence, who is “really black,” and which of them is “keeping it real,” as opposed to “selling out” (i.e., mimicking or assimilating into the white hegemonic norm). Perhaps the most fitting and recent example of this was found in the 2002 Democratic primary in Alabama's seventh congressional district. Incumbent Earl Hilliard ran against Arthur Davis in a contest that the press noted pivoted on the race issue, with Hilliard claiming that “his lighter-skinned opponent [was] not really black at all.” Both candidates' discussions about black authenticity foreshadowed what will likely become an increasingly common theme in elections within majority-minority districts.

It is clear that changes in the larger U.S. political climate have made the issue of equal representation the prized political goal of African Americans. Blacks are increasingly moving away from monolithic forms of political thought and strategizing, which will contribute to their attaining this goal. Yet new challenges will likely be posed as blacks continue to compete for power and a voice in American politics.

— *Charlton D. McIlwain
and Stephen M. Caliendo*

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BLACK POWER CONFERENCE OF NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

The 1967 Black Power Conference of Newark, New Jersey, established an unprecedented shift in blacks' ideas for and practices in their nonviolent struggle for civil rights. The name of the conference, the important slogan and mantra—black power—popularized by Stokely Carmichael (also known as Kwame Ture), exposed the weakness in protesting solely for integration. On May 29, 1966, Adam Clayton Powell, who was then chairman of the Education and Labor Committee, declared in his baccalaureate address at Howard University that “Civil Rights are man-made and Human Rights are God-made. To demand our God-given rights is to see *black power*—the power to build black institutions of splendid achievement.” A week later, Stokely Carmichael marched through Greenville, Mississippi, leading the marchers in the call-and-response chant, “We want black power,” “We want black power.”

Prior to the black power movement, which was accompanied by pounding fists, the traditional civil rights struggle favored coalitions and integration with whites. Black power, on the other hand, carried forward the ideology and nationalism of 19th-century writer and activist David Walker; the doctor, essayist, author Martin Delany; and the fighter journalist, Ida B. Wells. In the 20th century its essence was reflected in the political philosophy of Marcus Garvey and later Elijah Muhammad. The omnipotence of black power traveled internationally. In South Africa, the activist and nationalist Stephen Biko coined the term *black consciousness* to describe this ideology. In America, the salute of pounding raised fists and the chanting of “black power” gave the adherents an experience of their potential previously lacking in American political struggles. The spirit of black power was a grassroots powder keg and ideology. Unlike the Communist Party, USA, and later the radical progressive left, black power proponents spoke specifically to black people, insisting on intraracial solutions to eradicate white supremacy.

The Black Power Conference of Newark, New Jersey, engendered this essence, potency, and direction, as well as continuing the tradition of antebellum Negro conventions and early 20th-century pan-African congresses. The conference had 1,000 delegates representing 286 organizations and institutions from 126 cities in 26 states, plus Bermuda and Nigeria. It took place in 1967, from July 20 to 23, in Newark, New Jersey, which was still recovering from the black rebellion that occurred there from July 11 through 17, leaving 26 dead and 1,004 injured. Martin Luther King said of Newark that it had “a short fuse and a long train of abuses.” At the time of the rebellion, black people constituted 52% of the city's 400,000 people, and over half of the black adults had no more than an eighth grade education. High unemployment, broken families, and crime strained the black community and ultimately led to the rebellion.

THE WORK OF AMIRI BARAKA

Leroi Jones (later known as Amiri Baraka) attempted to avoid just such a disaster when he established Spirit House in 1965 as a center for black art and community activities. In 1967, however, activists at Spirit House challenged the mayor for his refusal to hire a black man to a post on the board of education, despite the fact that at the time 70% of Newark's schoolchildren

were black. There was also tension among blacks over authorities' decision to relocate blacks from 150 acres of city land in order to build a medical school there. This mounting tension catapulted when police brutality was added to the long-standing indignities assaulting black people, thus the rebellion. Nathan Hare, chair of the Black Power Conference, refused to capitulate to the city officials who wanted the conference postponed or held in another city. Recognizing that systemic white supremacy caused the black rebellions, Hare and the Continuations Committee members decided that to cancel the conference was tantamount to yielding to the same system that caused the rebellion. The Continuations Committee members were Omar A. Ahmed of the Bronx, New York; Ron Maulana Karenga of Los Angeles, California; Isaiah Robinson of New York; and Chuck Stone and Jewel Mazique of Washington, D.C. Adam Clayton Powell appointed this original committee on September 3, 1966, following the 1-day Black Power Planning Conference that Powell had convened at the Rayburn House office building. That committee formulated plans for the first National Conference on Black Power in 1967.

THE PURPOSE OF THE CONFERENCE

The purpose of the Black Power Conference in Newark was to discuss the most pressing issues of the day. In the Episcopal diocese of Newark, the delegates held workshops, presented papers, and developed more than 80 resolutions calling for specific programs of action in political, economic, and cultural affairs. The following is a small sampling of the 286 organizations and institutions represented at the National Conference on Black Power: Abyssinian Baptist Church of New York, *Amsterdam News*, Association of Black Social Workers, A. Philip Randolph Institute, Better Business Investors, Black Liberation Center, Black Muslims, Business and Industrial Co-ordinating Council, Catholic Inter-racial Council, Committee to Save Negro Lives on Foreign and Domestic Battlefields, Committee to Seat a Negro Congressman in Brooklyn, Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), Delta Ministry, Detroit's Inner City Organizing Committee, Democratic Liberation Party of San Francisco, Fisk University Poverty Research Group, Greater Hartford Council of Churches, Jazz-Art Society for Social Research, Mau Maus, and Yale University Child Development Center.

At the 14 workshops, delegates presented papers and discussed youth organizing, politics, nationalism and internationalism, economic development, social change, and intellectual and black power. The main purpose of the delegates was to decide how to capture the momentum of black power and mobilize it into constructive programs and empowerment for the masses. The delegates believed that black power represented the future, despite the dissension and disagreements of the many groups and organizations in the movement. They charted a course for black people for the next 100 years. This was the first conference of its kind in the 20th century and it contrasted with, broadened, and challenged the traditional civil rights movement and its leadership. Nobody missed Martin Luther King, Whitney Young, or Roy Wilkins; however, Adam Clayton Powell, who had been scheduled to speak, was noticeably mourned. Powell had to cancel his appearance when he learned that he could not enter New York because of legal difficulties.

More than 80 resolutions emerged out of the 14 workshops. All were read and considered by a vote at the conference's final plenary session. Only one resolution was officially passed by the conference and that was The Black Power Manifesto, a small section of which reads,

Black people have consistently expanded a large part of our energy and resources reacting to white definition. It is imperative that we begin to develop the organizational and technical competence to initiate and enact our own programs. . . . Control of African communities in America and other black communities and nations throughout the world still remains in the hands of white supremacist oppressors.

It was therefore resolved that the National Conference on Black Power sponsor the creation of an International Black Congress, to be organized out of the soulful roots of black peoples and to reflect the new sense of power and revolution that was blossoming in black communities in America and black nations throughout the world.

— Regina Jennings

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BLACK POWER MOVEMENT

The black power movement was a political, social, cultural, and economic movement for black self-determination. The movement, which brought forth a generation of black activists committed to the struggle for and practical realities of black agency, began in the United States in the mid-1960s and lasted until the early 1970s. The legacy of this era has still not been fully accounted for, as this movement for black political, social, economic, and cultural power not only transformed American society, but, also infused peoples of African descent all over the globe with the desire to accentuate and positively identify with black pride and black consciousness. This was a time that recalled the black nationalist legacy of Marcus Garvey and the United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), as well as elements of the Harlem Renaissance era of the 1920s, which can be deemed the precursor of the black power movement of the 1960s. As Walter Rodney, author of *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (1981), maintained in a speech in Philadelphia in 1969, “Black Power as a slogan is new, but it is really an ideology and a movement of historical depth.”

After the assassination of Malcolm X on February 21, 1965, there was an ideological shift in the black power movement away from the focus on nonviolent integrationist strategies of Martin Luther King and other leaders of the civil rights movement. Malcolm X’s emphasis on human rights over civil rights, and his assertions of black self-determination, a need for knowledge of African heritage, pan-African

philosophy, and the promotion of an overall positive black consciousness, highly influenced black youth and student activists. By the mid-1960s, the notion of black power had emerged as the rallying call of mainly disenchanted members of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Kwame Ture (1941–1998; also known as Stokely Carmichael) was elected to chair SNCC in 1966 after members had become increasingly impatient with the slow pace of the integrationist tactics of their previous leader, John Lewis (who later became a congressman). Ture left the SNCC in 1967 (to be replaced by H. Rap Brown, who was later known as Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin) and soon after joined the Black Panther Party, established by Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale in 1966, as the group’s honorary prime minister.

THE BLACK POWER CONCEPT

Kwame Ture also collaborated with Charles V. Hamilton to pen the now classic *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America* (1967). The authors argued that it was incumbent upon black people in the United States to politically control their communities for the good of the majority. They also emphasized how important it was not to imitate the structures of power that had oppressed black people by seeking political pluralism instead. They asserted that “the ultimate values and goals [of black power] are not domination or exploitation of other groups, but rather an effective share in the total power of the society.”

In the late 1960s, *black power* as a slogan was profoundly misunderstood by some of the major civil rights leaders and by mainstream white America. Yet the term had become popular with black student activists and artists. In response to the growing popularity of black power, U.S. mainstream society set about infiltrating and destabilizing black organizations. The Black Panther Party and the Us organization were groups that endured infiltration into their ranks by undercover police officers; surveillance of black groups was also employed by the FBI’s counterintelligence program (COINTELPRO). Indeed, at the very outset, the black power movement and its various organizational groups were deemed subversive by American law enforcement agencies, led by J. Edgar Hoover of the FBI, and considered a threat to American life. Interestingly, before he was forced to resign from office in 1974 due to the Watergate scandal, President Richard Nixon endorsed the idea of black

power as it related to economic development within black communities.

The fact that a rather right wing Republican president endorsed the notion actually highlights the ambiguities in the theories and practice of black power during this time period. Although not all advocates in the black power movement were socialists, the majority of the key leaders espoused an anticapitalist, antiexploitation agenda. However, it was the Black Panthers who advocated an openly Marxist-Leninist approach to the black liberation struggle. In 1968, Bobby Seale published *Seize the Time: The Story of the Black Panthers*, in which he clearly locates the Black Panthers' manifesto within an antiracist and anticapitalist frame of reference. Seale wrote,

We, the Black Panther Party, see ourselves as a nation within a nation, but not for any racist reasons. We see it as a necessity for us to progress as human beings and live on the face of this earth along with other people. We do not fight racism with racism. We fight racism with solidarity. We do not fight exploitative capitalism with black capitalism. We fight capitalism with socialism. And we do not fight imperialism with more imperialism. We fight imperialism with proletarian internationalism. These principles are very functional for the Party. They're very practical, humanistic, and necessary. They should be understood by the masses of the people.

THE POLITICAL CLEAVAGES

The black power movement was not a monolithic group of black activists sharing the same ideology and methods for black liberation. There were differences in thought and action among activists in the movement. There has yet to be written an in-depth study of, for example, the friction between the cultural nationalists and the Black Panthers. The Black Panthers were grounded in the principles of socialism and the enemy was, according to Seale, "the ruling class, the very small minority, the few avaricious, demagogic hogs and rats who control and infest the government." But because the Black Panthers were prepared to work in alliance with white, left wing liberals, Kwame Ture resigned from the party in July of 1969. He was disillusioned with the black power movement's

direction in the United States and emigrated to Guinea in West Africa.

However, the cultural nationalists emphasized primarily the reality of white racism and only afterward capitalist economics. What black people needed was a cultural base that authenticated their experience. The cultural nationalists believed that without such a culture, American blacks could not expect to become free from the politics of white racism. Maulana Karenga, one of the leading interpreters of the national question, often says in his public lectures that the international issue is racism, not economics, so white people are racists not just capitalists; that race rules out economics, and minimizes it when it doesn't wipe it out completely; and that therefore we conceive of the problem today not as a class struggle but a global struggle against racism.

Karenga did not rule out the economic aspect of black liberation; however, he emphasized that in order to have authentic black power, there was a need for cooperative economics (*Ujamaa* in Kiswahili) grounded in cultural nationalist philosophy (e.g., buying in the black community). At bottom, the main difference between the cultural nationalist perspective and the Black Panthers, in terms of black power economic strategy for liberation, appears to have been in regard to the cultural nationalists not particularly emphasizing or critically evaluating the inherent inequality within the capitalist system.

A number of critics have examined the 1960s black power movement and endeavored to put the era into historical context. Among these critics is Harold Cruse, who in *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* (1984) wrote,

In essence, Black Power represents nothing more than a strategic retreat for a purpose. It proposes to change, not the white world outside, but the black world inside, by reforming it into something else politically and economically. In its own way and for other purposes the Nation of Islam has already achieved this in a limited way, substituting religion for politics.

Cruse understood that Africa could not be romanticized, but he was adamant that Africans in America faced particular complex social problems when it came to their liberation struggle in the United States. Black power advocates in the 1960s often failed to learn from lessons of the past, particularly from the 1920s Harlem Renaissance and Garveyism era.

Nevertheless, in hindsight, the black power movement of the 1960s was still able to gain certain concessions from an overtly racist society. The founding of Black Studies departments and programs is part of this legacy, even though many of these departments and programs do not espouse a philosophy and social practice that empower African-centered perspectives. The rise in black consciousness that accompanied the movement created a space for people of African descent to endorse their heritage. Thus the age of the Afro hairstyle and the saying “black is beautiful” ushered in a limited, but cultural, sense of African agency. Moreover, this era inspired young black intellectuals to create motifs, symbols, and concepts with authentic meaning for African diaspora cultures. For example, Maulana Karenga developed Kwanzaa, the African-centered cultural holiday that was at first meant for Africans in America but now is celebrated in many parts of the African diaspora. In addition, Molefi Kete Asante used his philosophy of Afrocentricity to help him develop the first Ph.D. program in African American Studies. Black women intellectuals who emerged from the legacy of the black power movement include Marimba Ani, Miriam Maat Ka Re Monges, Katherine Bankole, Christel Temple, Patricia Dixon, Shirley Weber, Vivian Gordon, Charshee McIntyre, Barbara Wheeler, and Clenora Hudson-Weems, among many others. Each sought to advance an authentic insight into African-centered scholarship.

There is no doubt that the black power movement inspired a generation of scholars and activists to endorse and promote African heritage as it related to the African diaspora experience. However, little credit is given to it for inspiring other oppressed communities to fight for their rights in an oppressive society. For example, the white women’s movement and the gay and lesbian movement both imitated the black power movement in order to gain concessions in U.S. society. And the proliferation of Women’s Studies and Ethnic Studies programs in the academy is directly related to the vanguard position of the Black Studies movement.

Finally, African diaspora communities continue to grapple with the reality of white racism and white privilege. In hindsight, what the black power movement fought for in the 1960s should be the basic right of every human group—dignity, self-respect, first class citizenship, and freedom from all forms of discrimination.

— Mark A. Christian

See also Black Arts Movement

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THE BLACK SCHOLAR

The Black Scholar was founded by Robert Chrisman and Robert Allen in 1969 in Oakland, California. It has become one of the most important intellectual journals in the black world by virtue of its high standards. Almost all of the major contemporary African American intellectuals have published in its pages. The journal has regularly featured such authors as Audre Lorde, Toni Morrison, Maulana Karenga, Cornel West, Molefi Kete Asante, Henry Louis Gates, Amiri Baraka, Manning Marable, and Haki Madhubuti.

The purpose of *The Black Scholar* was from the start to provide an instrument for the dissemination of the current social, political, economic, and cultural

ideas of the black intelligentsia. Over the course of its lifetime, the journal has shown a remarkable flexibility in themes and subjects. Thus, it has provided a much needed outlet for black intellectuals' essays detailing their political and ideological perspectives.

Over the past 20 years, the journal has struggled to support itself with funding from private sources. In 2004, the journal was acquired by the University of Nebraska Press. Robert Chrisman, who is chair of Black Studies at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, is the editor of the internationally acclaimed journal. The journal has firmly established itself as one of the leading journals of black cultural and political thought in the United States. Among its recent contributors have been Amiri Baraka, Angela Davis, Julian Bond, Shirley Chisholm, Nelson Mandela, and Maya Angelou. *The Black Scholar* remains a strong and vibrant journal after nearly 40 years of publication.

— Daryl Zizwe Poe

FURTHER READING

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BLACK SKIN, WHITE MASKS

Black Skin, White Masks was written in French by Frantz Fanon and first published in France in 1952. It has been translated into many languages, including English, as it has become a classic reference text on the issue of European colonization and subsequent black alienation. Fanon was born in 1925 in Martinique, a Caribbean country colonized by the French since 1635. In 1947, Fanon left Martinique to study psychiatry in France. *Black Skin, White Masks* was originally written as part of Fanon's medical thesis.

Fanon was primarily concerned with the devastating impact of colonial racism on African people.

According to Fanon, in order to justify and maintain their colonial supremacy over Africans, Europeans conveniently constructed two social categories, blackness and whiteness. The first one was equated with fundamental inferiority and animality. The second one conferred a monopoly over humanity. Thus, for Fanon, blackness and whiteness are purely social constructs, with no basis in reality. What does exist, however, is the human. The human's determining characteristic, wrote Fanon, who was heavily influenced by the French existentialist philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, is to be free. Colonialism, by creating racial categories from which no one may escape, gravely interferes with freedom and must be destroyed.

In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon described in particular the reification of African people in Martinique and its terrible consequences. Defined by the colonizers as cannibals, backward, rapists, fetishists, inferior, and so on, it became impossible for blacks to avoid white people's definition and perception of them. Thus, racism literally, and in the most fundamental way, ascribed an inferior, subhuman status to blacks. As a result of having internalized this negative discourse, many black people became convinced that they could only achieve human status if they imitated those who claimed to define humanity (i.e., white people). Thus, what followed were tragic and pathetic attempts on the part of some blacks to appropriate whiteness in an effort to redeem their humanity.

Black Skin, White Masks focused particularly on the issue of the prestige associated with speaking a European language and having a white lover. After having noted how language plays a vital part in life, Fanon explained how the rejection of Creole, the mother tongue of African people in Martinique, and the worship of French was a case of linguistic alienation caused by blacks' attempt to escape blackness and be reborn into whiteness. Similarly, those blacks who engaged in love or sexual affairs with whites did this to prove their human worth. In other words, the colonized subjects, victims of the psychological violence inflicted by the colonizers, aped the colonizers, thus wearing "white masks." All of this, Fanon claimed, was quite unhealthy. His recommendation therefore included destroying blackness and whiteness alike, through the destruction of colonialism, to redirect our focus on the cultivation and nurturing of the human that is within each person, regardless of skin color. Fanon rejected Négritude, that is, the belief that there exist specific

black cultural values. Similarly, he thought of the past as an unnecessary and false burden that could only compromise the realization of that individual freedom so dear to him at the time of his writing.

— *Ama Mazama*

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BLACK STUDIES

Black Studies, which is also called Africana Studies, is the critical and systematic study of the thought and practice of African people in their current and historical unfolding. As an area of inquiry, Black Studies may be conceived in a broad or narrow sense. More broadly conceived, it is an inquiry that begins with ancient societies, such as ancient Egypt, Mali, and Songhai, which established an intellectual tradition of studying themselves and the world in which they lived. More narrowly conceived, Black Studies is a self-conscious and organized university-based discipline with origins in the 1960s and a modern intellectual practice rooted in and expressive of the social visions and social struggles of this period. Reflected in the vision, values, and practice of Black Studies are the critical concerns expressed in African struggles for freedom, justice, equality, power, political and cultural self-determination, educational relevance, meaningful African presence in areas of

critical social space in society and the academy, and an expanded sense of social and human possibility. And it is from the critical concerns and the struggles that gave practice and social expression to them that Black Studies developed its self-understanding as both an area of critical intellectual study and an instrument of social change in the interest of African and human good.

THE INITIAL DEVELOPMENT

Black Studies developed in the context of the intellectual and social struggles of the 1960s, but it of necessity draws upon the rich resources of the African past—continental and diasporic, ancient and modern. Classical civilization, especially ancient Egypt, is studied critically for the intellectual and social paradigms, possibilities, and understanding it provides. Also of interest in Black Studies is the similarity in the insights expressed by ancient peoples and by the men, women, thought, and issues of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Black Studies is rooted in and builds on the ancient and ongoing activist intellectual tradition of African culture. This tradition extends back to Egypt and its model of social consciousness and activist intellectuals (*seshu* in the ancient Egyptian language Mdw Ntr) who understood their purpose as moral and social as well as intellectual. Thus, they constantly expressed a commitment to searching after that which was good for the people, and to serving the people through the pursuit of justice, caring for the vulnerable and the environment, respecting persons as bearers of dignity and divinity, speaking the truth, and working for future generations. A similar emphasis is found in the Ifa intellectual tradition of the Yoruba, in which the sage and teacher Orunmila taught that the fundamental criterion for a good world and the key instrument in creating that world is effective knowledge of things—a moral wisdom that enables humans to come together for the purpose of creating, increasing, and sustaining good in the world.

AN ACTIVIST TRADITION

This activist tradition that is so central to Black Studies' self-conception and methodology has been maintained and further developed in more modern times by such black activist intellectuals as W.E.B. Du Bois, Anna Julia Cooper, Ida B. Wells, Mary

McLeod Bethune, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, and many others who have used their knowledge and skills to address the critical issues of their times in both discourse and social practice. Thus commitment to the pursuit and use of knowledge in the service of community, society, and humanity is deeply rooted in African intellectual practice and serves as a foundation for the Black Studies activist scholar and activist intellectual. And it is reaffirmed in the self-defining triple mission of Black Studies—cultural grounding, academic excellence, and social responsibility.

Like the activist-intellectual tradition that preceded it and contributed to its development, Black Studies began as a political demand, rooted in both the general student movement on campuses and the social struggles of the 1960s out of which the student movement evolved. The social struggles of the time served as a context for and contribution to the emerging student movement, which self-consciously linked itself to these larger struggles for social change on and off campus. Interacting to create a climate of struggle on campus that was linked to larger social struggles were four basic movements. These movements—the civil rights movement, the free speech movement, the anti-Vietnam War movement, and the black power movement—contributed to the emergence of Black Studies as a discipline.

The civil rights movement's fight for freedom, justice, and equality was essential to the political and educational mobilization and organization of black students and other students for the struggle on campus and in society. The free speech movement affected Black Studies by focusing on free speech as a student right, which expanded space for a dialogue to emerge from assertions by Black Studies activists of their right to speak their own cultural truth and their right to a relevant education. The anti-Vietnam War movement brought together people of color and progressive whites in a coalition to oppose the war in Vietnam; they demanded that the U.S. government remove armed forces from Vietnam and their representatives from campus, that the university stop its complicity in the war effort, and that Americans take up the struggle against racism at home and abroad. The antiwar movement helped build alliances among people of color, linked the struggle for change in the society to the struggle for change in the university, and further revealed the university's vulnerability to student power and activism.

BLACK POWER AND BLACK STUDIES

It was in the black power period of the student movement, however, that Black Studies emerged and took root. In 1965, the black power movement evolved in the wake of the exhaustion of the civil rights movement and with the emergence of urban revolts as a political signature of the times. The black power movement ushered in a new dialogue about relations of power and the place of blacks in society and the university, racism as a defining feature of society, and the need to struggle to overthrow the established order and create a more just society. In addition, the movement argued for self-determination, cultural grounding, relevant education, and cultural and student activism for blacks. It was out of this political consciousness and activist context that Black Studies developed as both a movement and a discipline.

The first Black Studies initiative was put in motion in 1966 by black students at San Francisco State College (now known as San Francisco State University). The movement began as a project with academic and social dimensions, an experimental offering of courses and links with tutorial programs and other service activities for the surrounding community. The black students realized the importance of departmental status and began to demand a department of Black Studies. Nathan Hare was called in to develop the department and did in fact develop the first Black Studies department, but the board of trustees continued to delay action on the project. Confronted with the administration's resistance, the black students formed the Third World Liberation Front of students of color and in 1968 launched a strike, which they won. From this point of departure, Black Studies ultimately expanded to hundreds of colleges throughout the country.

A MISSION-ORIENTED DISCIPLINE

As Black Studies advocates, scholars, and students with diverse interests and emphases sought to define and develop the discipline, a broad sense of mission evolved. These activists and intellectuals sought to create a project that would link their two areas of concern and struggle—community and campus—in mutually beneficial ways. This is what Nathan Hare meant when he told black activists, "we must take the campus to the community and bring the community to the campus." To achieve this, the founders of the discipline crafted a triple mission whose interlocking

elements served as a foundation and guideline for their work. First, they moved to critically study, bring forth, and teach the best of African culture and social practice and pose it as a model of human excellence and human achievement. Second, they sought to extend the struggle for social freedom and justice in society to include a struggle for academic freedom and justice in the university. And finally, they linked education and the obligation to serve by connecting student learning with student activism directed toward achieving the good in and for the community, the society, and the world. Thus, stated concisely, the triple mission of Black Studies—to provide and inspire black cultural grounding, academic excellence, and social responsibility—took root.

Black Studies scholars began with the understanding that African culture was and must be the foundation and framework for their intellectual and social practice. Moreover, they saw it as a source of valuable paradigms for understanding, approaching, and changing the world. And they also understood that without grounding in African culture, they could not produce an authentic, accurate, or dignity-affirming understanding of African people or their initiative and experience in the world. This was the requirement of a black framework for intellectual thought and social practice that would later be called an Afrocentric or African-centered approach.

In addition, Black Studies evolved with the central understanding that black life and culture are worthy of the most careful and detailed study for their models of human excellence, achievement, and possibility, and that black scholars must produce research and engage in teaching practices that are of the highest quality. This is a commitment to the highest level of teaching and intellectual production as Black Studies scholars and students, with the focus not simply on amassing data but on below-the-surface thinking and the development of an interpretive capacity to understand and translate the African initiative and experience in the world in varied, deep, and dignity-affirming ways.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

In Black Studies, the emphasis on social responsibility is affirmation of the discipline's commitment to using knowledge to improve the human condition and enhance the human prospect. From its inception, Black Studies

understood itself as not only a source of intellectual production and exchange but also an agency of social change. It has therefore linked intellectual emancipation with political emancipation and committed itself to both in a single interrelated project. This is logically linked to Black Studies' commitment to being both critique and corrective, which assigns a social activist emancipatory role to both education and the educated.

The discipline of Black Studies has, of necessity, undergone a series of significant changes since its inception. These changes, as might be anticipated, are the result of the internal developmental dynamics of the discipline itself and its responding to challenges posed by a changing academy, society, and world. Some of the most important developments are (1) professional organizations of the discipline, (2) the methodology of Afrocentricity, (3) black women's studies, (4) multicultural studies, and (5) classical African studies. The National Council for Black Studies, the preeminent professional organization of the discipline, has been instrumental in providing forums, models, advisors, and scholars for development of curriculum, programs of assessment, service learning, links to the community, and international exchange. These initiatives have brought scholars together in mutually beneficial exchanges and helped to expand the discipline and move it toward a flexible standardization in vital areas. The African Heritage Studies Association has played a similar role in the development of the discipline.

INTELLECTUAL ADVANCES IN THE PROFESSION

Another significant development for the discipline is the annual International Cheikh Anta Diop Conference organized by Molefi Kete Asante, founder of Afrocentricity and professor of African American Studies at Temple University. As the preeminent Afrocentric professional forum of the discipline, it has created important space for a community of junior and senior Black Studies scholars dedicated to pursuing the kind and area of inquiry suggested by the scholarly legacy of Africa's premiere Egyptologist and classical African studies scholar, Dr. Cheikh Anta Diop. Bringing together Black Studies scholars from throughout the world, it offers an important paradigm of Afrocentric scholarship and intellectual exchange in diverse and productive forms.

Clearly, one of the most important developments in Black Studies is the emergence of Afrocentricity as a major conceptual framework within the discipline. A methodological initiative put forth by Molefi Asante, founder of the first doctoral program in African Studies, Afrocentricity quickly became a major focus and framework for discourse in the discipline, the academy, and society. It has invigorated academic and public discourse by posing challenges of methodology, pedagogy, and research to the discipline itself and the academy as a whole. Black women's studies has also been indispensable to the discipline's continued development and the maintenance of its self-understanding as a liberatory project that offers moral critique of and corrective for constraints on human freedom and human flourishing. The development of black women's studies as an integral and indispensable part of Black Studies affirms this position, enriches and expands Black Studies discourse and research, and reflects the discipline's capacity to constantly rethink its scope and content and reconstruct itself in ever more valuable and vital ways.

Multicultural studies, with its critique of and demand for an end to a monocultural and Eurocentric education, actually was initiated with and through the struggles for Black Studies. The contention, then and now, was and is that a quality education is, of necessity, a multicultural education and that comparative engagement in analysis and understanding can only enrich our learning and teaching experience. Classical African studies, which includes ancient Egyptian, Nubian, Yoruba, Ashanti, and other cultures of antiquity, has brought an expanded and enriched understanding and exchange to the Black Studies project. It has provided an ancient and instructive point of departure for framing and pursuing critical issues, affirming the centrality of African history to the history of humanity and human civilization and providing useful and expansive paradigms of human excellence and human possibility.

— Maulana Karenga

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BLACK STUDIES, CITY COLLEGE OF NEW YORK

On June 28, 1969, after consideration of the student and community protests and agitation for more relevant education for African and other ethnic communities, the City College administration submitted a proposal to the Board of Higher Education of the City of New York for the establishment of an Urban and Ethnic Studies Program. An ad hoc committee appointed by the acting president had drafted the recommendation for the program in accordance with the recommendation of the faculty senate.

The country was filled with political activism, and other university campuses were exploding with protests and demonstrations, seizures of administration buildings, and teach-ins. City College sought to avoid such disturbances to its normal academic life by insisting that it was keeping up with the changes in the society. Thus the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences on the campus planned to apply the department's standard of excellence to providing instruction, research, and specialization in urban and ethnic studies. These new courses were approved by the administration at the college.

Soon it became clear that the department would not be able to maintain an ethnic studies emphasis, which had included almost every ethnic group of importance in New York, as well as an emphasis on urban studies. Thus in 1972, when Leonard Jeffries came to City College, he found ethnic studies in disarray. Jeffries, who since graduating from Columbia University with a degree in political science had been in the thick of Black Studies developments in New York, and who had been one of the founders of the Black Studies department at San Jose State University in California, had a clear objective. He wanted to make the Black Studies courses in ethnic studies the basis for a separate department, and for that department to become one of the leaders in the nascent field of Black Studies.

The department needed to respond to two aspects of the African world—the African and the diasporic. This was consistent with what was going on intellectually and academically in the nation, as other colleges that had instituted Black Studies departments were taking a pan-African approach.

Therefore, by the fall of 1972, the newly constituted Black Studies department was seen as being designed to articulate in intellectual and constructive terms the crucial life experiences of people of African descent on the continent and in the diaspora. To that end, the department began the process of seeking faculty who could produce the courses necessary to achieve such an objective. In the process of securing the faculty for the program, the department found it was able to attract some of the most visible professors in the nation. The names of the professors—Kiteme, Scobbie, Sanchez, Bain, Wheeler, Amoda, Laraquem, Cartey, Mathias, and Bambara—represented the entire African world, as scholars from the United States, Africa, the Caribbean, and Central America were employed by City College.

The department experienced enormous growth in its student population and in the number of courses it offered, but it was always threatened by changes in administration at the levels of the deans and presidents, as well as by outside political pressures, usually brought on by those who did not want to see the Black Studies program advance. Convinced that New York needed the program to be responsive to the interests of the community, the leadership of the department made a liaison with the African and Caribbean communities in New York in order to widen its own political and community base. This proved to be a wise strategy because the forces on campus that sought to derail the department saw that community support for the department was strong. John Henrik Clarke and Yosef ben-Jochannon became patrons of the department and sought to give advice to its leadership. Thus, the department gained an international reputation. It was the place where African academics from all over the world came to see what was going on in the field of Black Studies. In the 1990s, however, the political climate changed and the new conservative atmosphere in the nation was affecting the campus. There were constant verbal attacks against the department, as well as academic politics meant to keep the department from hiring new permanent faculty, offering new courses, and responding to the various needs of the students, such as by offering programming that

gave students the opportunity to study abroad. The department had to defend its right to exist.

Nevertheless, the department developed a Master of Arts degree program in defiance of what seemed like impossible odds. This program was created because African American Studies had become an established part of higher education and there was an urgent need to make available curriculums and facilities to prepare teachers and scholars to do research in this field. The Master of Arts program was to be jointly administered not just by City College but by all of the colleges of the City University of New York (CUNY). The department came increasingly under fire as it became known that James Smalls, an adjunct professor and employee of the college, was holding community meetings to inform the public about the African origin of civilization, Afrocentricity, and African politics. In addition, a speech given in Albany by Leonard Jeffries was widely criticized by state politicians as being inflammatory. Some elements in the state moved to have Jeffries fired from City College, but because he had been a professor for nearly 30 years and had tenure, there was nothing that could be done legally to remove him from his post. However, CUNY did remove him as chair of the department, although there had never been any complaints with his work. Jeffries went to court to secure his freedom of speech. The court determined that CUNY could not remove a professor for speaking his mind, even if it disagreed with the professor. The case was appealed by CUNY. Jeffries denied the charges lodged against him and became an instant celebrity among African American Studies communities, which saw him as being persecuted.

In the meantime, the Department of Black Studies at City College suffered severely as a result of the political pressures surrounding it and was unable to adequately fend off its enemies. Many faculty members left the program and student interest in it waned. Although some of the professors were redistributed into other departments, the objectives of the program have not been extinguished, and a small core of faculty still seeks to create a truly international, pan-African department at City College.

— Molefi Kete Asante

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classic statements of the problems confronting African scholarship and political transformation. Clarke's work is a pan-African thrust into the belly of anti-Africanism.

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Fanon, Frantz. (1963). *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press. This book explains the conditions that Africans in the Americas, Africa, and the Caribbean must struggle against to overcome all forms of mental oppression, of which the education deficit is but one.

BLACK STUDIES, KENT STATE UNIVERSITY

On April 4, 1968, African Americans throughout the United States rose up in strident and oftentimes violent protest over the assassination of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Three years before King's murder, Malcolm X (who is also known by his Muslim name, el Hajj Malik el Shabazz) was gunned down in Harlem while speaking at the Audubon Ballroom.

The murders of these two warriors in the struggle for civil and human rights, and liberation from America's institutionalized racism, resulted in widespread urban protest and violence in black communities everywhere. Protests also erupted in the nation's high schools and universities, and Kent State University in Ohio was no exception. The on-campus appearance in November of 1967 of the Deacons for Defense and Justice (which originated in 1965 in Jonesboro, Louisiana) had inspired students to organize the Black United Students (BUS) in the spring of 1968. BUS members then began to assert their dissatisfaction with white America and with Kent State University. To make matters worse, recruiters for the Oakland Police Department appeared on campus, further inciting black students to react. These events precipitated BUS's walkout in May of 1968 from a campaign rally held for Democratic presidential candidate Hubert Humphrey.

These incidents, along with the deaths of Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, and Medgar Evers, spurred the students into more dramatic actions. Consequently, they organized a student walkout in November of 1968, "a day of absence" during which 58% or more of the 600 black students on campus walked off

and set up a "university in exile" in the neighboring community of Akron or simply went home to Cleveland. The students remained out until they were convinced they should return by the administration's willingness to address their demands. The students made five demands. First, in May of that year, black students had argued for and were granted an office that would be responsible for dealing with the educational and social factors they felt were obstructing their ability to achieve. The students wanted this office to be administered by an African American with the rank of dean. Second, BUS pressed for the establishment of an office of minority affairs, a learning development program, and a fund to assist black student programming activities. Third, the students demanded they be granted amnesty for violating university regulations by walking out. The students' fourth and fifth demands, which were not met until May of 1969, called for the establishment of an autonomous Black Studies institute that would not be attached to one of the university's constituent colleges, as well as a facility to house a black cultural center.

KENT STATE ENTERS THE CIVIL RIGHTS ERA

The 1964 Civil Rights Act required all public and private higher educational institutions that were receiving federal funds to demonstrate how they were working in good faith toward removing all vestiges of race and color discrimination. Kent State, therefore, needed African American students as much as those students needed Kent State University. Consequently, Kent State granted the students amnesty, stating that the university had insufficient evidence to suspend or deregister them. The university selected from its African American faculty Milton E. Wilson, who worked with BUS during its walkout, as dean of the newly established Human Relations Center. This center was to administer the Office of Minority Affairs and create and staff a learning development program. However, its primary emphasis, as its name suggested, was to effect better relations between the races. With these acts, the university met three of the students' demands.

In May of 1969, Kent State began a national search for a director of the institute. One of the three persons interviewed was Edward W. Crosby, who had earned both his bachelor's and master's degrees at the

university, in 1957 and 1959; he earned his doctorate at the University of Kansas in 1965. From 1965 to 1969, he was the educational director of the Experiment in Higher Education, a federally funded higher education program sponsored by Southern Illinois University (SIU) and based in East St. Louis, Illinois, a community that was 90% black. The program, a Black Studies precursor, offered a standard curriculum with emphasis on African, African American, and World Culture Studies and enrolled 100 students (10 of whom were white).

From a survey of the faculty and from Crosby's interview, the university assumed he might prove to be a problem. At issue were his emphasis on programmatic holism and his apparent tendency to align with black students. The university's president, Robert I. White, therefore tried to dissuade him from taking the position by offering him the same salary he was earning at SIU. Crosby had anticipated this ploy; he didn't like it, but he was smart enough not to react negatively. Instead, he wrote White declaring that he was "not interested in the position for the sake of money; he was rather interested in it for the sake of the work students were asking him to do." With this statement made, he accepted the position, began his time at the university on August 15, 1969, and changed the title of the nascent Afro-American Studies Institute to the Institute for African American Affairs (IAAA). As students enjoy doing, they later shortened the title to "the Institute" or "the 'Tute." Both names rapidly caught on.

THE INSTITUTE FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFAIRS

The word *affairs* in the official title was chosen specifically because the director's experience at the Experiment in Higher Education had taught him that any meaningful educational program for undergraduates had to be holistic in design. Its operational organization and curriculum should not be compartmentalized and broken down into fiefdoms, as is the case on university campuses. The students, moreover, must not be bi- or trifurcated as they are at most universities. The word *affairs* also allowed the institute to handle all of the affairs (i.e., related educational areas) that African American students would be engaged in—academic affairs, student affairs, financial affairs, sociocultural affairs, and so on; as much as possible, students would not be shuffled off to other campus entities for service.

The institute was intended to be a *full-service* academic program, and the university was made aware of this programmatic imperative from the outset. It was for this reason that the provost, Louis Harris, drafted a policy statement, stating in his cover letter to President White that he would "harness" the institute's director. The institute's program, as stipulated in the policy statement, was to be guided by a committee composed of the deans of the university's four constituent colleges and others. A professor from the College of Education was chosen as its chair. This harnessing committee was calculated to obstruct all programmatic attempts to respond affirmatively and reasonably to the desires of black students; it was also to ensure that the institute was shackled financially and operationally. Nevertheless, after two or three meetings, the director allowed the committee to die.

The students' choice of Crosby to direct the institute was made to the consternation of university officials, who knew that Crosby agreed with the students' demands (1) for an institute that would be credit granting and autonomous of all constituent colleges and schools; (2) for a program designed not in accordance with a "studies model" and thus not required to rely primarily on already hired faculty (most of whom were, of course, white); and (3) for a program that would be able to draft its own operational imperatives and design and staff its own curriculum. The last two points were critical, as the provost, the administrative officer to whom the institute would report, had already assigned his assistant to survey all university departments and ascertain how many courses taught could be used as Black Studies courses. The provost wanted to saddle the institute with courses and faculty that would harness (i.e., curtail) its freedom to determine its development. Moreover, Kent State wanted to saddle the institute with a "rush into blackness" that would result in something the students would soon tire of, fail to garner a supportive student constituency, and within 1 to 3 years collapse of its own inertia.

The institute's start up budget was a paltry \$62,000. Its director knew that other start-up Black Studies programs had received much larger budgets, such as the \$500,000 with which the University of Pittsburgh's Black Studies program was begun. Not only were Ohio State and Cornell better funded, they also were granted graduate program status. The institute's budget was without doubt dispensed to induce failure. During the institute's first year, Crosby's salary was over \$20,000—a third of the budget; the

salary of his assistant, Wiley Smith III, was \$14,000; and the secretary's salary was \$7,500. Thus \$19,500 had to suffice for office supplies, telephones, in- and out-of-state travel, if any, and wages for student assistants. Faculty hires were not even contemplated.

The institute's decision not to use already hired faculty, of course, made staffing a quality course sequence difficult, if not impossible. To overcome this difficulty, the institute pledged its funds, its willingness to struggle, and its creative talents; it would not allow its limited budget to deter its ability to build an institution. In August of 1969, the institute was housed in a small office divided into two sections in 111 Kent Hall. Later, in 1970, it was allocated additional office space in Lowry Hall. Coordinating programmatic activities in two places was logistically problematic, but institution-building efforts proceeded according to plan nevertheless. By 1971, the institute occupied an entire wing of Lowry Hall's second floor. In 1972, the director petitioned the university to move the institute to the ground floor of the recently vacated Old Student Union building, and his petition was approved. Ultimately, the institute's successor, the Department of Pan-African Studies, would program the entire three-story building.

The institute had committed itself to offer one or two courses for spring quarter 1970. A student recruitment regime was drafted that involved meeting with groups of black and white students in 30 dormitories. At the same time, the institute's two-member administrative team busied themselves with solving their major problem (1) by eliciting the academic support of the few African American faculty teaching in various departments; (2) by creating a list of potential external lecturers and discussion leaders who could be called on, if needed; and (3) by studying several published brochures and catalogues to discover the academic support services the university offered. The black academic community on campus was informed of the institute's programmatic intentions. Their list of potential lecturers employed at other universities, heads of local community-based public service agencies, and discussion leaders grew very quickly. In addition, the administrative team discovered that the university had a policy that made their Tele-Productions Unit available for developing televised courses without cost to the requesting department. This was the answer to the institute's curriculum-building problems. The director and his assistant immediately visited the Tele-Productions Unit to learn

the particulars for televising courses and came away from that meeting knowing they could proceed with their plans to offer an academic program that would not overtax their budget.

THE COURSE OF STUDY

A three-course sequence was drafted that consisted of fifteen 2-hour lectures per week per quarter. These lectures would be canned and used for course offerings in subsequent quarters. They would also be aired over the university's closed-circuit television system in the dormitories. Discussion leaders would show the lectures during class periods, and students could then view the lectures for study or review purposes in their dorm rooms. To avoid the problem of having visiting lecturers relating to nothing other than the camera, the lectures would be televised live in the television studio. Thus, the individual lecturers would in fact be relating to students just like in a regular class. The series of lectures, titled "Symposium on the Black Experience," was divided into three quarter segments: "Towards a Black Cosmology and Aesthetic: The Way of Life of Peoples of African Descent," "Towards a Black Perspective in the Social Sciences," and "Towards a Black Community Development Science." The segment titles announced the curricular direction the institute would take throughout its development. Moreover, each course segment firmly established the institute's commitment to curricular holism and instructional innovation.

This curricular plan was presented to the provost for his advice and consent and circulated to all those selected to serve as advisors, seminar leaders, and/or lecturers. In the fall of 1969, a conference was convened to which were invited all the potential lecturers and consultants, the administrators of the Tele-Productions Unit, several undergraduate and graduate students, and, of course, the provost. The first course was offered in March of 1970 to 51 students—one of whom was a white female. The institute's first academic offering was aborted on May 4, when anti-Vietnam War protests on campus unfortunately resulted in the Ohio National Guard shooting 13 white students, four of whom were killed. The university was shut down, classes were cancelled, dormitories were closed, and students, faculty, and administrative and clerical staff were barred from the campus. Fortunately, a number of lectures for the first segment were already in the can. When classes resumed for fall

quarter, the institute had a larger budget and was able to pick up where it had left off, make preparations to televise its second series of lectures, and continue to pursue its institution-building mission.

From 1968 on, the university reluctantly allowed the Black Cultural Center to exist. Indeed, its existence soon came under attack. The university and the dean of human relations objected to the Black United Students' use of the cultural center, which they had named Kuumba House. The center had been placed in a small two-story wooden frame house. BUS and the institute developed several programs for the house, one of which was an art exhibit. In spite of their joint efforts, they did not program the center to the dean's satisfaction. One of his complaints was that too many long distance calls were made from the center. Simply disabling the phone would have resolved this issue. A list of equally specious complaints was also lodged. It was clear that the problem was that the facility was not conducive to cultural center programming. Moreover, the university's central administration had not been forthright with BUS and had offered them a facility the university knew would be torn down within a year. Kuumba House sat on land earmarked for the construction of a business administration building. The institute joined BUS, therefore, in their struggle with the administration over securing an alternative site—until 1972, when the institute and BUS both moved to the ground floor of the Old Student Union building.

This move energized the institute, BUS, and the Black Culture Center. All three elements now had a respectable facility within which they could thrive. The three organizations seized the opportunity and became a force the university had to contend with during its years of controversy and the instability caused by the National Guard's murder of four student protesters on the university's campus.

The combination of the three organizations led to changing the cultural center's name to the Center of Pan-African Culture (CP-AC). The move also furthered the institute's ability to concretize its goal: to build a holistic African-oriented educational institution on a state university campus. The institute envisioned and endeavored to create an institution that had a ready-made student constituency; offered academic studies in African and African American history, literature, education, politics, and sociology; incorporated social and cultural programs; and augmented its curricular efforts using theatre productions, conferences, lectures, artistic performances, art exhibits,

workshops, and so on. This combination of academic and sociocultural attributes placed the institute and BUS in the forefront of black educational programming in Ohio.

This union of BUS and the institute also led to the disruption of the university's plans to scuttle their existence. When the institute, the CP-AC, and BUS entered the Old Student Union building, the university in league with the dean of the human relations center established what they considered a competing center—The Center for Human Understanding. This center lasted less than 2 years. It was given an old army barrack behind the CP-AC. Later this barrack was found to be infested with termites. Dean Wilson was told by the university's architects to evacuate the facility within 24 hours. The Center for Human Understanding then moved into vacant but inadequate space in a converted dormitory. Before its second year was out, it closed its doors for good.

The university's attempts to stymie the development of a viable African American academic institution united with a black student-operated sociocultural enterprise were unsuccessful. The longer the institute and BUS survived, the stronger and more effective their programming efforts became.

In 1973 the institute discontinued using the three sets of symposium tapes as its primary course offerings. The economic reasons predisposing the use of available electronic technology were still at work; however, the original symposium series was converted into three standard courses under the IAAA rubric with different titles. Five qualified full-time but non-tenurable teaching faculty were employed to teach sections of these courses. In 1974 five additional faculty and sections of Kiswahili and Yoruba were added.

In 1975, to reach a larger audience, the institute established a relationship with the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) and two of its affiliated channels—WNEO and WEAO. These channels were based in Kent, Akron, and Youngstown and programmed in Kent. This connection allowed the institute to incorporate into WNEO's and WEAO's programming schedules a recently produced PBS program—The Black Experience, a comprehensive series of 60 half-hour TV programs produced by WTTW in Chicago and written and narrated by Charles P. Branham. The series begins with "African Beginnings" and ends with "Towards a New Community: The Search for Alternatives." The consulting historian for the series was John Hope Franklin. The institute divided The Black Experience series into three quarter-length

courses and assigned two faculty members to draft three manuals composed of reading materials and study guides for the series. They selected Franklin's *From Slavery to Freedom* as one of the primary texts for the three 5-hour credit courses. The institute went a step further, however, and had the complete series aired in Akron and Youngstown and every other surrounding community able to view programs. The institute thus fulfilled two of its programmatic objectives, in that it simultaneously diversified its course offerings and reached out to urban and rural communities within the 50-mile radius that comprised its catchment area. Black Studies programming at Kent State University was on the move. The institute had demonstrated its value to itself, the university, and the community at large.

In 1976, the institute petitioned the College of Arts and Sciences for full departmental status. In response, the university offered the institute departmental status with a ready-made curriculum and teaching faculty, which the institute's director agreed with BUS they should reject. However, after the institute had been in operation for 7 years and established a curriculum and a faculty to teach it, the institute was ready and strong enough in all the requisite particulars to hold its own as a *bona fide* academic department. The institute again petitioned for full departmental status and its petition was approved, with major and minor course sequences, by the relevant committees of the Faculty Senate and the State's Board of Regents. The institute then metamorphosed into a research and program development institute and the Department of Pan-African Studies (DPAS) was born. Its faculty were tenured and a two-volume introductory textbook was written by Edward Crosby—*The African Experience in Community Development: The Continuing Struggle in Africa and The Americas*. After two preliminary editions, Simon and Schuster published the text in 1984, along with a companion text by Crosby, *Your History: A Chronology of Notable Events in the History of Africans in Africa and the Diaspora, 1600 BCE to 1980*.

The institute had thus evolved from a one-room program with three hired staff into the Department of Pan-African Studies with a faculty and staff of 42 persons. The department had administrative control of an entire building, the Old Student Union, which was officially renamed Oscar W. Ritchie Hall, dedicated in memory of the first African American to teach in a majority white state university in Ohio. During 25 constructive years, from August of 1969 to January of

1994, DPAS's curriculum expanded from a series of 45 televised lectures by several discussion leaders into full-fledged major and minor sequences taught by tenured faculty supported by graduated assistants and a cadre of dedicated undergraduates. The DPAS not only offered a creditable range of courses, it also formed the Black Faculty and Staff Association on campus, worked to form the Black Studies Consortium of Northeastern Ohio, and participated in the formation of the National Council for Black Studies. Other than the aforementioned textbooks and manuals, the institute and later the Department of Pan-African Studies published during this period KITABU, a monthly newsletter that was distributed nationally; the quarterly *African American Affairs Monograph Series*; and the short-lived *electronic Journal of African Studies* (eJAS). Successive DPAS administrations chose not to maintain these publications.

In its early years, the institute made itself into a full-service academic enterprise. That is, it literally became a holistic educational institution, handling students' academic needs, financial needs (at one point, Kent State's business office commissioned the institute to handle the financial problems of all university students), and social and cultural needs. In 1972, for instance, the institute responded to students who were having unnecessary difficulties with college English as it was taught in the English Department. The institute proposed to the English Department that it allow the institute to offer the same English classes in DPAS under the English Department's rubric and taught by English Department teachers but selected and administered by IAAA/DPAS. This English program was endorsed by a senior English Department faculty, approved by the English Department's chair, and has remained in operation for 33 years.

To cement the universality of its mission, DPAS had its minor programs offered in the College of Education and the College of Fine and Professional Arts. On Honors Day DPAS conferred three awards on African American students with various majors: The Fela Sowande Award of Creativity, The Mary McLeod Bethune Award for Scholarship, and the W.E.B. Du Bois Award for Service. DPAS also established other honors and recognitions, such as the Mu Mu Chapter of Alpha Kappa Mu, a national academic honor society for all students with a GPA of 3.5 or higher. For many years the IAAA/DPAS, by establishing meaningful relationships with students in general, enrolled over 60% of the black student body and a number of white students as well.

In 1970 the institute began staging amateur theatrical productions. These productions continued until 1972, when the institute moved into the Old Student Union building and the theatrical performances became more professional. With the assistance of the director and other staff from Cleveland's famed Karamu House, the productions became the nucleus of a full-blown theatre program. In 1978 a doctoral candidate in speech communications, Fran E. Dorsey, joined the staff of DPAS. His acumen and skills resulted not only in his being named the CP-AC's director but also in the establishment of the African Community Theatre (ACT). Dorsey also had the work ethic and inspirational drive that the cultural complex with growth potential needed. The theatre program was originally in Ritchie Hall; however, because of its growing size, ACT had to acquire space on another side of campus in Franklin Hall, where Dorsey and the chair alone renovated two theatres—Mbárí Mbáyò Theatres I and II. ACT then began to stage performances on campus and in surrounding communities. The Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History invited ACT to perform at its annual conference in Philadelphia. ACT's director also managed to have constructed on the second floor of the CP-AC a fully outfitted theatre, and its repertory company—the Mbárí Mbáyò Players—performed on and off campus and out of state until 1998.

The approach of IAAA/DPAS/CP-AC to academic and sociocultural programming was to keep it live, that is, to make it dynamic and powerful as well as relevant. This approach had already resulted in students' registering for IAAA and DPAS courses in excess of what they would have to take to constitute a major or minor. IAAA/DPAS wondered what was causing students to enroll for these extra credit hours. IAAA/DPAS reasoned that the operant element was their welcoming attitude and willingness to meet students where they were and not where they were imagined to be. The IAAA/DPAS desired to serve students and become not only their mentors but also their surrogate parents, their home away from home. This served to attract black and white students, who were also captured by DPAS's openness.

CHANGES AND PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

When the DPAS chair retired, the university reignited its effort to change the department's student advocacy

role. The university therefore reintroduced its old arguments to have DPAS turn itself into a "traditional" department and divorce itself from black students. Kent State wanted the DPAS, as an academic department, to cease advocating for redress of issues relating specifically to students of color. The chair of DPAS has resisted this argument for 25 years. Only time will tell how his successors will continue to wage the struggle and maintain the mission and program modalities initiated by the Institute for African American Affairs and advanced by the Department of Pan-African Studies into the 21st century.

— Edward R. Crosby

FURTHER READING

- Asante, Molefi Kete. (2002). *Afrocentricity*. Chicago: African American Image. This is one of the first volumes to deal with the question of culture as a way to reconstruct the consciousness of African Americans.
- Karenga, Maulana. (2002). *Introduction to Black Studies*. Los Angeles: University of Sankore Press. This book remains the classic introduction to the field of Black Studies.

BLACK STUDIES, NAMES CONTROVERSY

Black Studies, as it emerged on university and college campuses across the United States in the late 1960s and early 1970s, was fundamentally the product of the many sacrifices of countless black students. Much of the early philosophical confusion surrounding the field was reflected in the lack of clarity the students found in the naming process itself, thus Black Studies is referred to by a thicket of names.

These black students—with the support of the small cadre of black faculty and staff who joined them (there were very few black faculty and staff at most predominantly white universities and colleges at that time), as well as with sympathetic white students, faculty, and staff—sought to establish institutional structures that would enable them to study systematically, and from a black perspective, the lives and works of black people in the United States, Africa, and the Caribbean. They did not seek to simply infuse existing courses in, say, history, political science, sociology, psychology, anthropology, economics, philosophy, and English with some black-related materials or to graft onto the curricula of these disciplines courses with "Black,"

“Afro-American,” “African American,” or “African” in their titles. They sought to break away from the white-dominated content of virtually all of the classes to which they were exposed and reorient their education in a direction that gave them a sounder social and psychological mooring in regard to the lives and works of black people. At the very outset, then, Black Studies was seen as a corrective to the extant curricula of just about every college and university in the American academy.

Black students, who made untold selfless sacrifices to lay the institutional foundations of Black Studies, held very strong views and opinions about what they wanted, though they generally lacked the knowledge and experience necessary to achieve what they envisioned. Furthermore, they usually did not receive support from their black professors, as of the few blacks who filled faculty and staff roles at predominantly white colleges and universities, many did not subscribe to the creation of Black Studies departments, divisions, programs, and so on. Given the small cadre of black faculty and staff who shared the sentiments of the students concerning the institutionalization of Black Studies, it was the desires, demands, and pressure of black students that were foremost in impelling largely white administrators and faculty to establish Black Studies on their campuses.

THE SOURCE OF THE NAME ISSUE

At a time when black students routinely called one another brother and sister, the Afro hairstyle was very popular, the saying “black is beautiful” was a commonplace, and the concept of black power was highly evocative for blacks as well as whites, there were those who saw Black Studies as fundamentally a study of U.S. history and society designed to empower black people individually and black communities generally. Black Studies was thus study and action in regard to black people in the United States. It was at once a movement, an ideology, an academic initiative, and a form of community action. Black Studies sought to end the neglect and correct distortions in the study of black Americans.

But very early on, there were university students, faculty, and staff, who constructed the terms *black* and *Afro* to transcend the boundaries of the United States. For them, both terms were linked inextricably with the continent of Africa and could not be separated from it. They perceived intuitively, and also experientially,

black, *Afro*, and *African* to be a triad of terms that formed one unified whole, where each was substitutable for the other. From this perspective, Black Studies and Afro-American Studies entailed African Studies, and vice versa. And so, in the early years, there were departments, divisions, programs, and certificates in Black Studies that emphasized past and present links between black people in Africa and in the United States. The initial emphasis on the United States was soon to expand to cover all of the Americas. (Incidentally, the term *Africana Studies* was coined to distinguish the version of Black Studies articulated in this paragraph from the traditional white-dominated African Studies that had been institutionalized at leading universities in the American academy.)

THE TWO SEPARATE CURRENTS IN BLACK STUDIES

At the very outset of its institutionalized form, then, there were two separate and distinct, though related, intellectual currents in Black Studies—one nationalist and the other universalist in culture and politics. The cultural nationalists saw the scholarship of Black Studies as a means to the national empowerment of black people in the United States. The cultural internationalists perceived in the scholarship of Black Studies possibilities for the empowerment of black people worldwide. Among the cultural internationalists were the pan-Africanists, who discerned in Black Studies paths for the rebirth, growth, development, and grandeur of continental Africa, which, they professed, would be advantageous to black people wherever on the planet they lived and in whatever society they participated. Pan-Africanist themes were not eschewed by the cultural nationalists, but they played a supporting rather than a leading role in the cultural nationalists’ construction of Black Studies.

The intellectual and social ferment from which Black Studies arose was manifested in the broad array of names used to designate the substance of the discipline, which in addition to Black Studies include Afro-American Studies, African American Studies, African and African American Studies, Africana Studies, and Pan-African Studies, among others. The many names associated with Black Studies reflect the rich, and sometimes countervailing, array of values, interests, and purposes that attend it, at times with regrettable consequences. Some view Black Studies as grounded in the activity of pure scholarship, others

see Black Studies as a vehicle for transformative social activism, and still others perceive Black Studies as an institutional home for the scholar-activist.

AFRICOLOGY AS A LEGITIMATE NAME FOR THE FIELD

It is against this backdrop, drawn over almost two generations, that the term *Africology* formally entered the lexicon of the American academy in the 1993–1994 academic year at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. *Africology*—the normative and empirical inquiry into the life histories and life prospects of Africans and their descent transgenerationally, trans-millennially, and universally—subsumes all of the names that attend Black Studies and make them all redundant intellectually and pragmatically. But controversies attending the name Black Studies have not ended with the introduction of the more comprehensive and precise disciplinary name Africology. Questions pertaining to whether Black Studies (or Africology, for that matter) is an academic discipline persist, despite the work of individuals who have claimed all along that it is a discipline. Moreover, there are those who have posited that Black Studies itself is not a discrete discipline but an interdisciplinary discipline, and there are still others who simply see Black Studies as one of many area studies. And so, controversies pertaining to the name Black Studies and its cognates are likely to persist for yet another generation, even though increasingly Black Studies is disappearing from the formal names of departments, programs, and certificates in the American academy—to be supplanted by Africology in due course.

—Winston A. Van Horne

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- Cruse, Harold. (1967). *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual*. New York: William Morrow. Cruse shows how the black intellectual in America has had to struggle for definition by overcoming the imposed names, definitions, and interpretations of a racist society.
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BLACK STUDIES, WELLESLEY COLLEGE

Wellesley College was started in 1875 for rich and bright white women who were excluded at the time from elite white men's colleges. It has traditionally been one of the "Seven Sisters" colleges, a kind of Ivy League for women, comprised of Radcliffe, Barnard, Smith, Mt. Holyoke, Bryn Mawr, Vassar, and Wellesley. Most African American colleges were founded in the same period and for a similar reason, namely, as an alternative for students who were mostly unwelcome at mainstream institutions of higher learning. In the 1970s, some of the Seven Sisters colleges became either completely coeducational or partially coeducational (e.g., in their graduate school only). Wellesley has remained steadfastly committed to its status as an all women's college.

W.E.B. Du Bois in his 1902 *College Bred Negro* reported two black graduates of Wellesley since its inception. This was enough to qualify Wellesley as a liberal institution at a time when most white schools totally rejected black students. Ella Smith Elbert, class of 1888, was Wellesley's second black graduate and became one of African America's pioneer professional historians when she obtained her master's degree in economics and history from Wellesley in 1892. She taught at Howard University, the legendary "capstone of Negro education," for 11 years.

THE REVOLUTION COMES TO WELLESLEY

By the eve of the Black Studies revolution of the late 1960s, about 100 black women had graduated from Wellesley. These included women who went on to distinguish themselves in a variety of professions. Several, like Jane Matilda Bolin, who became African America's first woman judge in 1939, were the first blacks in their fields. Some were daughters of famous black men, such as Clarissa Scott Delaney, daughter of Emmett J. Scott, Washington's secretary at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama and special assistant to the Secretary of War during World War I. Some black women, like Portia Washington, daughter of Booker T. Washington, attended but did not graduate from Wellesley.

Early on, in the absence of Black Studies, black students at Wellesley, as elsewhere, sometimes constructed their own informal black studies in any way they could. Elbert, for example, did her master's thesis

on Reconstruction after the War of the Slaveholders' Rebellion. She later became an important black bibliophile and ultimately donated her extensive collection of rare Afro-Americana to Amherst College, her son's alma mater, and to Wellesley College, where her acquisitions are now housed in a special collection.

FIGHTING FOR CIVIL RIGHTS AND EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

Change came to Wellesley, as it did to the entire nation, in the wake of the civil rights and black power movements. By the mid-1960s, the nonviolent, integrationist civil rights movement had given way to its more militant, nationalist black power counterpart. Black empowerment and racial pride replaced desegregation as the major objectives of black struggle. On campus these objectives were translated into demands for courses relevant to the black experience that were taught by black professors. There was a close connection between campus activism and Black Studies. Members of the militant Black Panther Party for Self-Defense claimed to have introduced the first such program at Merritt College in California. Wellesley was not untouched by these currents. Black power movement leaders Stokely Carmichael (later known as Kwame Ture) and Malcolm X were among those who spoke on Wellesley's campus in the 1960s. White colleges, in response to the worsening racial situation, began admitting black students, either for the first time or in larger numbers than before.

The period from 1965 to 1968 saw the most intense spate of racial violence in the United States since 1919, culminating in the nationwide riots triggered by the assassination in April of 1968 of civil rights icon, Martin Luther King, Jr. This tragedy turned out to be the proximate event leading to the introduction of Black Studies at Wellesley. At the time of King's death, there were 24 black students at Wellesley, the largest number at one time in the college's history. Some days after this tragic event, a few of them (legend has it, in a taxi) founded Ethos, the Black Student Union. In the tradition of the time, they announced a number of nonnegotiable demands. They wanted the introduction of a Black Studies program run by black professors. They wanted an immediate increase in the number of black students admitted to Wellesley. They demanded the immediate hiring of someone in the school's admissions department whose task would be to recruit black students. They demanded other black

support personnel. If their demands were not met forthwith, they warned, they would go on a hunger strike and call in the national media. All 24 students joined Ethos and supported its demands. One initial hold-out was eventually won over to the cause.

Intense negotiations ensued. The faculty was split, and the white student government leaders accused Ethos of racism for categorically rejecting white student input into a negotiation committee. The college president, Ruth Adams, managed to maintain a cool head and eventually acceded to the requests of the black students. She understood that the popularity of a hunger strike, outside pressure, and vigorous agitation for Ethos meant that Wellesley had to respond. She committed Wellesley to immediate efforts to increase its black enrollment. She agreed to the establishment of an Afro-American Studies program. It would initially be an independent major, cobbled together from whatever willing faculty members could extract from their hitherto Eurocentric curricula. A white history professor headed this interim arrangement. The school set up a Martin Luther King, Jr. fund to finance speakers and other extracurricular events. The school's Waddell Fund was utilized to finance student projects requiring travel to Africa and the Caribbean. Between 1968 and the inception of a full-fledged Black Studies department in 1973, Wellesley College saw its first-ever black faculty. One of these was the writer Alice Walker, who served briefly in the English department before departing as a result of the racism she encountered at the college. (About three decades later, she was still sufficiently upset by her experience to refuse a Wellesley invitation to be commencement speaker.)

For the 1972 to 1973 school year, Wellesley initiated an official Black Studies program, with one full-time professor, a historian. His charge was to recruit a full complement of professors for the Black Studies department that would come into being the following year. Wellesley's new Black Studies Department began in 1973 with a full complement of five professors. It was a fully fledged department (as opposed to a program) with the curricular autonomy and financial stability that normally emanate from departmental status. Students could and did major in Black Studies from the very beginning. The major was interdisciplinary and pan-African in scope, with professors encouraged to cover more than one area of the African diaspora. Several years later a minor was added. In the early 1990s the department's name was changed from Black Studies to Africana Studies. This reflected a nationwide

trend at the time. It was also an affirmation of the pan-African scope of the department's offerings.

The first five professors in the Black Studies department came from various disciplines—two from history, one from English, one from drama, and one from sociology. Two of the five were full-time Black Studies professors. One was a joint history and Black Studies hire. One was jointly in English and Black Studies. The sociologist had an unusual joint appointment at Wellesley College and Brandeis University. By this time, thanks to the energetic recruitment that resulted in large black classes of 1972 and 1973, there was a critical mass of black students on campus. Black students supported the new department and have continued to do so from then to now. Blacks as well as students of other races elected the Black Studies classes in fair numbers.

KEEPING FAITH

The new black faculty and administrators moved quickly to consolidate their position on campus. They set up structures that were able to sustain the community through the good years and the rough ones that lay ahead. One of these was the Black Task Force (BTF), comprised of black faculty and staff. The BTF sought and obtained guarantees of black representation on all college committees. They argued that most blacks would never get elected to committees through a normal majority vote. This has proved an invaluable device over the years. Several attempts were made in ensuing years to strike it down, but it has survived. Since much of the governance of Wellesley College takes place in committees, black folk have thus been assured a voice, albeit a minority one. Another enduring institution founded early on was Harambee House, a building that had conveniently become vacant at the time of the 1968 demand by black students that a special place on campus be provided for them. Harambee House has always had a black director, who has usually played a crucial role in coordinating students' concerns and being a liaison with faculty and staff. Harambee House over the years has provided a black haven on campus for the social, educational, and political activity of all sectors of the black community.

The rapid consolidation of the black community was tested in 1975 when black Wellesley faced its first post-1973 crisis, that of the tenuring of the first black faculty. One of the historians had come in as an associate professor and, according to college rules, would be

evaluated for tenure in his second year. His qualifications were strong and his chances for tenure seemed very good. However, the events that followed his becoming eligible for tenure made clear that the prospect of a tenured black colleague unnerved some white professors, who had probably not sufficiently thought through this implication of a Black Studies department. First the history department, where he had a joint appointment, abruptly terminated the joint arrangement. They simply stopped inviting him to department meetings, but never formally informed him of their decision. Then the dean of the college wrote him a note saying that the college had decided in its wisdom that the tenure quota for Black Studies would be capped at one for all time. This meant, she explained, that if the current candidate came up for tenure as mandated by college legislation, he might well be successful and then no other Black Studies professor would ever have a chance to be tenured. In order to level the playing field, she curiously argued, she would advance the next person in line, who would have been eligible for evaluation the following year. Thus, she reasoned, two (black) people would have a chance to slug it out while the rest of the college would presumably enjoy the spectacle.

CONFRONTING DIFFICULTIES AND PERSEVERING

In reply, the associate professor thanked the dean for her thoughtfulness, but he said that he did not wish to be drawn into a fight with another black professor that would result in the inevitable loss of a job for one of them. He suggested that the dean simply give tenure to the candidate who was being prematurely advanced and said that he would leave the college without a fight. When word of the dean's grotesque maneuver reached the black students, they called an emergency meeting at Harambee House. In a single night, almost the whole black student body signed a petition expressing their abhorrence of what the dean had attempted. They pressured the artificially advanced candidate to withdraw from the arrangement, but he refused. The students then suggested that the dean should go ahead and evaluate both professors, but that the stipulation of only one slot should be withdrawn. If both candidates qualified, they said, then tenure them both. If neither qualified, then so be it. But they did not want two professors being forced to fight for a preordained single slot.

To make matters worse, the administration chose this very time to inform the most popular black staff

member on campus, a psychological counselor, that his job was being reduced from full time to half time. Now the students had two reasons to be upset. In response, they held a sit-in at the president's office on one day, and later thoroughly disrupted Wellesley's showcase centenary convocation. As the president of the college rose to speak before the assembled presidents of all the Seven Sisters colleges, other dignitaries, and the press, the president and members of Ethos, together with some white allies, marched into the chapel, grabbed the president's microphone, and took over the meeting. When an organist tried to drown out the Ethos president's speech with loud chords, a student pulled the plug on his instrument. Ethos rained on Wellesley's 100th birthday parade. The upshot was that the school restored the counselor's job to full time and ended up having to tenure two black professors rather than one. For the professor who chose to go along with the dean's scheme and have himself prematurely tenured, this proved a big mistake. Students thereafter refused to take his courses. With no one to teach, he was made associate dean, a post invented especially to give him something to do. He left the college shortly thereafter.

The new department greatly enriched college life at Wellesley. Its first drama professor, Danny Scarborough, was able to fill the largest auditorium on campus for 3 nights at a time with his annual Broadway-type shows, featuring his student-comprised Wellesley College Black Total Theatrical Experience Repertory Theatre company. The Ethos Fashion Show, begun in 1983 as a major fundraiser, has remained the most largely attended student production on campus.

In the early 1970s, Wellesley's Black Studies department faculty were founding members of a Boston-area Black Studies consortium that brought together faculty from Harvard, Brandeis, and Brown Universities, Salem State College, Boston State College, and other nearby schools. The consortium later joined the National Council for Black Studies (NCBS) and hosted both regional NCBS meetings and a joint national meeting of the NCBS and the African Heritage Studies Association. Out of this activity came the *New England Journal of Black Studies*. Members of the consortium presented guest lectures at one another's campuses and taught occasional courses for other departments and programs as the need arose. Sometimes they collaborated with a Boston community organization, the African Heritage Institute, to bring such speakers as Kwame Ture and Robert Williams to Boston.

The members of the department proved to be serious scholars. Their publication record was as good as that of the faculty of any other department at Wellesley. In fact, it was better than that of many, perhaps most, faculty at the school, which despite its prestige did not in the 1970s have a particularly outstanding publication record. The department also turned out some outstanding majors. One finished her first 3 years of coursework at Wellesley in 2 years, was Phi Beta Kappa, and was accepted into Harvard Medical School at the end of her junior year. She never had a chance to finish her Black Studies major. Another had her 1978 bachelor's honors thesis accepted for publication by the publisher G.K. Hall (which is now a division of Macmillan). Both of these are probably records that have not been equaled or surpassed by students in any other department at Wellesley. While these achievements were acknowledged by the wider community, they were not sufficient to relieve the sense of siege and presumed inferiority under which Black Studies operated for much of the time.

A significant part of the problem seemed to be caused by the attempt by successive administrations to destabilize the department. As in the case of the 1975 artificially advanced tenure candidate, the administrations had an uncanny knack for identifying those black faculty and staff who could be enlisted in this work of self-destruction. In addition, as in all Black Studies departments, in the department at Wellesley student issues were never totally divorced from wider community issues. The campus was not insulated from the events affecting black people in the outside world, thus, for example, for many years the issue of divestment from corporations collaborating with apartheid South Africa was a source of recurring unease. When in 1995 the Rodney King beating verdict provoked riots in California, Wellesley's black students were just as enraged and frustrated as the rest of African America. A large body of students left a campus rally and marched on the president's house in the middle of the night to vent their rage.

In the early 1990s, strained Black-Jewish relations began to loom as a major recurring problem. African American Egyptologist and professor Yosef ben-Jochannon spoke at Wellesley and was heckled by Greek and Latin professor Mary Lefkowitz, provoking an angry response from the students and community members present. Al Sharpton's visit to campus was preceded by charges of anti-Semitism from

Jewish students. One of them made the outlandish suggestion that Sharpton was an advocate of genocide. When the film *Cleopatra* starring Elizabeth Taylor was screened on campus by the Greek and Latin club, a black student wrote an op-ed piece in the newspaper on the historical inaccuracy of the film. She was consequently summoned to Lefkowitz's office and harangued for a considerable period. This student left the college shortly thereafter. By the 1990s, Lefkowitz had begun to carve out a career of sorts in Black Studies bashing. Major publications such as the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and the *Wall Street Journal* seemed to have an insatiable appetite for her fulminations on what she considered the "irrational" development represented by Black Studies in academia. All of this reached its culmination in what some blacks called the "Jewish onslaught," which began in 1993.

The trouble began when Professor Tony Martin included portions of *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews*, authored by the Historical Research Department of the Nation of Islam, on his African American history survey syllabus. The book was based overwhelmingly on material culled from Jewish sources and illuminated the Jewish role in the slave trade, a subject that was insufficiently known. Wellesley's Jews considered the exploration of this aspect of African history to be a "hateful" exercise. The Wellesley chapter of the national Jewish student organization, Hillel, initiated a protest. They were quickly joined by national Jewish organizations and the college administration, most of whom were Jews.

A joint call for the revocation of Martin's tenure was made by four major Jewish organizations, namely the Anti-Defamation League, American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress, and the Jewish Community Relations Council. The powers that be were able to enlist the support of some black folk. The chair of Africana Studies, Selwyn Cudjoe, practically placed himself at the head of the protest and initiated the attacks on Martin in academic council. From relative obscurity, Cudjoe was suddenly lifted into national prominence, and his op-eds condemning *The Secret Relationship* appeared in many major newspapers. He was ably assisted by Marcellus Andrews, a black economics professor, who was allowed to opine in the campus newspaper that Wellesley's black students were "intellectually weak and morally lazy." This was his response to black students' standing fast against the protest against Martin and solidly supporting him.

Martin countered with a book of his own, *The Jewish Onslaught: Despatches From the Wellesley Battlefield*, in which he placed the Wellesley hysteria into the context of the history of relations between blacks and Jews.

About half a year into the controversy, Wellesley hired a new president. Her first major pronouncement was a statement denouncing Martin and *The Jewish Onslaught*. An astounding 40,000 to 60,000 copies of this statement were reportedly sent out to all students, parents, alumnae, faculty, staff, the media, and presumably whoever else the school could think of. When merit pay for full professors came around, Martin was awarded zero, despite his 13 publications in the 3-year review period and strong teaching and service performance. Professors who had published nothing in as many as 20 years received merit pay. The history department, where Martin's courses had been cross listed for 20 years, suddenly decided that the courses were no longer worthy of history credit. Cudjoe and Andrews, blacks who sided with the Jews, received temporary endowed chairs, the first and still the only black professors in Wellesley's history to be awarded chairs of any kind. When the revolving department chairpersonship rotated back around to Martin, the administration stepped in and imposed a chair from another institution. This person continued to teach at Brandeis University while commuting periodically to Wellesley to chair its Africana Studies department.

Rumors were also circulated of an intention to close down Africana Studies altogether. This appeared imminent when the administration announced the establishment of a visiting committee to review the Africana Studies department. The three-member panel was composed of respected but moderate professors from institutions of comparable prestige. Their report, which some in the black community feared might be a pretext for closing down the department, was actually constructive and mildly censured the school for some of its indiscretions. The administration proclaimed itself not bound either by the criticisms leveled against it or by the suggestions for ending their subversion of the department's operations.

Jews and blacks again came into conflict in 2002 when black students invited New Jersey poet laureate Amiri Baraka to speak. He had spoken on campus twice before without incident, but this time his visit coincided with a strident attack on him from Jewish

spokespeople and organizations. He had expressed in poetry the view that there might have been possible Israeli foreknowledge of the Twin Towers disaster of September 11, 2001. Jewish organizations protested this insinuation and the college president issued statements decrying Baraka's anti-Semitism.

Africana Studies at Wellesley continues as always to provide a quality education while existing within a constant aura of siege. The effort to protect the department from encroachment by others trying to offer parallel courses and from attrition by deans wanting to reduce its size is a constant reality. Throughout its history, the department has nevertheless enjoyed steady support from black students and fair to strong support from all others. Successive administrations seem not to have come to terms with the reality of black scholars with a perspective of their own. Rather than try to find a principled solution to tensions, the tendency has often been to subvert the department by encouraging disruptive elements within it to keep it off balance. In many ways, the story of Black Studies may simply be the story of being black in America—writ small.

— Tony Martin

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BLACK THEOLOGY

Black theology is an approach to understanding the supreme deity that is rooted in African culture. It emerged in the 1960s as a viable alternative to white Christian theology. Black theology was principally articulated by African American preachers and theologians led by James Cone, a professor at the Union Theological Seminary. Cone reached into the past of black America's rich theological and spiritual heritage to highlight the role of religion in the life of black folk, and he laid the groundwork for those who have followed his steps to systematically record the history of theology in black America.

With the assistance of Gayraud Wilmore and others, Cone reached back to Africa to study how Africans had understood the concept of God. Wilmore's theological writing, particularly in his book *Black Religion and Black Radicalism* (1983), connected the present plight of black suffering with the African past. Wilmore and Charles Long encouraged Cone and other black radical theologians to read the writings of Africans. Cone read these writings and came to see Africa as the critical source for the development of a black theology based on black religion.

The radical theologians became even more determined to look to Africa as the source of African American theology when South African theologians started contrasting their theology with black theology. What Cone and other radical clergy and theologians were doing was systematically developing a theology of empowerment based on the African experience. According to Wilmore, this was the first time since Garveyism that black Christianity distinguished itself as something unique and different from white Christianity. Black theology further displayed its flexibility by searching its religious past in Africa, which was not rooted in Christianity. Moreover, because it looked to Africa as the place to pattern black theology in America, it freed itself from the orthodox dogmatism of Scripture alone. Thus Black theology continues as a designator, which distinguishes it from Euro-American theology.

According to black theology, it is necessary to go beyond the church experience to discover the source of theology. Thus, it can be found in black folklore, spirituals, and the blues. It is the function of the clergy and theologians to glean insight from these rich sources, findings that eventually will aid in the liberation of all oppressed people.

In the 1960s, a distinct consciousness of black theology began to emerge when nontraditional black clergy began to assess Christianity in relation to the struggle unique to black America. When black clergy began to evaluate Christianity in light of their struggle, they found Anglo racism at its core. Hence, many started to associate racism with the Antichrist. Cone critically analyzed the plight of African people in his first book, *Black Theology and Black Power* (1969). This was the work that laid the groundwork for black theology. In the book, he connected theology with the philosophy of black power, a decision clergy and theologians challenged. After all, this was the white man's religion, so what could it say to blacks? However, Cone took no time to address his critics, as he believed he was on a divine mission and therefore refused to be distracted from it.

During Cone's early theorizing, he was primarily centered on white racism. Later he balanced this one-dimensional perspective by focusing on other factors that contributed to suffering and inhumanity, including sexism and economic exploitation. Yet his boldest stance was an attempt to show that a positive relationship existed between black power and the Gospel. His decision to link Jesus with black empowerment was not some frenzied notion based on emotionalism or anger. His rationale was rooted in the biblical perspective and based on the ministry of Jesus. For Cone, "if Christ is present among the oppressed, he could only be working through the activity of black power." The rise of black power in America brought to the forefront what was taking place in the hearts and minds of many African Americans. Because Martin Luther King was such a beloved prophet in the black community, few organizations could successfully challenge his nonviolent philosophy. However, the gravitation toward black power by many who were disenchanted with society signified a rejection of King's vision of black and white fellowship. Because of this important philosophical change in the black community, Cone made no apology for linking black empowerment with the Gospel of Christ. In fact, the Gospel from Cone's perspective is not authentic unless it empowers the weak and outcast members in an oppressive society. A theology that does not reach out to the poor and oppressed but remains confined in abstraction is an inadequate theology. Cone quoted Malcolm X as having said, "I believe in a religion that believes in freedom. Anytime I have to accept a religion that won't let me fight a battle for my people, I say to hell with that religion."

Cone's scholarly focus and ministry have been devoted to fighting battles for black people. Developing a theology of black empowerment, for Cone, did not take place in a vacuum. What directed him to evaluate the relationship between Christianity and black empowerment was his experiences and those of millions of black people suffering throughout America. Cone takes pride in the knowledge that black theology, unlike Euro-American Christianity, does not have its mooring in academia. Black theology has its roots in the community of suffering, and it is rooted in the community of outcast and not among Constantine's conquerors. The ministry of Jesus started not with the elite members of society but among the illiterate and downtrodden.

So if the Black Church endeavors to recapture the ancient spirit of Christianity and embrace its pre-Civil War zeal, black theology must adopt its 1960s posture or become a haven of rhetoric much like the theology Cone condemns. If the fervor and zeal that heralded the Black Church's pre-Civil War and 1960s stances is not reignited, then Cone will find himself fighting against his own creation.

— Douglas E. Thomas

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BLAXPLOITATION FILMS

The term *blaxploitation films* refers to a series of films released between 1969 and 1974 that featured a primarily black cast and whose narratives focused on the contemporary black urban experience. Grounded in the action-adventure genre, these films were usually

low-budget Hollywood productions geared toward the black youth market.

The blaxploitation period was preceded by several shifts in America's sociopolitical landscape. In the context of World War II, the United States felt vulnerable to charges that the country's racist practices were similar to the extreme nationalism exhibited by Germany and Japan. This started a thrust toward inclusion that resulted, among other things, in an agreement in 1942 between the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) and heads of the major studios to increase the participation of blacks in the film industry. Hollywood responded to the charges with an attempt to improve the representation of blacks on screen. The 1950s became known as the era of integration in American cinema and led to the rise of actors such as Sidney Poitier, Dorothy Dandridge, and Harry Belafonte. Poitier in particular came to symbolize the integrationist hero by starring in vehicles that cast him as a conservative, intelligent, sexually neutral, culturally ambiguous figure who posed no threat to the white establishment. He was the model of black respectability for white audiences as well as for a certain segment of the black community. Blacks who desired assimilation into the dominant culture generally embraced Poitier, but others rejected him because of his characters' unwillingness to articulate their oppression and rage.

THE BLACK PERSONA OF THE 1960s

By the late 1960s, Hollywood had begun to respond to the desire of black audiences for a more assertive black film star, and Jim Brown, a former all-star football player with an appealing personality and arresting physical presence, proved to be exactly what Hollywood was looking for. Though black audiences initially welcomed Brown's aggressive film persona, they grew increasingly weary of the way in which his characters' emerging militancy was continually undermined by their support of the white power structure. Eventually, it became clear that Hollywood's typecasting of Brown in roles that required physical strength rather than emotional depth merely signaled a return to the caricature of the black buck popularized in early American cinema.

Hollywood's increasing interest in black-oriented films in the 1970s was the result of a financial crisis that left the industry on the verge of economic

collapse. The advent of television and the expansion of the foreign film market after World War II steadily cut into the studios' profit margin. At the same time, middle-class whites were vacating urban areas for the developing suburbs, leaving cities to their black citizens. Though blacks made up only 11% of the population in 1970, they accounted for 30% of movie audiences in the urban areas where theaters were traditionally located. Studio executives had begun to notice this shift in racial demographics several years earlier, and they came to believe that the key to their financial solvency was the production and distribution of a film product specifically geared to the black community.

THE NEW BLACK DIRECTORS

Melvin Van Peebles, a black director with several film credits to his name, is generally credited with popularizing the genre that eventually became known as blaxploitation. He directed *Story of a Three-Day Pass* (1967), a foreign film based on his novel, and *Watermelon Man* (1970), a low-budget Hollywood feature. Then 39-year-old Van Peebles decided to channel his resources into independently writing, producing, and directing *Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song* (1971), the story of a black man who triumphs over a corrupt white establishment. The protagonist of the film works as a sexual performer in a South Central Los Angeles bordello where he was abandoned as a boy. He received the name Sweetback at the age of 9 from a female prostitute who forced him to engage in sexual intercourse with her. At the beginning of the film, Sweetback appears to be a passive character, emotionally alienated from the people and events around him. As the narrative unfolds, two police officers request that the bordello owner allow Sweetback to act as a temporary suspect in a local murder case in an effort to calm public fears. While he is in custody, Sweetback becomes a witness to the brutal beating of a young black revolutionary by the two cops. He becomes enraged by the beating and physically attacks the officers. Sweetback then becomes caught in a series of misadventures as he attempts to elude police.

Van Peebles employed a number of technical devices (such as multiple exposures, jump cuts, and long montages) to differentiate his film from the standard Hollywood product, and the innovative musical arrangements of the 1970s soul group Earth, Wind, and Fire as well as the director's own poetry were

used to enhance the narrative. Van Peebles produced his film for \$500,000, yet it had grossed \$10 million by the end of its run.

Sweetback was particularly popular with young, black males; however, it did not fare as well with other members of the community. Blacks who were fans of the integrationist hero did not care for this new style of protagonist. Though Huey P. Newton, one of the founders and leaders of the Black Panther Party, called *Sweetback* “the first truly revolutionary Black film made,” Lerone Bennett of *Ebony* magazine stated that “Sweetback is neither revolutionary nor black.” Black intellectuals and critics generally agreed with Bennett’s criticism of the film. Though Van Peebles stated that his aim was to reappropriate the image of the bad, black buck, many felt that his emphasis on Sweetback’s sexual prowess undermined any attempt to provide audiences with a conscious, liberated character. Especially problematic was Van Peebles’s treatment of the women in his film, who functioned mainly as objects for Sweetback’s sexual gratification. However, the representation of an overtly sexual, defiant hero who challenges the white power structure and wins was a refreshing change for many black moviegoers.

The success of *Sweet, Sweetback’s Baadasssss Song* launched a host of imitators, the most notable being *Shaft* (1971), directed by Gordon Parks, Sr., the first black to work as a photographer for *Life* magazine, and *Superfly* (1972) directed by Gordon Parks, Jr. *Shaft* was originally conceived as a standard detective tale with a white protagonist, but studio executives refashioned the script to capitalize on tensions in the black community. The central character, John Shaft, is a smooth-talking, butt-kicking, leather-coat-wearing New York City detective who espouses black nationalist ideology through his rhetoric and demeanor. However, unlike Sweetback, who harbors no alliances with the white establishment, Shaft is able to successfully negotiate that world without jeopardizing his position of authority within the Harlem neighborhood he polices.

Critics had less trouble with Shaft than with Priest, the Harlem cocaine dealer who is the hero of *Superfly*. Though the plot of *Superfly* centers around the hustler’s attempts to abandon the drug trade, the products of his corrupt lifestyle—the expensive wardrobe, apartment, and car and the beautiful, alluring women—are glamorized throughout the film. Especially problematic is Priest’s apparent lack of

remorse for the negative impact his illegal activities have had on his community. He simply wants out of the drug business and is looking for the most advantageous way to achieve his goal.

THE BLACK FEMALE STARS

Several vehicles starring female protagonists were also released during this period. Actresses Pam Grier and Tamara Dobson launched their careers in the films *Coffy* (1973, Hill) and *Cleopatra Jones* (1973, Starrett), respectively. And like their male counterparts, these characters also elicited a storm of controversy. Though many black moviegoers considered the sexually assertive heroines to be mere reformulations of the black jezebel, others applauded these aggressive, gun-wielding defenders of the black community.

THE NATURE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE GENRE

The blaxploitation genre is generally credited with articulating to a certain degree the social and political upheaval experienced by America, and particularly its black community, in the 1960s and early 1970s. The Vietnam War, political scandals such as Watergate, government social policies that led to the increased ghettoization of the black underclass, the rapid rise of drug use within the culture and its insidious infiltration into the black community, as well as the backlash on civil rights gains, resulted in increased feelings of cynicism among many. In films like *Sweetback*, *Shaft*, and *Superfly*, the stark, realistic cinematography depicted the decay of urban black communities, and the soulful lyrics of respected musical artists such as Isaac Hayes and Curtis Mayfield reflected the community’s feelings of disenfranchisement. However, as blaxploitation films continued to draw a sizable audience, Hollywood became even more conservative in its presentation of progressive black characters. By appropriating the discourse of black nationalism in its characterization of individualistic, material-driven, pseudomilitants, Hollywood ultimately sought to undermine black social and political agency and the idea of black collective empowerment.

By the mid-1970s, Hollywood had emerged from its fiscal crisis. Amid increased public condemnation of the one-dimensional characters, rehashed plots, and poor technical quality of most of the blaxploitation films, studio executives no longer felt it necessary to

invest in black-oriented material and the blaxploitation era soon came to an end.

— Stephanie Yarbough

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BLUES

The *blues* are an African American musical genre created as the personal expression of the collective emotive response to the cultural and social experience of Africans living in America. The blues are not only musical compositions and styles of performing but also a conscious state of being. The music encompasses a wide range of styles from meditative solo performances to barrelhouse piano to sizzling dance music. Characteristic features of the blues include “blue notes”—altered pitches in a diatonic scale; special vocal effects—hums, grunts, growls, and falsetto; AAB form—a three-line stanza with statement, restatement, and concluding commentary; and a standardized chord progression in the instrumental accompaniment.

Based in oral tradition, the blues are directly linked to African musical precedents in structure and tonality, style of delivery, choice of accompanying instrument, and the role of the musician. Distinctive elements in the music performed by the *djelis*, praise singers, of Senegambia are so prevalent in the blues that the blues can be seen as a transformation of this African musical heritage to accommodate the experiences of Africans in America. The use of the pentatonic scale, call-and-response patterns, and special vocal effects are common in both the music performed by the *djelis* and the blues. The *koni* and *xalam* played by the *djelis* are the prototypes of the banjo that was used as an accompanying instrument in the early

forms of the blues. The blues musician maintains the role of cultural historian and social commentator that is so vital to the *djeli* tradition.

Other early African American musical forms rooted in African tradition also contributed to the development of the blues as a genre. The early blues singers incorporated the vocal potentiality and musical resourcefulness of the cries, calls, and hollers of field workers and street vendors. Blues musicians continued the rhythmic elements and call-and-response patterns of the work songs. In addition, many blues compositions are indistinguishable from spirituals.

The blues are central to the creative and ingenious communicative dynamics in African American culture. The blues engage in a search for truth in the African American experience, thus blues songs communicate the performers’ responses to the realities of life. The song texts cover a wide range of subject areas and convey an underlying theme of hope and optimism regarding the survival and progress of African Americans despite their social conditions. This message of the blues is proliferated through proverbial wisdom, philosophy, humor, satire, imagery, self-affirmation, political commentary, and protest. Some common topics found in blues texts include emotional concerns like love, loneliness, frustration, and grief, as well as social concerns like oppression, injustice, poverty, and homelessness.

Itinerant musicians who sang at social functions, railroad stations, street corners, and restaurants performed the earlier forms of the blues. They accompanied themselves on the banjo or fiddle, and their blues songs were improvisatory in nature. The banjo was eventually replaced by the guitar, which became the preferred accompanying musical instrument of the blues singer. The blues singer could adapt the guitar to produce sounds expressing a “blues” feeling by sliding a knife or bottleneck against the strings.

The blues as a distinct musical form was stabilized in the 1920s by the recording and publishing industries. W. C. Handy is credited as one of the first musicians to notate his blues compositions, and he established a music publishing company in 1907 in partnership with singer Harry Pace. Handy’s composition *St. Louis Blues*, published in 1914, gained worldwide recognition and resulted in the dissemination of the blues sound to a wide-ranging audience. Beginning in the 1920s, talent scouts from recording companies searched the United States for blues performers to record, concentrating first on female singers and by the mid-1920s on male

singers. The blues are most often described in four general categories—the country blues, the classic blues, piano blues, and the urban blues.

The country blues, or down-home blues, are associated primarily with regional styles, including the delta blues from the Mississippi Delta, the Carolina Piedmont blues from the Southeast, and the Texas blues. The performers were primarily solo male singers who were accompanied by guitar, banjo, or harmonica. Performers of country blues—like Blind Lemon Jefferson, Huddie Ledbetter, Charlie Patton, Brownie McGhee, Sonny Terry, and Son House—became known for their personal style and creativity.

The blues performed by female singers accompanied by piano or small instrumental ensembles, and with a more standardized musical formula, are categorized as city blues or classic blues. Classic blues singers were mostly from the Southern states and were well versed in the songs sung by the country blues singers. Bessie Smith, Ma Rainey, Ida Cox, and Alberta Hunter are among those referred to as classic blues singers.

Piano blues developed from the banjo and guitar accompaniments of the country blues, with the specific styles created known as barrelhouse, honky-tonk, and boogie-woogie. Leading blues pianists included Albert Ammons, Meade Lux Lewis, Jimmy Young, Clarence “Pine Top” Smith, and Jelly Roll Morton.

The urban blues, or electric blues, are typified by the big band accompaniment of electric guitars, amplified harmonicas, saxophones, drums, and piano. Features of earlier blues are maintained in these blues, although the music is notated and arranged. This style is expressed in the music of B. B. King, Muddy Waters, Howlin’ Wolf, Bobby Blue Bland, and T-Bone Walker.

The blues have served as the basis for the early development of jazz and greatly influenced American popular music forms such as rhythm and blues, soul music, and rock-n-roll. The study of the blues is important because the blues are a synthesis of ideologies and sensibilities that provide critical insight into the African American psyche.

— *Mawusi Renee Simmons*

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BROADSIDE PRESS

The Broadside Press was founded in Detroit, Michigan, in 1965 and lasted until 1977, effectively encompassing the early phase of the Black Studies movement. The objective of the press was to publish the writings, particularly the poetry, of new black writers. Founded with only \$12 by celebrated African-American poet, librarian, and publisher Dudley Felker Randall (1914–2000), the Broadside Press was a medium for the publication of poems and other writings of black writers, thus giving voice to an entire generation of African American authors. It published books at affordable prices, as well as the individual poems printed on a single sheet of paper that are known as broadsides. One such broadside is “Ballad of Birmingham” (1969), a poem Randall wrote on the 1963 bombing of a church in Birmingham, Alabama. He published it on a broadside sheet and called it a Broadside Press publication to protect his copyright. Indeed, during the 12 year span of its existence, the Broadside Press published 90 titles of poetry and had 500,000 books in print, making it one of the most prolific black commercial book publishing companies in the United States.

Unfortunately, late in 1975 the firm experienced some financial problems, as a result of which it stopped publishing books. In 1977 Randall sold the press to an Episcopal Church, the Alexander Crummell Memorial Center, to pay his debts. Even though Randall had to sell the press, he still managed to hold onto much of his vision, and he remained with the company as an editorial consultant.

Although Broadside Press published books in various categories—literary criticism, plays, autobiographies, collective biographies, picture books, and story books—the primary objective of the company was to publish black poetry, as Randall had contended from the beginning. Randall did not lock himself into any rigid ideology as manager of the Broadside Press, but he did have certain proclivities. He wanted to publish poetry, and he did. Among the many books of poetry published by Broadside Press were *Poem Counterpoem* (1966) by Dudley Randall and Margaret Danner; *Cities Burning* (1968) by Dudley Randall;

Think Black (1967), *Black Pride* (1968), and *Don't Cry, Scream* (1970) by Haki R. Madhubuti; *Black Judgement* (1968), *Black Feeling, Black Talk* (1970), and *Re-Creation* (1970) by Nikki Giovanni; *We A BaddDDD People* (1970) by Sonia Sanchez; and *The Last Ride of Wild Bill* (1974) by Sterling Brown.

Other black authors whose works—adult nonfiction, juvenile nonfiction, and juvenile fiction—were published by Broadside Press include, inter alia, James Andrew Randall, Jr., John Clayton Randall, Gwendolyn Elizabeth Brooks, Claude McKay, Countee Cullen, Addison Gayle, Margaret Walker, Imamu Amiri Baraka, Langston Hughes, Frenchy Jolene Hodges, Mae Jackson, Etheridge Knight, Gwendolyn Thompson, Habte Wolde, Audre Lorde, George Barlow, Henry Blakely, Juddy Simmons, Regina O' Neal, Lyn Levy, Leanead Pack Bailey, Arna Wendell Bontemps, and Nicolas Guillen. The press best represented the period of the black arts movement by publishing the revolutionary artists whose work often would not be published by the major American publishers. Broadside Press inspired young authors to write, contributing perhaps more than any Black-owned and Black-operated publishing firm of its time to the literary development of African American talents.

— Thomas Houessou-Adin

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BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION OF TOPEKA

Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka was an extremely important court ruling aimed at the dismantling of legal segregation and discrimination in the

United States. Indeed, in this 1954 ruling, a unanimous Supreme Court, under chief Justice Earl Warren, struck down the “separate but equal” doctrine that had legalized segregation. The ruling provided hope that discrimination against blacks was finally coming to an end.

This discrimination has a long history. After the Civil War, Reconstruction substantially improved the conditions of blacks, economically and politically, in the Southern states. For example, blacks served in legislatures of Southern states and even served as senators in the U.S. Congress. This progress, however, quickly dissipated as the North abdicated responsibility and the South reverted to conditions that in cases were worse than the conditions blacks experienced prior to the Civil War. During this period, the rise of the Ku Klux Klan and other white supremacist societies, the withdrawal of federal troops from the South, and legislation that disenfranchised and denied blacks access to education and public facilities, all created conditions of extreme terror for blacks in the South. This culminated in the *Plessy v. Ferguson* case in 1896, in which the Supreme Court established the “separate but equal” doctrine that upheld segregation as long as the separate facilities available to the races were equal. For all practical purposes, very little attention was paid to the “equal” part of this ruling, while great emphasis was placed on the “separate” part.

Beginning in the 1930s, several efforts were made to chip away at the *Plessy* ruling, most of which were attempts to force states to provide equal facilities to blacks. However, the legality or the morality of separation was never questioned. With the onset of World War II, the challenge to legal segregation began to build momentum. Several executive orders by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and President Harry Truman eliminated segregation in the armed forces and related agencies. The *Brown v. Board of Education* decision is considered the culmination of these efforts.

Thurgood Marshall served as the principle lawyer of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) defense fund that argued the case in front of the Supreme Court. Aided by notable lawyers such as James M. Nabrit, Jr., Robert Carter, Jack Greenberg, and William T. Coleman, Jr., and assisted by the pioneering research of psychologist Kenneth B. Clark, the Court asserted that separate schools could not be equal because

segregating children on the basis of race “generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely to ever be undone.”

It is argued, however, that the *Brown* decision alone had little impact on ending segregation, for it failed to define what constitutes segregation and to provide a timeline for dismantling it. Although the *Brown* decision is important and symbolic, the 1964 Civil Rights Act of the Johnson Administration, which barred discrimination in all schools and other institutions receiving federal funding, is believed to have played a more significant legal role in ending segregation.

However, since the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the Supreme Court has meticulously worked to dismantle the ideals espoused by the *Brown* decision. Beginning with the Nixon Administration and culminating in the Reagan-Bush years, the conservative Rehnquist Court has issued rulings meant to return to the era of *Plessy v. Ferguson*—a ruling for which Rehnquist has expressed his deep support. Three key decisions stand out as important in the Supreme Court resegregation agenda: *Board of Education of Oklahoma City v. Dowell*, *Freeman v. Pitts*, and *Missouri v. Jenkins*. With these three decisions, the Supreme Court stated, in effect, that a school district could send students back to de facto segregated neighborhood schools, after the latter had obeyed their court orders for desegregation for several years.

— Garvey F. Lundy

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BUREAU OF REFUGEES, FREEDMEN, AND ABANDONED LANDS

The Freedmen's Bureau, as it was often called, was established in the U.S. War Department by an act of

March 3, 1865, nearly a year before the end of the Civil War. The bureau supervised all relief and educational activities relating to refugees and freedmen, including issuing rations, clothing, and medicine. The Freedmen's Bureau also assumed custody of confiscated lands or property in the former Confederate states, border states, District of Columbia, and Indian territory. The operation was run by the assistant commissioners and the state superintendents of education and included the maintaining of personnel records and reports on the programs and conditions throughout the South.

When the Civil War started, the issue of what to do with the African population in the South was uppermost in the minds of the Northerners who prosecuted the war. The Africans were simply interested in freedom. However, with the liberation of areas of the South, millions of African people became refugees. It was out of concern over what would become of these refugees that a government body was created to deal with the situation in the South. The Freedmen's Bureau operated from 1865 to 1872, a mere 7 years, but it might be argued that it was in effect more informally from the beginning of the war, as the Union Army had to do something about the Africans who were liberated during the war.

Thus as soon as the Union Army defeated Confederate forces in Virginia and Tennessee, escaped and freed Africans came into the Union lines. Men, women, and children who were frightened, hungry, and tired—a cadre of starving folk, homeless and often unhealthy—came into the camps of the Union soldiers to volunteer their services, to seek protection, and to serve as spies. Many white soldiers responded to the pitiful condition of the refugees; some even started Freedmen's Aid societies and appealed to philanthropists for relief. The American Missionary Association, which had been active in the defense of the black rebels onboard the *Amistad*, sprung into action as well.

Soon the number of freed Africans and forfeited estates was overwhelming, so the government sought to regulate the situation by proposing half-hearted measures overseen by the U.S. Treasury. The officials of the Treasury were asked to take charge of the abandoned lands and sell them or lease them for 1-year periods, as well as to provide for the welfare of the Africans who once served on those lands.

Congress had passed a bill, by the thin majority of two, to establish a bureau for freedmen, but Senator

Charles Sumner of New York argued that freedmen and abandoned lands belonged under the same department, and he therefore substituted a bill that attached it to the Treasury in an attempt to strengthen the Treasury's influence in the matter. This bill passed the Senate but was not taken up by the House. Finally, after several months, a conference of the House and Senate came up with a compromise that made the new department independent of the Treasury and the war officials. This bill was defeated when it was put to the full Senate, and a new bill was drawn, the Act of 1865, which passed, resulting in the Freedmen's Bureau. Although the bureau only existed until 1872, its influence lasted until the Union Army left the South in 1877. This might be called the end of the Reconstruction era, which had lasted for a total of 12 years.

The Freedmen's Bureau took charge of abandoned lands and at one time held 800,000 acres. These lands disappeared when Congress ended the appropriations for the bureau. The Freedmen's Bureau had

alleviated a vast amount of pain and suffering, built some schools, opened some health facilities, taught more than 100,000 people to read, and transferred many people back to farms where they could earn a living.

— Molefi Kete Asante

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C

CAPOEIRA

Part of Brazilian folklore, capoeira is a battle dance, a martial art, and a national sport. In past decades, it has been taught in Brazilian schools, universities, and private health clubs. Today, it is popular all over the globe, and interest in this fast-spreading battle dance has yielded a great number of historical, anthropological, and sociological studies that examine its various facets and manifestations.

Capoeira includes a variety of components: musical instruments, dancing, and singing. Because it is also a social event conducted in a circle, it is sometimes defined as a dance. But it also includes combat maneuvers, jumping and kicking, which complies more or less with the definition of a martial art. Those who participate are called capoeiras.

TWO STYLES OF CAPOEIRA

There are two major known capoeira styles today. The first, *capoeira Angola*, purports, as its name indicates, to preserve the pure, authentic dance brought from Angola by enslaved Africans who practiced a rite of passage called “*Zebra Dance*,” the *N’golo*, in which the winner would get to marry his chosen bride without having to pay her dowry. The Angoleiros (those who practice *capoeira Angola*) believe that, due to the circumstances of Brazilian slavery, the ritualistic aspect of *N’golo* was lost while the combative elements gained prominence. Thus, *capoeira* emerged as a means of resistance and survival. The second,

capoeira Regional, purports to be modern and innovative in that it incorporates elements from East Asian combat sports into the traditional movements. Fans of *capoeira Regional* believe that it was invented in the Reconcavo plantations in North-Eastern Brazil.

CAPOEIRA’S ORIGIN

The origin of capoeira is still a principal subject of research and debate among scholars. Some trace its origins from West Central African combat games, while others emphasize that it came about as a result of creolization.

The earliest written sources found on capoeira are from the late 17th century, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. At that time, studies and documents, were written mainly by whites and obviously reflect their outlook on life. Some of them viewed Africa as a backward continent, deprived of the developed European cultures. These attitudes—together with the needs of plantation owners—translated into policies designed to prevent and annihilate any black cultural expression, including capoeira.

From the white authorities’ standpoint, capoeira had two aspects, both odious. On one hand, it was a game played by enslaved Africans, and that game might become aggressive and dangerous. On the other hand, it was a means capoeiras used to undermine the public peace and threaten the lives of peaceful citizens. In either case, capoeiras were severely punished when caught.

In the early 1800s, authorities and tourists described capoeira “as slaves’ plays,” “dances,” and

“battles.” The inconsistency in definitions was the result of their attempt to define an activity that was irreconcilable with their experience. Dancing does not go hand in hand with boxing—at least from the white man’s point of view. Moreover, the movements of capoeira presented a specific kind of a martial art—without the physical contact—thereby lending the air of a game to the entire activity. The confusing definitions stem from the significant differences between the life experiences of the various cultures.

Social Expression

For the African enslaved in the early 1800s in Brazil, capoeira was a social expression that inherently incorporated all the basic elements of African dances: the circle, the dance, the music, and the spectators, as well as rituals, symbols, and other components that served the capoeiras in the course of the activity. As with many other activities, it contained elements that combined the sacred and the secular; hence the gods or the dead or both were active participants in the event. It was necessary to appease them; there were ways to secure their help; and there were customs, various garments, accessories, gestures, songs, and sounds that assured the desired results. There are reports about capoeiras who participated in public festivals and mass celebrations, dancing, leaping, and hopping in front of military parades and religious processions, supposedly disturbing the peace and exhibiting the kind of behavior expected of them. The records report that they used amulets and participated in rituals that were supposed to protect their bodies against injuries. They put on special accessories and played music to connect with arcane worlds and with their gods and forefathers to secure their protection against evil spirits.

While the authorities tried to label them as dangerous and violent hoodlums, the people admired capoeiras and their deeds. The lower classes, which mainly consisted of blacks, held on to their ancient traditions, gods, ceremonies, and symbols. Yet, with the changing reality, they did not remain isolated and segregated. Various influences infiltrated the patterns of their customs and rituals. Their direct connection to their countries of origin was cut off when the transatlantic slave trade was stopped in 1850, and the traditions that were transmitted from generation to generation depended on memory and on oral teachings, which were influenced by external factors.

Changing Attitudes

In the 1870s, there was a noticeable growth in the amount of capoeiras’ activities and an improvement in their social status, followed by a change in the attitude of the authorities toward them. In this period, capoeiras began to team up into two major groups: the Nagoas and the Goaiamus. They competed against each other to gain supremacy over the various city regions. Historians have characterized this rivalry as a struggle for control over the urban space and a political conflict between social classes.

The major capoeira characteristic in the third quarter of the 19th century, at least from the authorities’ perspective, was their entrance into the field of politics. The other characteristics—well-organized and loyal groups, physical skills, the use of arms, the perpetration of heinous acts of violence, disturbances of the peace, and rioting—instilled fear in the public. Politicians, well aware of the power of the capoeira gangs, of their command of the streets, and of their intimidating effect on the citizens, took advantage of this power to further their personal political aspirations. As bodyguards, capoeiras wielded their influence, especially during elections. They guarded the polls and encouraged or deterred the voters, depending on their connections with their patrons. Opponents were beaten up savagely, whereas supporters were provided with armed escorts as they made their way to the polling stations.

The Fall of the Monarchy

Once the Brazilian monarchy fell on November 15, 1889, the Republicans retaliated against the capoeiras they detested by launching a relentless war. The leader of this unyielding campaign was Police Commissioner João Batista Sampaio Ferraz, a sworn Republican, who was determined to root out violence and crime from the city and considered the capoeiras his main target. Capoeira was no longer only a black performance but had become an activity in which various other people engaged, including many mulattos and whites, most of whom had definite occupations and a regular income. Still, because they participated in capoeira, these people were stigmatized as drifters and idlers whose source of livelihood was theft, extortion, and murder.

The policy of suppression eventually expressed itself in the penal code signed October 11, 1890 that

outlawed capoeira. Capoeira groups lost their power and political influence and dismantled. But as numerous records of their arrests in the last decade of the 19th century and the early 20th century prove, the phenomenon did not vanish altogether.

The *Mestico*

In the 1930s, researchers led by Gilberto Freyre began stressing the beneficial influence of the African and Indian cultures on the creation of Brazilian society. There began an intensive preoccupation with the creation of a national Brazilian identity with an emphasis on homogeneity. The new mixed identity was called *mestico*. Getulio Vargas's "Estado Novo" (new state) Policy in 1937-1945 advocated the image of Brazilian unity where whites, blacks, mulattos, mesticos, and others live in harmony and with no racial strife. Capoeira, like other popular manifestations such as samba, carnival, and African-Brazilian religions, gained legitimacy as part of the national identity and increased in stature. Because sports were also encouraged, capoeira was recognized as the Brazilian martial art, as the national sport, and as a Brazilian product worthy of the public's admiration.

Destigmatizing Capoeira

To cleanse the capoeira of the negative connotations associated with it, it became necessary to refashion and show capoeira in a new light. The Rio de Janeiro version of capoeira stood for everything the authorities rejected and abhorred, so the first action was to sever ties with this version. "The negative" Rio de Janeiro brand of capoeira was totally ignored, and all eyes turned to the second capoeira center, to Bahia, which henceforth became the symbol of Brazilian authenticity, the pure source of social and cultural expressions.

Engraved in the collective memory are two great teachers of capoeira from Bahia: Mestre Bimba and Mestre Pastinha, who respectively started the two prevailing capoeira styles, *capoeira Regional* and *capoeira Angola*.

Manoel dos Reis Machado (Mestre Bimba)

The most significant turnabout in capoeira was introduced by Manoel dos Reis Machado, known as Mestre Bimba, who made capoeira a profession by

creating *capoeira Regional*, the most famous and popular style today. From a spontaneous street and beach activity, from public celebrations and processions, capoeira turned into a sport, a martial art, presented as superior to all others. Bimba's greatness lies in his realization that capoeira must be institutionalized, severed from its "playful" context as a pastime, and ushered in as an integral part of physical education and self-defense. Bimba did it by adding elements from other martial arts—especially from the Far East, such as karate, judo, and jujitsu—and by introducing its systematic and consistent teaching into the syllabus of special schools.

Vicente Ferreira Pastinha (Mestre Pastinha)

Many capoeiras, led by Vicente Ferreira Pastinha (Mestre Pastinha), who wished to preserve the spirit of what he considered the "pure" capoeira, demonstratively refused to accept the regimentation of Mestre Bimba's version. Their style, which they claimed represented the real capoeira brought over from Angola, presumed to keep alive the values, movements, rituals, and esthetic language prevalent in African cultures.

CAPOEIRA TODAY

As Brazil's military regime weakened in the early 1980s and as a result of similar processes taking place in the United States, radical social changes revived interest in the traditions, customs, and values of African cultures. Brazilians returned to the "sources" and attempted to connect once again with the traditions of the "motherland." Protest groups demonstrated against the government, claiming that the hitherto pursued policy of encouraging the recognition of a uniform Brazilian identity and image embodied in a common national type was meant to conceal the deep chasm between whites and blacks and between rich and poor, thereby perpetuating veiled and camouflaged discrimination and racism. New groups of capoeira Angola were founded, stressing more than ever the African elements. These processes rekindled the embers of interest in this almost-defunct version, and new students enrolled in these schools first in Brazil and later in the United States and Europe.

Some scholars as well as *capoeiras* believe that, nowadays, there is a new type of *capoeira* called

capoeira atual (actual *capoeira*) created by Bimba's students who felt the loss of African traditions known in *capoeira Angola*. These students tried to combine the traditions and adapt them to our times. When people adopt what they like from the two *capoeira* styles, they create countless hybrids, depending mostly on the masters' predilections. In Brazil, the further invention of new styles, such as *capurate* (*capoeira* with karate) or *capugitso* (*capoeira* and *jio jitsso*), points to an intricate process in constant flux, the encounter, collision, and fusion of different cultures, traditions, world outlooks, values, and customs, all of which find their expression in contemporary *capoeira*.

— Maya Talmon-Chvaicer

See also Creolization

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CARIBBEAN

Traditionally, the term *Caribbean* refers to the thousands of islands that run parallel to Central and South America, stretching almost 2,500 miles. The term, however, also often includes Belize in Central America, as well as Guyana, Suriname, and Guyane on the South American mainland. The Caribbean islands are further divided into three major groups: the Bahamas archipelago, made up of 700 islands and 2,000 rocks; the Greater Antilles (that is, the four larger islands of Cuba, Hispaniola, Puerto Rico, and Jamaica; as well as the Caiman Islands); and, finally, the Lesser Antilles, which run from the Virgin Islands in the north to Aruba in the south, off the coast of Venezuela.

PEOPLE OF THE CARIBBEAN

Indigenous People

Until the end of the fifteenth century, three different people lived in the Caribbean: the Ciboneys, the Taino Arawaks, and the Karibs. It is to the latter that the region owes its name. Estimates concerning the size of the original population vary from 300,000 to 6,000,000. The Arawaks were located primarily in the Greater Antilles, the Bahamas, and some of the Lesser Antilles islands; the Karibs lived in the Lesser Antilles; the Ciboneys had settled in the western part of Cuba and Haiti. The word *Antilles* itself derives from "Antillia," the name of an imaginary island that started appearing on maps as early as 1424.

The Arrival of Europeans

The first Europeans, led by Christopher Columbus, set foot in the Caribbean on October 12, 1492, in the Bahamas, on the island of Guanahani, known today as San Salvador. Columbus was then searching for a new route to Asia and incorrectly believed that he had reached its western shores. This mistake led him to call the Caribbean islands the "West Indies," a name that is still commonly used. Columbus's first voyage was followed by many, and each time he stumbled upon an island, he claimed it as a Spanish possession and renamed it accordingly. Thus, original indigenous names were replaced by Europeans ones, such as Karukera losing its Karib name of "the island with beautiful waters" to become Guadeloupe and Ayiti becoming Hispaniola (literally, "Little Spain").

The arrival of the Europeans in the Caribbean opened an era of great physical and social violence. It was particularly disastrous for the indigenous people, and almost all of them disappeared in a short period of time. The reasons for their elimination are multiple and range from warfare, European diseases, slavery and overwork to brutal murder and unspeakable cruelties. The Karibs in particular put up a fierce resistance against European assaults, and this caused them to be described by Eurocentric historians as "warlike" and dangerous, with some even tracing the root of the word *cannibal* to their name, Karib. Of course, the Karibs were simply and quite naturally defending themselves. Many, less biased, historians recognize that the extermination of these indigenous people represents one of the largest genocides of modern history. Today, only in Dominica has a small community of

Karibs managed to survive on a reservation where they weave baskets for tourist consumption.

The Spanish claim over the Caribbean was quickly challenged by other Europeans, in particular the French, British, and Dutch, each one wanting to seize Caribbean land. As early as 1538, Spanish ships had to travel under protection due to the constant attacks launched by other Europeans. In 1621, a war broke out between the Dutch and the Spanish, which the latter lost. The Dutch victory led to the creation of the Dutch West India Company that same year, and between 1630 and 1640, the Dutch claimed Curaçao, St. Eustatius, St. Martin, and Saba. The Spanish defeat also facilitated French and British incursions and settlements in the Caribbean, and by the end of the seventeenth century, both European countries had succeeded in firmly entrenching themselves in the region: the British had seized Barbados in 1627, Nevis in 1628, Antigua and Montserrat in 1632, St. Lucia in 1638, Jamaica in 1655, and the Cayman Islands in 1670, while the French had occupied Guadeloupe and Martinique in 1635 and the western part of Hispaniola (now Haiti) in 1665. In 1671, Denmark claimed the Virgin Islands. European conflicts over the control of the Caribbean were constant, and it was not uncommon for a given island to change hands in a short amount of time. Thus, Dominica, for example, changed European hands no less than 17 times.

The first years of the European occupation were a period of social experimentation, with rather small production units devoted to several crops such as cotton, coffee, and more particularly tobacco. In addition, parallel to the vanishing of the indigenous people was the introduction of small numbers of Africans, as well as of Europeans. The former were introduced in the Caribbean as early as 1493, primarily to help the Spanish approach the Karibs; while the latter came as indentured servants. These were socially disenfranchised Europeans, some of them even criminals and prostitutes, in search of a better life. At the end of their indentured service, they often received a plot of land, which they could cultivate, that is, if they were still alive or around. Indeed, many died or chose to return home, due to difficult life conditions.

Conscripted Africans

Starting in the 1660s, however, the cultivation of sugar cane began dominating the Caribbean landscape when cane proved more profitable than other plants

such as tobacco. This predilection for sugar cane was pervasive, and it is generally admitted that, in the seventeenth century, the Caribbean underwent what is known as the Sugar Revolution, with sugar being held as “King.” The cultivation of sugar cane requires large areas, as well as an important labor force, and this led to the massive introduction of enslaved Africans in the Caribbean, assorted with a gradual disappearance of white indentured servants for whom there were no more plots available. The result was a drastic alteration of the Caribbean’s demographics and racial structure, with the Africans often making up over 90% of the total population.

Most Caribbean people today are descended from those Africans who were brought primarily from West Africa in the dreadful and fetid holds of slave ships. The Caribbean, as a whole, received over 50% of the Africans taken out of Africa during the European slave trade. This represented, by all accounts, the largest forced migration in history. Unsurprisingly, the increase in the African population closely paralleled the increase in sugar production. For example, in Jamaica, the sugar production was 4,782 tons in 1703, with an enslaved African population of 45,000. In 1754, Jamaica’s sugar production had jumped to 23,396 tons, obviously produced by 130,000 enslaved Africans.

Life as an enslaved African was horrific. The mortality rate was extremely high due to overwork, depression, disease, malnutrition, and mental and physical torture. On the other hand, the natural reproduction rate was low, thus causing the constant arrival of new captives from Africa to replenish the labor force of European-owned plantations. From a social standpoint, plantation societies were divided along caste lines. Each caste had its own subdivisions. Generally speaking, there were two major castes: the white caste and the caste of the enslaved Africans. With the passage of time, a third significant caste emerged: free people of color, made up of black and mulatto free individuals. Over all, one’s race and color determined rather rigidly one’s social rank, with darker Africans at the bottom of the social hierarchy, and whites at its top.

RESISTANCE TO SLAVERY

Resistance to slavery and white supremacy was a constant feature of Caribbean societies otherwise ruled by terror. In fact, resistance was as old as slavery

itself. It took several forms, such as revolts, maroon communities, poisoning cattle, breaking up equipment, abortions, and slow work. Although maroon communities existed everywhere that slavery prevailed, those in Jamaica and Surinam remained the most famous in the Caribbean. On the other hand, it is in Haiti that the most successful revolt took place between 1791 and 1803. It eventually ended with enslaved Africans' victory over French colonists who were backed by the most powerful army at the time, that of Napoleon Bonaparte. Haiti became the first black republic in 1804.

The African victory in Haiti, then the wealthiest Caribbean colony, dealt a serious blow to slavery in the Caribbean, as well as elsewhere, raising serious doubts about the viability and future of plantation societies. Inspired and ignited by the Haitian example, Africans everywhere in the Caribbean became increasingly and openly adamant about instant freedom. In addition, developments in Europe, in particular a growing industrialization, made labor-intensive industries increasingly obsolete.

There was also in Europe a growing anti-slavery movement. Slave trade was banned in 1808 by the British and in 1814 by the French. A few decades later came the abolition of slavery itself: in 1834 in British colonies, in 1848 in French and Danish colonies, in 1863 in Dutch colonies, in 1873 in Puerto Rico, and, at last, in 1886 in Cuba. The abolition of slavery in Cuba marked the end of legal slavery in the region. Caribbean countries, however, remained colonial properties of Europe. In addition to the traditional European colonial powers, the end of the 19th century marked the beginning of a visible U.S. imperialistic presence in the Caribbean. Invoking the Monroe Doctrine and Manifest Destiny, the U.S. gained control of four major islands of the Greater Antilles, namely Haiti, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic. This was done through wars, military interventions, and occupations, as well as the imposition of dictators, such as Batista in Cuba or Trujillo in the Dominican Republic. The United States also purchased many of the Virgin Islands from Denmark in 1917 for \$25 million.

At the abolition of slavery, payments and reparations were made not to the formerly enslaved Africans who had toiled for free for hundreds of years but to the colonists, whom, it was felt at the time, had lost valuable property and commerce opportunities. To the Africans, nothing was granted. And although slavery

had been abolished, for the most part, the *haves* remained the whites and the *have-nots*, black. Many Africans engaged in small subsistence farming. With few Africans choosing to continue working on sugar plantations, the white colonists relied on indentured servants from many parts of the world, especially Asia and including Africa, to replace their lost labor force. This marked the beginning of the Indian and, to a lesser degree, Chinese migration to the Caribbean in the second half of the nineteenth century. Between 1838 and 1917, it is estimated that nearly half a million Indians settled in the Caribbean, with Guyana and Trinidad being the two major destinations followed by Guadeloupe and Surinam. Thanks to Asian labor, the sugar industry managed to survive. After 1850, however, the Caribbean sugar industry declined steadily and has become quite limited on many islands today. In the meantime, except in Haiti, the African masses remained excluded from meaningful political participation in their new societies well up to the middle of the twentieth century. This was to change to a certain degree, however, with the achievement of political independence or autonomy in many Caribbean countries.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE CARIBBEAN NATIONS

It was in the 1960s that most Caribbean nations emerged, for the most part without much bloodshed. As far as British colonies are concerned, Jamaica and Trinidad gained independence in 1962, Barbados and Guyana in 1966, the Bahamas in 1973, Grenada in 1974, Dominica in 1978, St. Lucia and St. Vincent in 1979, Antigua-Barbuda in 1981, and St. Kitts-Nevis in 1983. We must note, however, that many of these countries still recognized the queen of England as their titular head of state. For Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Virgin Islands, the situation was different. Cuba, through a socialist revolution led by Fidel Castro, broke away from international capitalism and successfully put an end to U.S. rule. Puerto Rico became an associate free state in 1952, while the Virgin Islands remained under complete American tutelage. Similarly, France turned its colonies of Guadeloupe and Martinique into "overseas departments" in 1946, making them an administrative and geographical extension of France.

While changes in political status may have engendered a new vision and a sense of hope for a brighter

future, as well as facilitating the emergence of a black middle class, it is nonetheless fair to say that, for the most part, Caribbean nations still find themselves economically controlled by outside forces. This is due in part to the fact that, shortly after independence, Caribbean nations had to face a difficult set of economic circumstances, such as rising interest rates, sinking prices for exports, shrinking markets, increasing costs of oil and other imports—all of which precluded sustained industrialization and led to quasi-endemic trade deficits, increased unemployment, debt, and poverty. The external debt (primarily to the IMF, World Bank, and Inter-American Development Bank), for example, increased by 100% between 1981 and 1991. Servicing the debt is taking a serious toll on Caribbean economies and people. In the 1980s, countries like Guyana and Jamaica spent nearly 50% of their revenues on foreign debt service payments. Thus, while life expectancy and literacy have generally improved, poverty and suffering are widespread due to structural adjustment reforms. Unemployment rates of from 15% to 25% are common.

Economy

It is largely bleak economic prospects that have led large numbers of Caribbean people to leave their native land in search of greater opportunities, primarily in Europe, the United States, and Canada, contributing to the emergence of a sizable African-Caribbean diaspora. The largest migration wave to the United States began in 1966, with the passage in 1965 of the McCarran-Walter Act that eliminated the previously established national quota system. Since then, thousands of Caribbean men and women have made the United States their home, in particular New York, where the largest concentration of Caribbean individuals can be found. Most Caribbean immigrants have maintained strong ties with their homeland, however, often supporting Caribbean economies through capital inflows.

While some countries such as Trinidad, Jamaica, and Guyana have been able to rely on some earnings from oil and/or mining (primarily bauxite), for most Caribbean countries, tourism, bananas, and sugar are their major foreign-exchange earners. Nonetheless, due to high costs of production, bananas and sugar depend on preferential marketing arrangements. In terms of services, tourism is the single most significant business sector. In 1993, for instance, it provided

26% of the region's GDP and employment to about 400,000 people. It is the only industry that has shown steady growth over the past 30 years. Because it is largely foreign-controlled and owned, however, tourism has a limited impact on local economies. On the other hand, it is believed to be responsible for significant environmental degradation, as well as cultural and psychological damage. It also suffers from serious fluctuations in visitor volume and spending. Offshore financial services represent a significant sector in Caribbean countries, in particular, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, and the Bahamas. In recent years, the apparel and textile sector has rapidly expanded. In fact, footwear, sewn leather products, apparel, and textiles represent nearly half of all U.S. imports from the region.

A UNITED CARIBBEAN

The Caribbean Community and Common Market

In the face of a common legacy of slavery, colonialism, and shared culture, and a present of economic difficulties, the Caribbean countries attempted to unite. The Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) came into existence on July 4, 1973 and into effect on August 1, 1973. It was signed by the prime ministers of Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad, and Tobago at Chaguaramas, Trinidad. Some of the goals of CARICOM were to improve standards of living and work, facilitate full employment, and expand trade and economic relations with third states.

Caribbean Free Trade Association

Another effort at unity is the Caribbean Free Trade Association (CARIFTA). CARIFTA came into existence as a result of the signing of the Treaty of Dickinson Bay in July, 1965 by Antigua, Barbados, and Guyana. Additional countries joined CARIFTA, and, eventually, CARIFTA countries Belize, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Montserrat joined CARICOM in 1974, followed by Suriname in 1995 and Haiti in 1997.

The Caribbean Basin Initiative

Unfortunately, instead of fostering significant intra-Caribbean cooperation, Caribbean leaders increased their reliance—and thus, dependency—on the

European Union and the United States, as well as their corporations, as their major commercial partners. This dependency became further entrenched and institutionalized with the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) developed under the Reagan administration in 1984. Its purpose was to provide tariff exemptions or reductions for most products from 24 participating countries in Central America and the Caribbean. In addition to its great economic influence, the U.S. has increased its military presence in the Caribbean with several military bases, the two largest ones being in Puerto Rico. The U.S. penetration into the Caribbean, however, has also been cultural, with American television programs being readily accessible throughout the region, thus disrupting further the local way of life.

THE CARIBBEAN TODAY

Despite this, the Caribbean remains culturally fertile and creative. It continues, for example, to produce important musical genres—reggae, calypso, ska, zouk. On the intellectual and ideological front, the Caribbean has had the distinction of making a major contribution to Pan-Africanism and Black Nationalism, with native giants such as Marcus Garvey, C.L.R. James, George Padmore, Frantz Fanon, Kwame Ture (a.k.a. Stokely Carmichael), and Eric Williams. The Caribbean has also produced important literary figures such as Aimé Césaire, V. S. Naipaul, and George Lamming, to mention only a few.

— *Ama Mazama*

See also Maroon Societies, the Haitian Revolution

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CHARLES L. BLOCKSON AFRO-AMERICAN COLLECTION

The Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection is a unique repository of major and minor documents representing African and African American history and culture. The collection was founded by Charles L. Blockson, who began collecting African books when he was 14 years old. After his teacher told him that history showed there was only a handful of notable black Americans, young Blockson decided to prove her wrong. He began to gather books about people of African descent and their history by going to thrift shops, used book stores, and church bazaars, as well as the Salvation Army and Goodwill stores; Blockson found that “even trash cans in alleyways” would occasionally have treasures.

Collecting books and artifacts that document African American culture and history became Blockson's lifelong passion. In 1984, he donated his collection of over 20,000 books and documents to Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to form the Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection. Today the Blockson Collection contains over 100,000 books, journals, pamphlets, manuscripts, photographs and prints, drawings, sheet music, broadsides, posters, and artifacts. In addition, information contained in brochures, flyers, newspapers and magazine clippings, and ephemera is available in the Collection's Vertical Files. A catalogue of the Blockson Collection was published in 1990.

The Blockson Collection covers all phases of Afro-Americana from 1600 to present, including materials on black people of countries other than the United States. Among the numerous resources in the Collection are the following groups of materials:

The Slave Narrative Collection. Included here are narratives of black former slaves such as Olaudah Equiano, Ignatius Sancho, Prince Lee Boo, Sojourner Truth, and Frederick Douglass.

The Photographs and Prints Collection. Features images of African American Civil rights leaders, religious leaders, artists, entertainers, educators, and images of major historical events in African American history. The John W. Mosley Photograph Collection, which provides images of notable black entertainers,

the old Negro League players, social and political personalities, and the general black social and cultural life in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is a distinctive part of the photographs and prints collection.

The Paul Robeson Collection. Contains concert clippings, recitals, performance programs, photographs, posters, and sheet music pertaining to Robeson's life and career.

Sheet Music Collection. Represents popular music, jazz, and folk music.

Other important research materials in the Blockson Collection are letters, papers, correspondence, and memorabilia. Outstanding among these are related to Bishop Richard R. Wright, William Still, Frederick Douglass, Langston Hughes, and James Baldwin. Of special significance are Haitian presidential papers from Henri Christophe to the Duvaliers.

Among the treasured items at the Blockson Collection are many rare and out-of-print books. Some of these volumes include *Corippus Africani Grammaticus*, a description of Africa (1581); *Anthology of the Poems of Phillis Wheatley* (1773); *Confessions of Nat Turner*, describing his role in the 1831 slave uprising; *The Bible in Defense of Slavery*, an 1851 publication that uses biblical passages to justify slavery; and a novel, *Clotel; or, the President's Daughter* (1853). The Collection also offers readers first editions of works by George Washington Williams, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, Paul Lawrence Dunbar, W.E.B. Du Bois, Carter G. Woodson, and others.

The Blockson Collection is unique in that it is directly run and supervised by the dedicated historian and bibliophile Charles L. Blockson. Peter J. Liacouras, former president of Temple University, said, "The most important element in the Charles Blockson Collection is Charles Blockson himself." Blockson's work has been published in numerous journals and anthologies, and his ten books include his autobiography, *"Damn Rare": the memoirs of an African-American bibliophile*; *African Americans in Pennsylvania Above Ground and Underground*; *Hippocrene Guide to the Underground Railroad*; *Black Genealogy*; and *Pennsylvania's Black History*. He is also the author of a cover story on the Underground Railroad that appeared in the July 1984 issue of the *National Geographic Magazine*.

One of Blockson's many achievements is that, in 1989, he initiated and launched The Philadelphia African-American State Historical Marker Project. Sixty-five markers were built and installed honoring the contributions of African Americans to the city of Philadelphia. He also published a guide book to accompany this project, *Philadelphia's Guide: African-American State Historical Markers*.

The Blockson Collection attracts visitors from throughout the world. It is located in Sullivan Hall on the main campus of Temple University in Philadelphia.

— Aslaku Berhanu

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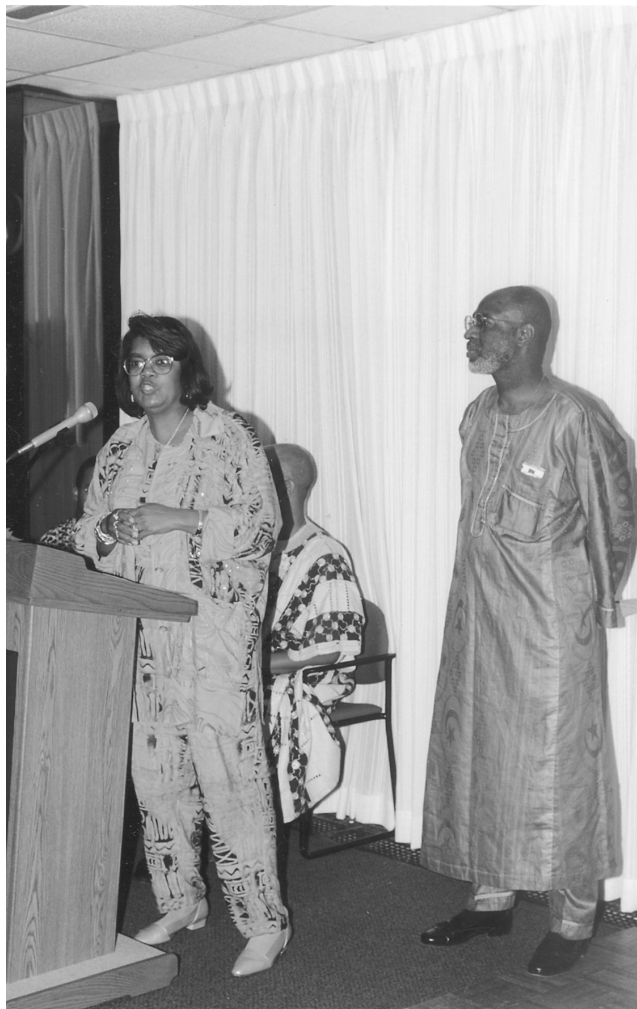
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CHEIKH ANTA DIOP INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

The Cheikh Anta Diop International Conference was initiated by Molefi Kete Asante to coincide with the introduction of the first doctoral program in African American Studies at Temple University. The conference was called in October, 1988, and featured many of the new students who had enrolled in the Department of African American Studies at Temple.

The Cheikh Anta Diop Conference had three objectives: (1) introduction of the new discipline, (2) professional and collegial networking among students and faculty in Black Studies, and (3) advancement of disciplinary knowledge around the Afrocentric idea.

Named for the brilliant Senegalese scholar, Cheikh Anta Diop, who single-handedly revised the text on African antiquity by writing several books exposing the methods Europeans had employed to falsify



Dr. Doreen Loury and Dr. Segun Shabaka, recipients of doctoral degrees in African American Studies, discussing the future of Black Studies at the conference

African history, the conference assumed a leadership role in the projection of Afrocentric consciousness. From the beginning, the CAD Conference was defined as an instrument where space for intellectual growth could be created and sustained in an environment of free discourse. Diop had been the inspiration for the conference because, in his two important works translated into English—*The African Origin of Civilization* and *Civilization or Barbarism*—he had demonstrated the advantages of sound scholarship over shoddy work. His research methods were multidimensional and his expertise was sharp, always projecting a measure of African intellectual integrity in pursuit of truth.

The conference has attracted participants from Africa, Asia, North America, South America, Europe,

and Australia. A committee evaluates papers presented in abstract form and selects the best ones for presentation at the conference. Because it is always the intention of the conference to have the papers published, papers selected for the conference must be written out in full.

By 2004 there had been sixteen conferences, all held in Philadelphia. The Cheikh Anta Diop International Conference was affiliated with Temple University until 1996, when it became affiliated with the Association for Kemetic Nubian Heritage (ANKH). ANKH underwrites the conference and is responsible for the organization, personnel, and programming. The papers are usually published in full form in the *Journal of Black Studies* or as abstracts by ANKH. Considered by professionals in the field of Black Studies as one of the key conferences each year, the Cheikh Anta Diop International Conference has achieved the singular status of most preferred professional conference in African American Studies.

— Garvey F. Lundy

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CHRISTIANITY

Christianity is a set of religious beliefs anchored by a belief in the existence of Jesus Christ, whom Christians accept as Lord and Savior. Christianity originally developed from Judaism. Jesus Christ was a Jew who lived from about 3 BC to 30 AD. He lived and taught in Palestine, primarily (although not exclusively) among fellow Jews. Christianity separated

from Judaism when followers came to regard Jesus as the son of God and as God's presence in human form.

While it is true that Christianity has its own values and beliefs, it shares a number of beliefs and practices with other religions, particularly Judaism and Islam. For example, all these religions believe in one Creator God. They also believe that God is active in the personal lives of individuals, and that God teaches people.

African people first encountered Christianity during the European Slave Trade. The first Christians that came to Africa during the period of enslavement were Catholics who had been led to believe that the whole world belonged to them. Although there had been African Christians in earlier centuries, particularly in Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sudan, it was not until the 15th century when Portuguese explorers encountered Africans on the west coast of the continent that Africans felt the negative aspects of the Christian doctrine. The Portuguese kidnapped Africans and took them to Lisbon, where they were held against their wills and made to serve the king of Portugal. This opened the road to the European Slave Trade and the dehumanization of African people.

This action is often said to be against the Christian doctrine, but the character of Christianity then and now has remained essentially the same. Christians argue for three aspects to their religion, which they base on the experiences and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, who is also known as Jesus Christ or simply the Christ. First, Christians accept the idea that human beings have sinned against God and, second, are therefore in need of salvation. Third, they practice an exclusionary form of salvific religion where only the Christians shall be saved.

Christianity is also a world system. It was first introduced into Africa as a world system by missionaries, who entered the continent with the idea that their God was better for the Africans than the Africans' own Gods. Africans considered this arrogant and hegemonic, but the missionaries, often accompanied by the gun, imposed their will on the African people, creating in the continent an alien body of believers who no longer respected their own traditions. When the African first saw the white man, the white man had the bible and the gun and the Africans had their land. Soon the white man had the land and the gun, and the African had the bible. This pattern was repeated. The Catholic Church sanctioned the taking of African lands, and the pope blessed the decision to split the world between Portugal and Spain.

Although Christianity has had many reforms in an effort to transform the nature of the religion's history, it remains central to many African people.

— Cynthia Lehman

See also European Slave Trade

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CLASS AND CASTE

A *class* is a group that is ranked according to its place in a social hierarchy based on inequality in terms of wealth, education, and/or income. A *caste* is a more rigid form of social stratification whereby a member of a particular caste, as determined by birth and social mobility, has a fixed ethnicity and is rigidly confined to the status of the group. The intersection of class and caste as it relates to the global black experience has led to a provocative debate. To explain the social stratification in the "New World" experience of blacks, some scholars offer mainly a Marxist account that incorporates race into the paradigm. Other writers recognize that class and caste are an integral aspect of black life, yet they prefer an analytical approach centered on social action and interpretive sociology to an approach centered on race. The problem for African-centered scholars is that in regard to class and caste analyses, Marxist and related schools of thought lay fundamentally within the framework of Eurocentric-derived concepts and sociological discourse. Thus a Black Studies scholar seeking to understand the plight of African Americans within a class and economic structure may find a Marxist or Weberian class and status analysis too narrow and Eurocentric to be of any real value. The African-centered scholar's problem therefore lies in what can be deemed not having conceptual agency and an authentic black perspective.

Unlike traditional Marxist accounts of white European class exploitation, the accounts of black scholars—such as Eric Williams’s *Capitalism and Slavery* (1964), Oliver Cromwell Cox’s *Caste, Class and Race* (1970), Robert Staples’s *Introduction to Black Sociology* (1976), and William Julius Wilson’s *The Declining Significance of Race: Blacks and Changing American Institutions* (1980)—all put a primacy on the economic basis of the exploitation and discrimination of black people in Western societies. In addition, regardless of their theoretical differences, the scholars who wrote these works have understood the place of race in Western societies and have each explained it by including the racial dimension in their discussions of the oppression and discrimination of black peoples. The common denominator in the accounts of these economic reductionist scholars is the placement of economics alongside race and racism as a primary factor of exploitation. For these scholars, capitalism as a system creates racist exploitation of blacks by upper-class whites, and it also uses race as a mechanism for dividing the white and black working classes. Therefore, racism is seen as part of an analysis of a racist-capitalist-caste society in which more than mere class exploitation is involved in the process of social inequality. The debate involving class being more significant than caste (i.e., race) intensified in the late 1970s and 1980s with the work of William Julius Wilson.

Class and *caste* are certainly slippery terms when analyzed from a black perspective, as they are complex and interconnected variables, as well as mutually exclusive yet interrelated terms when they are associated with societies that are structured in racialized hierarchies. Indeed, class alone does not explain the social inequality of black people in Western and Westernized societies, and neither does caste in isolation explain the inequality. Each variable plays into the other and together they can be useful in analyzing the structural position of black people, particularly in nations that can be deemed capitalist in terms of economic and social organization. In his *Introduction to Black Studies* (2002), Maulana Karenga writes that “it is clear that racism cannot be reductively translated as a function of class or class struggle. Such a position obscures the complexity and variousness of their interplay and their separate relevance as factors in a racist-capitalist society” (p. 305). The relevance of class is separate from that of race, although the concepts are often connected in discussions of racialized or castelike oppression.

Gunnar Myrdal’s macro analysis of U.S. society, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (1944), a social study of African Americans, concludes that they are a “caste” group and that their collective treatment has fallen short of what the United States stands for—democracy and liberty for all its people. For Myrdal, African Americans constitute “an American dilemma” for the nation that could be remedied by bringing them in line with the ethos of American ideals and away from the experiences of enslavement, segregation, and second-class citizenship that have made African Americans, unlike whites, a distinct and stigmatized caste. Yet this idea of “fixed” status of African Americans is problematic, as many blacks, by virtue of their light skin or European phenotype, have been able to “pass” into white society. Therefore, Myrdal’s research is not a valid application of the concept of caste to African Americans, whose experience has often blurred racial boundaries, despite the historical attempt by the established order to segregate the community from full citizenship.

Oliver Cromwell Cox heavily criticizes Myrdal’s study in his book *Caste, Class and Race* (1970), maintaining that it is an “idealist” analysis of the African American experience. Instead, Cox adopts a basic but not thorough Marxist perspective and maintains that American racism is merely a tool of the ruling class to keep the working classes divided. Cox rejects the idea that African Americans are a caste, explaining that in India the caste system was ordained by consensus, but in the United States a caste system would be fundamentally antithetical to the egalitarian principles of democracy, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Thus while enslavement and segregation stigmatized all African Americans, this economic process deeply contradicted the nation’s avowal of social justice and freedom for all.

From an African-centered perspective, class and caste are concepts that provide insight into social inequality, particularly in societies such as India and South Africa (under apartheid), but that do not fully explain the experience of African-descended people in societies such as those in the United States and the United Kingdom. Although class is an important factor in determining economic disparity, African Americans and black Britons could more logically be recognized as historically outcast social groups than as groups with a specific caste status. Moreover, even though these social groups are genetically heterogeneous, they have endured homogeneity in the collective experience

of racialized oppression, in varied forms, since they arrived on Western soil. At bottom, the traditional definition of caste does not appropriately fit the social experience of the many African-descended communities throughout the world. However, caste coupled with the concept of class provides a way to consider the various forms of racialized hierarchies that exist primarily, but not entirely, in capitalist nations.

— Mark A. Christian

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CLASS STRUGGLE

Historically, global patterns of structured socioeconomic inequality have varied in societies. Class struggle is a central tenet of Marxist analyses. Some scholars examine social stratification as it relates to the experience of African-descended people. They consider class struggle to be a central component in the fight against the social inequalities in modern societies such as those in the United States and the United Kingdom. In such societies, which use capitalism and free market enterprise as a socioeconomic organizing principle, the population is stratified and the distribution of wealth in society is primarily skewed toward benefitting the group that controls

and/or owns the means of production (the technology and resources used to produce the goods and services in the society). Black people in the African diaspora most often do not have control over the key resources that maintain the societies in which they live. These resources are fundamentally in the control of the white-led governmental, banking, business, and cultural sectors of these societies.

The key European thinker to have analyzed class struggle in relation to capitalist societies is Karl Marx (1818–1883). Along with his colleague, Friedrich Engels (1820–1895), Marx defined *class struggle* as fundamentally pertaining to the conflict between the ruling class (the bourgeoisie) and the working class (the proletariat), or the oppressor and the oppressed. In their classic work, *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels maintained that capitalism is an avaricious economic system. They mainly focused in that book on explaining the exploitation inherent in capitalist systems of socioeconomic organization. Moreover, they primarily examined the oppression of those in the white working class, who were seen as nothing more than an exploited commodity in the capitalist system.

A key point in the African-centered critique of Marxism is that Marx and Engels make no mention of the overt oppression and exploitation of those of African descent. Indeed, they say nothing about the millions of Africans in the diaspora who, at the time they were writing, were oppressed under European colonial and imperial dominance in the Caribbean region and on the continent of Africa. In their analysis of capitalism, then, Marx and Engels failed to deal with the oppression of the millions of unpaid laborers who were not only exploited through the use of their labor but also systematically brutalized and dehumanized via racialized oppression.

Some black scholars have used the class struggle paradigm of Marxism to explain the socioeconomic foundation of exploitation ingrained in capitalism. Yet the majority of black Marxists employ a racialized as well as economic analysis of exploitation in relation to class struggle. In *How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America* (1983), Manning Marable suggests that capitalism is more of a problem than communism for black Americans. The Marxist panacea for race oppression is tied in with that for class oppression. For black Marxists, the root cause of racialized discrimination is the unequal distribution of wealth and power. Discrimination based on race is merely employed by

the ruling class to fragment the working class and to set white workers against black workers. This tactic keeps at distance the possibility of unity or class consciousness among the exploited masses. Black Marxists believe that the issue of race is secondary to that of class, and that if the class struggle is won by the working classes, then race will no longer be relevant.

There are a number of problems with the black Marxist perspective on class struggle, and one of them is that it fails to consider that the white ruling class and the white working class have historically joined forces to oppress the black worker. Even the white-led trade unions, which are supposedly grounded in socialist principles, have historically barred blacks from joining their organizations as fellow workers. The white working class has usually viewed blacks collectively as wage-earning rivals and discriminated against them at will. Indeed, there has been little evidence of solidarity among black and white workers throughout the modern industrial and postindustrial eras in Europe and North America. Interestingly, in *Introduction to Black Studies* (2002), Karenga suggests that race and class are parts of the same issue. Thus, Karenga believes that it is unrealistic to imagine a utopia in which the entire working class unites, especially given the aggression white working class communities have historically meted out to black communities. This aggression cannot simply be regarded as false consciousness, as many enlightened and socialist-orientated trade union organizations actively maintained a color bar in regard to their membership criteria.

Maybe Marxism can explain the mechanism of the capitalist system. Thus Abdul Alkalimat may be correct when he examines the black struggle in the United States within a Marxist framework where workers are urged to join the union movement. However, Alkalimat may be idealistic in his vision, given the historical reality of white trade union behavior toward black workers. In short, the class struggle envisioned by black Marxists has never materialized, and in examining why, scholars have yet to fully consider both the origins of Marxism in mid-19th century Europe and whom it was designed to liberate. The class struggle was designed to free the white working class from its exploitation at the hands of the owners of the means of production; it was *not* designed to free black enslaved workers and their descendents. In the 21st century, Black Studies scholars may envision more creative solutions to the problem of social

inequality if they endeavor to locate themselves inside an intellectual paradigm designed not for others but specifically for black liberation.

— Mark A. Christian

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CODE NOIR

The *Code Noir*, meaning "Black Code," is the corpus of French laws that defined and governed the lives of enslaved and free African people who inhabited French colonial territories, primarily in the Americas but also in the islands in the Indian Ocean. The code was drawn up by Jean Baptiste Colbert in 1683 and first promulgated by Louis XIV in March of 1685. From the time of its inception until the definitive abolition of slavery in French colonies in 1848, no other piece of legislation would affect people of African descent to the extent that this document did.

The objective behind its enactment was to safeguard France's economic and other interests in colonial territories. France benefitted tremendously from the wealth generated by its colonies. Of the numerous

products sought after and cultivated, sugar was the most coveted. Already by 1700, Haiti (then St. Domingue) had earned the title of *île de sucre par excellence*, and by 1790 it had become the richest colony in the world, generating an annual revenue of 180 million livres and supplying three fourths of the world with sugar.

The 1685 Code Noir consisted of 60 articles that addressed every imaginable aspect of enslaved Africans' lives, from birth to death. Article 44 aptly captures the spirit: "Let us declare slaves as moveable property," thus reducing them to nothing more than objects. The other 59 articles, among other things, required that enslaved Africans be baptized in the Catholic faith within a week of their arrival in the colony; stipulated their food and clothing allowances, medical care, and work days; and included guidelines regarding their family life and marriage, burial rights, punishment for things such as striking one's master (or any member of his family) as well as for escaping, and civil conduct in court proceedings. As the French monarchy would come to regret some 50 years later, Article 26 even provided enslaved Africans legal recourse in the form of a *mémoire* for infractions committed against them.

Unlike the 1685 Code Noir, which was concerned primarily with regulating the colonial workforce, subsequent revisions in 1716, 1738, 1763, 1777, and 1778 were preoccupied with the conduct of enslaved Africans not only in the colonies but also in metropolitan France, especially with regard to issues of race. The 1716 edict came about as the result of planters requesting—on the pretext of Africans' needing religious instruction or to acquire a skill required in the colonies—that some of the enslaved Africans be sent to France. Other Africans simply accompanied the planters on extended visits as domestics. With each succeeding edict, the few existing rights of enslaved Africans diminished (i.e., all but their civil status). Fearful that after setting foot in France, enslaved Africans might consider themselves free, which was customary, planters implored the monarchy to introduce changes in the law. The new edict stipulated that enslaved persons' status remained unchanged in spite of their arrival in France, thus contradicting the 1571 decree by the Bordeaux Parliament that proclaimed: "France, the mother of liberty, allows no slaves."

The length of an enslaved African's stay in France was no longer left up to the discretion of the planter and was restricted to no more than 3 years. In addition,

enslaved Africans could no longer serve as domestics and were allowed to go to France only for the purpose of religious instruction or to learn a skill or trade. Marriages between enslaved Africans were not permitted, even with the consent of the planter, and planters were no longer allowed to emancipate enslaved Africans. Failure to observe any of these laws resulted in the African's being remanded to the king. The 1763 law forbade any person of color, whether enslaved or free, to embark for France; the 1777 law completely forbade any person of African descent to enter France, citing rampant miscegenation and "corrupting the good and natural order of the Kingdom" as the reasons. Finally, the 1778 law prohibited interracial marriages between blacks, mulattos, and other persons of color with whites—upon penalty and immediate expulsion to the colonies.

The existence of the Code Noir is proof that the universal principles of liberty and tolerance that were embraced during the Enlightenment were not extended to persons of African ancestry. The fact that the code was revised regularly throughout the 18th century, in response to the influx of enslaved and free persons of color in metropolitan France, refutes the historical claim that slavery did not exist in France. In fact, the historical record suggests that France reinvented slavery, and it raises new questions about France's critical role in the slave trade. Many historians have argued in defense of the code, citing it as a document designed to protect the rights of enslaved Africans. However, close examination reveals just the opposite, for it was the colonial planter and not the enslaved African who was privileged by the code.

One of the unforeseen but interesting consequences of the legal protection afforded enslaved Africans in Article 26 of the Code Noir, however, is its evolution into the deposition of liberation, a special form of the legal brief whose express purpose was to reclaim the enslaved African's liberty. The deposition of liberation was the most viable form of African resistance on metropolitan soil, and it is the only record we have from 18th-century France of the African's voice. And, unlike other forms of African resistance, barring insurrection, it is the one that most caught planters off guard, because they never expected enslaved Africans to challenge their authority by means of the same system used to oppress them. The first of these cases on record was that of Jean Boucaux from Saint Domingue, who sued his planter for his liberty in 1738, 10 years after he came to live in France. His case

established a precedent for other enslaved Africans who followed suit, and without exception, every enslaved African who made such an appeal won his or her liberty in addition to back wages. The evolution of the deposition of liberation challenged the legitimacy of the slave laws and called into question one of the fundamental laws of nature—that of natural liberty.

— *Iлона V. Johnson*

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COMPROMISE OF 1850

The Compromise of 1850 was a political maneuver that allowed the enslavement of Africans to continue in some areas of the United States, while in other states and territories Africans were free. The American political landscape from 1787 into the 1860s was constructed with infusions of compromises. The continuation of the institution of slavery in postcolonial America created ideological conflict between those who were for slavery and those who opposed it. Slavery was more prevalent in the South, where the plantation economy thrived as a result of the free labor provided by the institution of slavery, than it was in the North, where there were no plantations and the need for slaves was minimal.

The presence of slaves had implications for the population and the economic development of the newly

created American nation. Slaves swelled the population of the South, and if they were counted as humans and not as property, they would give the Southern states more representation in Congress. In addition, population would determine tax appropriation from the states. To create a balance between the interests of states with slaves and states with no slaves, Congress agreed on a three-fifths compromise that allowed the slave population to count for three-fifths of the white population.

In 1820, the slavery issue led to another compromise—the Missouri Compromise. In 1819, the people of the territory of Missouri applied for statehood. At the time, the nation had 22 states, of which half were states with slaves and half were states with no slaves. States with slaves preferred that Missouri be admitted into the union as a slave state, so that such states would have a numerical advantage in the Senate. To prevent this from happening, New York representative James Talmadge, Jr., introduced a resolution prohibiting the introduction of slavery in Missouri. The resolution engendered heated discussion in the House of Representatives, but it passed. The Senate, however, rejected the resolution. The application of the territory of Maine for admission into the union brought a solution to the Talmadge resolution. Maine was admitted into the union as a free state and Missouri was admitted into the union as a slave state with a proviso that slavery be excluded from the rest of the Louisiana Purchase north of Missouri’s southern border.

Controversy over slavery did not end with the Missouri Compromise but continued as new states were added to the union. Following its war with Mexico and the subsequent signing of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, the United States acquired territories from Mexico at a cost of \$15 million. These territories included Arizona, California, New Mexico, Texas (at the Rio Grande boundary), Nevada, and Utah. To prevent the institution of slavery in the territories acquired from Mexico, Representative David Wilmot from Pennsylvania attached a rider to a war appropriation bill, declaring that slavery be forbidden in any lands taken from Mexico. The rider sailed through the House but collapsed in the Senate. Senator John Calhoun of South Carolina led the fight against Wilmot’s proviso, arguing that the Constitution guaranteed to the citizens of all states who immigrated to the territories the same rights they enjoyed in their home states. Since the citizens of some states had the legal right to own

slaves, these citizens should have the right to take their slaves with them to wherever they migrated.

The issue of slavery polarized the nation as the territories acquired from Mexico applied for statehood and again when California applied for admission into the union. The Wilmot proviso had ignited a crisis, and a compromise seemed to be a viable solution. The aging Henry Clay of Kentucky demonstrated his political dexterity in crafting the Compromise of 1850. The goal of the compromise was to find a solution to all the controversies involving slavery in the nation. These included (1) the question of fugitive slaves; (2) arguments for and against slavery in the new states; (3) invocation of the doctrine of popular sovereignty, the right of the people of a territory to decide if slavery should or should not be introduced in their territory; and (4) the constitutional legality of slavery. The compromise, which resulted from Clay's "omnibus" bill, called for the following:

1. California would enter the union as a free state.
2. Utah, Nevada, New Mexico, and Arizona would be organized without mention of slavery.
3. Texas would cede certain lands to New Mexico and be compensated by Congress, which would pay the large debt of the former Republic of Texas.
4. A strong fugitive slave law would better protect slaveowners. Special federal commissioners would be allowed to circumvent local courts, arrest fugitive slaves in the North, and return them to their owners.
5. Slave trade would be allowed in the District of Columbia, the nation's capital.

Henry Clay's omnibus bill passed due largely to Stephen Douglass's political astuteness, but the compromise was never a comfortable one for either the South or the North. Many in the North were repulsed that slave auctions were being held in the nation's capital at a time when the slave trade had been abolished in many European nations. The different sectors were simply not willing to sacrifice their respective desires on the altar of compromise. The compromise survived for only about 7 years. In 1857, the Kansas-Nebraska Act divided the new territories into two types—slave and free.

— Levi A. Nwachuku

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CONGRESS OF AFRICAN PEOPLES

The Congress of African Peoples (CAP) was first convened in Atlanta, Georgia, in September of 1970. Organized primarily by CAP cochairs Hayward Henry and Amiri Baraka, its stated objective was to formulate a methodology that would unite the various theoretical persuasions within the pan-Africanist movement. This first CAP was attended by more than 2,700 delegates representing 220 national and international organizations. During the 4-day founding session of the congress, 11 workshops were conducted, which covered political liberation, education, history, social organization, religious systems, communications, law and justice, black technology, creativity, economics, and community organization.

Participants represented a wide range of ideological and political positions, from those who promulgated integrating into the American governmental system to those who supported the revolutionary overthrow of the U.S. government. All the constituencies united around the theme "unity without uniformity," which the CAP had adopted as its slogan and which captured the sentiment that the various factions within the black freedom movement could work together without compromising or surrendering their autonomy. At that time, the prevailing ideological position within the CAP, which was also held by key movement organizers, was cultural nationalism, the belief that African Americans must reclaim African culture

and develop African consciousness to wage a successful struggle for political power.

At the outset, the CAP expressed its ideology as *pan-African nationalism*, which is the global expression of black nationalism, and stressed institution building. It sought to operationalize the term *black power*, and in doing so identified its four constituent tenets: self-defense, self-sufficiency, self-determination, and self-respect. Work councils were created within the 11 workshops and charged with the task of creating programs that could concretize the CAP ideology. Professionals and specialists presented resource papers, and resolutions were passed in each workshop based on the information given. In the area of education, it was resolved that Black Studies scholars would initiate a process linking independent black institutions, Black Studies programs, and educational programs within black communities into a single unit titled the Comprehensive Black Educational System. In addition, resolutions were passed for the establishment of a worldwide black political party, which would seek to gain power both within and independent of electoral politics, and for the decentralization of U.S. law enforcement and creation of community security forces inside African American communities.

By 1971, 10 CAP chapters were operating in major cities around the United States. The CAP was a major force behind the historic National Black Political Convention held in March of 1972 in Gary, Indiana. In San Diego, California, in September of 1972, the CAP held its second national meeting. There was a decline in attendance of delegates, primarily as a result of the CAP's focus on building a separate, independent black political party in the months following the founding congress. Among those that withdrew support were the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) and members of the Congressional Black Caucus. Still, the CAP remained effective and continued to wield influence over the political landscape both inside and outside of African American communities.

As the CAP continued to operate, the organization's ideology began to shift. Whereas cultural nationalism was initially championed by a majority of CAP members, this position was later revised to incorporate certain concepts attributable to Marxism-Leninism. By 1974, the CAP openly embraced revolutionary nationalist ideology. Eventually, as a result of the influence of Maoism, the Congress of African Peoples was renamed the Revolutionary Communist

League (RCL). In 1978, the RCL united with two other revolutionary organizations, the Chicano August Twenty-Ninth Movement and the Asian American I Wor Kuen, to build a single organization, the U.S. League for Revolutionary Struggle.

— Storm Foreman

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CONGRESS OF RACIAL EQUALITY

The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) was founded in 1942 in Chicago. Among the students who created the organization were James Farmer, Bayard Rustin, Anna Murray, and George Houser. They had come to the conclusion that pacifism was the best way to approach the racial issues confronting the black community. The students were influenced by Henry David Thoreau and Mahatma Gandhi, and they practiced nonviolence and civil disobedience because these strategies had been used so successfully by people in India to end British colonial rule of their country.

In 1947, CORE announced plans to send a team of eight white men and eight black men into the deep South to test the ruling that interstate transportation had to be segregated. It was called the Journey of Reconciliation and was to last for 2 weeks through North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and Kentucky. The NAACP (National Association for the

Advancement of Colored People) did not like the direct action proposed by CORE and thought that such a movement of disobedience would bring about wholesale slaughter in the South. The Journey of Reconciliation left Chicago on April 9, 1947. The team included George Houser, Bayard Rustin, James Peck, Igal Roodenko, Nathan Wright, Conrad Lynn, Wallace Nelson, Andrew Johnson, Eugene Stanley, Dennis Banks, William Worthy, James Farmer, Louis Adams, Joseph Felmet, Worth Randle, and Homer Jack.

The Journey of Reconciliation team ran into trouble in several states. At one point, two African Americans were found guilty of violating South Carolina's Jim Crow bus statute and were sentenced to 30 days on a chain gang. However, the judge said he found the attitude of the white men even more objectionable, so although he sentenced the black men, Bayard Rustin and Andrew Johnson, to 30 days, he sentenced the white men, Jewish students Igal Roodenko and Joseph Felmet, to 90 days on a chain gang as punishment for coming to the South with blacks. This event galvanized the members of the Congress of Racial Equality. In February of 1948, the Council Against Intolerance in America gave George Houser and Bayard Rustin the Thomas Jefferson Award for the Advancement of Democracy for seeking an end to segregation.

The leader of the group who would make the most important contribution to ending segregation was James Farmer, who became National Director of the Congress of Racial Equality in 1953 and helped organize student sit-ins during 1961. The sit-ins against segregation were held in public parks, churches, libraries, museums swimming pools, and theaters. Within 6 months, these sit-ins had ended restaurant and lunch-counter segregation in 26 Southern cities. Later, the Congress of Racial Equality organized Freedom Rides through the South. In Birmingham, Alabama, one of the buses was firebombed and its passengers were beaten by a white mob.

By 1961, CORE had 53 chapters throughout the United States. Two years later, the organization helped organize the famous March on Washington. On August, 28, 1963, more than 200,000 people marched peacefully to the Lincoln Memorial to demand equal justice for all citizens under the law. In 1963, Floyd McKissick replaced James Farmer as the national director. The following year, CORE, the SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee), and the NAACP organized their Freedom Summer campaign. The idea was to put an end to the fear that

existed in the political arena and to support the right of blacks to vote. CORE was considered one of the major civil rights organizations in the country.

— *Mario Root*

See also Freedom Summer

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CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS

The Congressional Black Caucus emerged as a result of centuries of African Americans' determination and perseverance to obtain their freedom from enslavement and their right to enfranchisement. The United States was founded by people who sought to create a country ruled by a constitution rather than a king and who believed in the principle of freedom from governmental tyranny. However, the founding fathers continuously professed but rarely practiced the doctrine of freedom, liberty, and justice for all. These rights were largely absent from the lives of the majority of the population; when the constitution was ratified, only white property-owning men, 3% of the population, were granted the right to vote in state and federal elections. At that time, African Americans were enslaved. The Constitution neglected other groups and prevented nonproperty-owning white men, white women, Native Americans, free African Americans, and other racial groups from experiencing the power of voting for an elected official; it also neglected to abolish the institution of enslavement. Due to this reality, African Americans had to actively and continuously fight to obtain not only their freedom from enslavement but also their right of enfranchisement.

African American men fought bravely in the Civil War for both the Union and Confederate armies in the hope of obtaining their freedom and equal citizenship. However, both the Union and the Confederacy used African American soldiers in their political plan to control the United States, without any intention of granting them anything in return. In addition, on August 5, 1862, President Lincoln was quoted in the *New York Times* as having said that if he could unify the country without freeing Africans from enslavement, he would. Despite Lincoln's racism and reluctance to end the institution of slavery, on January 1, 1863, all slaves in states that were in rebellion against the Union were freed, and 2 years later, on December 6, 1865, the Thirteenth Amendment was ratified and enslavement was abolished.

THE LEGAL EMPOWERMENT OF BLACKS

The Thirteenth Amendment was followed by more important constitutional legislation. On July 9, 1868, Congress ratified the Fourteenth Amendment, which made all persons born in the United States nationalized citizens. This was followed in 1870 by the Fifteenth Amendment, which prohibited denying any citizen the right to vote and gave Congress the power to enforce this prohibition. After enslaved Africans obtained their freedom, they began during Reconstruction to realize their hopes of enfranchisement. Many African Americans sought and won political office, especially in locations where African Americans were the majority of the population. The first African American to become a senator in the United States was Reverend Rhoades Hiram Revels. Revels was born to free African American parents in Fayetteville, North Carolina on September 27, 1827. He was educated at Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois, and he became a minister in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. After Jefferson Davis abandoned his position as a senator from Mississippi to become the president of the Confederate States of America, Revels replaced him and served as a senator from February 23, 1870 to March 3, 1871. While in office, Revels served on numerous committees, including the Education and Labor Committee and the Committee on the District of Columbia.

Unlike Revels, Joseph H. Rainey, the first African American in the House of Representatives, was born into enslavement in Georgetown, South Carolina on June 21, 1832. On December 12, 1870, Rainey was

sworn into office, and he remained in the House of Representatives until March 3, 1879. Although both Revels and Rainey were the first African Americans to serve in the U.S. Congress, years of grandfather clauses, segregation, and racism prevented masses of African Americans from voting in the Southern states and from running for office. Despite this reality, African Americans continued to demand equal citizenship and the opportunity to participate in the democratic process. The history of African Americans' determination is the legacy that the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) embodies.

On January 2, 1969, a group of African American members of Congress united under the name the Democratic Select Committee. Those in attendance were Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., and Shirley Chisholm of New York; Charles Diggs and John Conyers, Jr., of Detroit; Louis Stokes of Ohio; Bill Clay of Missouri; William Dawson of Chicago; Robert Nix of Philadelphia; and Augustus Hawkins of Los Angeles. This meeting was followed in 1971 by another meeting, which four more African American members of Congress attended: George Collins of Illinois; Parren Mitchell of Maryland; Charles Rangel of New York; and Walter E. Fauntroy of the District of Columbia. After this meeting, on February 2, 1971, the Democratic Select Committee changed its name to the Congressional Black Caucus.

IN DEFENSE OF THE DEFENSELESS

From its inception, the purpose of the Congressional Black Caucus was to create a place in the federal government where the issues that face African Americans and other marginal Americans could be heard and addressed by government. The Congressional Black Caucus was formed during a time when the gains made by African Americans and other marginalized Americans were being attacked by white conservatives in the federal government, under the leadership of the Republicans and former president Richard Nixon. During this period, white America grew intolerant of the civil rights movement and integration, and as a result, white mobs attacked and killed many African Americans and the federal and state governments failed to protect African Americans' civil rights. To combat this situation, the Congressional Black Caucus emerged to become a presence in Congress that served the African American population and aided in creating a more democratic America.

The Congressional Black Caucus assumed radical objectives that included every person in the United States being able to afford fair and equal justice under the law, every businessperson be able to have equal share of public funds, and every community in the United States able to have equal share in deciding how taxes are to be allocated. The CBC also opposed the unfair international policies that are seen in this era of globalization, as well as unfair political campaign fundraising in the state and federal government. In addition, the organization put together coalitions comprised of black congresspeople and other nonwhite elected officials. The CBC's efforts to create a unifying and separate caucus within the U.S. government have met with much discontent. However, despite the CBC's critics' accusation that the group engages in reverse discrimination and separatism, the caucus has continued to prosper and remain a force in Congress that is devoted to exposing, examining, and addressing the issues that African Americans confront in American society.

Today the Congressional Black Caucus is comprised of all the African American congresspeople and is revered as a voice to be reckoned with in Congress. The influence of the CBC is seen not only in Congress but also in the numerous programs the caucus has created to aid African Americans. In 1976 the CBC created the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc. (CBCF), an institute whose purpose is to promote a coalition of members of the community of African Americans—legislators, businesses, community organizations—as well as of African Americans and organizations that serve people of color and labor unions, so as to foster positive change in the African American community. This foundation also creates forums where these constituencies can discuss their concerns and objectives for the future. CBCF programs, such as the Congressional Black Caucus Spouses (CBC Spouses), the Educational Scholarship Fund, the Fellowship Program, and internship programs, promote education and political involvement in the African American community. Finally, the CBCF recently created the With Ownership, Wealth (WOW) program, which employs education, counseling, and funding to help African Americans and other people of color buy, maintain, and keep their homes.

— Kiera Hope Foster

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CONSCIENCISM

Consciencism is a philosophy based on a set of philosophical statements penned by Kwame Nkrumah (1909–1972). According to Nkrumah, Africans everywhere share historical bonds, cultural bonds, and common aspirations for unity, but colonialism and enslavement interrupted the expression of this shared heritage and generated a cultural confusion rectifiable only by the ethical imposition of conscience. Nkrumah therefore presented consciencism as a way of beginning to resolve what he saw as the crisis of the African conscience. The statements that detail the philosophy were intended as a theoretical basis for an ideology that synthesizes the African experience. The elements of this synthesis are (1) traditional African society, which is understood as the base of the African experience and is used to filter other experiences through; (2) Islam's effect on the worldwide African community; and (3) the Euro-Christian impact on that community. Nkrumah sought to use this ideological formula to engender a harmonious development of African society.

Pan-Africanism was described by Nkrumah as the total liberation and unification of Africa under a socialist union government. He envisioned this objective as the only sure way of achieving the rapid transformation of African society that would ensure a better chance in life for Africans everywhere. The process of emancipating and unifying the African world required a pan-African ideology for guidance and support. The most impressive models of rapid transformation at the time were the Soviet Union and China. Each of those societies had chosen a socialist form of governance in opposition to the capitalist culture of the Western European colonial powers. Nkrumah thus added socialism to the definition of pan-Africanism and attributed this addition to what he called the African personality. He explained socialism as evolutionary in African societies rather than revolutionary, as such societies had already experienced similar principles of human relations in their communalistic organization and ways of life.

Nkrumah described the African personality as an expression of a reawakened consciousness among Africans and African descendants that could only reach its full potential when Africa reached pan-Africanism. The African personality was seen as an essential characteristic of the African nation rather than as a particular state, language, religion, political system, or skin color. Furthermore, Nkrumah asserted that the African personality would be projected in the international community after the liberation and unity of Africa was completed.

IDEOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY

In effect, consciencism is the philosophical premise of Nkrumahism, the ideology expounded by Kwame Nkrumah. It is a philosophy that brings moral responsibility to the work of the pan-African revolution. Nkrumah's 1970 text, *Consciencism: Philosophy and Ideology for De-colonization*, suggested this philosophical idea as the ideology for decolonization.

In his text, Nkrumah warned the non-Western students to find their philosophical tools within their own indigenous culture and social milieu. Nkrumah explained how this approach enables other cultures and their philosophical outlooks to be known and used to improve the plight of African people. He insisted that any revolutionary African ideology has to address issues capable of quickening the pace of liberation,

functional unity, and better life circumstances for the multitude of Africans everywhere.

The text *Consciencism* contrasted the philosophical views of traditional African societies with alien views. Nkrumah insisted that the critical study of past philosophies leads to modern theories that can imbue contemporary struggles with militancy and vitality. In his book, Nkrumah thus fine-tuned the analytical tools of dialectical and historical materialism by adding two tools—the concepts of categorical conversion and cosmic contrast. These concepts help to explain the vitality of the cosmic raw material—matter—and are necessary to resolve the outside-inside contradiction prevalent in Euro-Christian and Islamic philosophies. Consciencism asserts that traditional societies rejected transcendentalism by synthesizing the concepts of outside and inside and eliminated the contradictory relationship between them by making them continuous.

Furthermore, consciencism advocates a qualitatively different explanation for behavioral motivation in two ways. First, it removes the notion of nonhuman deterministic control over social reality. Second, it replaces the social determining force of the mode of production advocated by Marxists with the determining power of the condition of the consciousness. In the text, Nkrumah explained that the philosophy advocates ideological training as the only safeguard for the establishment of a socialist mode of production.

The philosophy of consciencism, Nkrumah's self-proclaimed materialist philosophy, adds an explanation of the existence of immaterial phenomena and their interconnection with matter to the analytic tool shed of African revolutionaries. The cosmic raw material is declared to be matter, which is described as a plenum of forces in tension and capable of self-motion. Nkrumah explained that the answer to the cosmic raw material question requires the synthesis of matter and its internal self-motion, nature and ideas, and practice and theory. Nkrumah agreed with Marx on the ordinal primacy of matter, but he also asserted the exigent primacy of ideology. Spirit is expressed as a surrogate of critically organized matter. The connection between spirit and matter and between theory and practice is explained through categorical conversion. The acceptance of the vitality of matter—often called, pejoratively, animism, was prevalent in traditional African societies.

CARDINAL ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

Consciencism's cardinal principles are humanism, egalitarianism, and collectivism, which are related to the concept of unity through matter's characteristic oneness. They represent core values in Nkrumahist ideology and are described as follows:

- *Humanism* is the recognition of each human being as an end within himself or herself, not merely a means to an end.
- *Egalitarianism* is the equal and fair opportunity for all and each in society to develop to their fullest capacity.
- *Collectivism* is the assertion of the paramount interest of the collective over the alien individual. The alien individual is typified as a person who remains self-absorbed and has chosen himself or herself in contradistinction to the collective. The individual who chooses the collective also chooses herself or himself.

CONSCIENCISM'S STATEMENTS

What follows is a summation of consciencism's statements:

1. Revolutionary African ideology requires the synthesis of the traditional base culture with the Islamic and Euro-Christian impact.
2. When a foreign philosophy is studied, it should be seen in the context of the intellectual history to which it belongs and the context of the milieu in which it was born.
3. Most African traditional societies see humans as essentially spiritual beings.
4. Positive action leads to liberated territories, while negative action supports various forms of foreign domination.
5. In order for a country to apply socialism, it must be liberated, be unified, and embrace philosophical materialism. It also needs a philosophical consciencism to enable it to hold to its general nature while allowing for its individuality in the family of nations. It does this through its response to the material conditions of the territory, its generation of dialectical moments, and its employment of positive action through a mass party.

— Daryl Zizwe Poe

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CONSCIOUSNESS

In defining the term *consciousness* for African people, the immediate task is to free African thinking from the meanings and constraints imposed by training in Western thought and techniques, and especially by the Western episteme and paradigms inherited and used for thinking itself. The African heritage of black people is replete with elegant, elaborate, and extraordinary conceptualizations of human knowing and awareness. The following explication is a brief and partial composite of African-centered understanding of consciousness.

In regard to the notion of consciousness, it is fairly well documented that Africa conceives of reality and all that is within reality as a mental expression of the divine. Ancient Nile Valley metaphysics, for instance, believes that Djehuti (whom the Greeks call Hermes) is the mind and will of the creative demiurge and that from this personified divine mind emerges the word that brings all things into being. Similarly, Dogon metaphysics states that the universe is a thought in the mind of Amma, the creator. In terms of consciousness, the philosophical thinking of the Akan makes a distinction between *Adwen* ("realms of knowing"), *Nea Wonhu* ("thought" or "that which can not be perceived"), *Nea edtra Adwen* ("that which transcends thought") and *Anidho* ("levels of awareness"), *Anidahoso* ("awareness of self"), and *Oben* ("perception beyond the ordinary").

In Kikongo Lingala, the word for *conscious* is *ezaleli*, which means the way you are in life, your essence. The Bantu-Congo believe that there are diverse forces and waves of energy that govern life surrounding humans. This fire-force, which is called *Kalunga*, is complete in and of itself and emerges within the emptiness or nothingness and becomes the source of life on earth. This *Kalunga* is a force in motion that can be considered consciousness. The

Bantu-Congo believe that the heated force of Kalunga blew up and down as a huge storm of projectiles, *Kimbwandende*, producing a huge mass in fusion. As Fu-Kiau puts it in *Tying the Spiritual Knot: African Cosmology of the Bantu-Konko* (2001), in the process of cooling, the mass was in fusion and then solidification occurred, giving birth to the earth. In a very real way, the world as a physical reality, floating in *Kalunga*, emerges as an act of consciousness.

The term *consciousness* as African people apply it is therefore a construct that represents their ability to know, perceive, understand, and be aware of self in relation to self and all else. All that is consciousness is, in fact, revealed in and determined by relationships (i.e., energy in motion). At the most fundamental level, consciousness is found in the pulse that gives us life. A heart cell, for example, is unique in that it produces a strong electromagnetic signal that radiates (or relates) out beyond itself. The electromagnetic (EM) field produced by the heart radiates outward some 12 to 15 feet beyond the human body. In effect, every human being is in constant contact or relationship with other human beings and energy-vibrating life forms at all times. Indeed, in *The Biology of Transcendence: A Blueprint of the Human Spirit* (2002), J. C. Pearce writes that if two live heart cells are kept apart, and then when they begin to die (as evidenced by fibrillation) are brought into close proximity with each other, they will resume their regular life-producing pulsation. This indicates not only a cellular relationship but also the awareness and understanding (consciousness) of each cell to every other cell, which is evidence of and critical to life. What is most important here is that what is seen as the electromagnetic (EM) energy of the cells is in fact the consciousness of each cell, which carries information or awareness. It is the vibration of each cell that results in the awareness of self (one cell) and other (another cell). Consciousness is, in effect, the intelligent energy of the divine.

What the ancient Africans of the Nile Valley (the Kemites) called the “intelligence of the heart” is in scientific terms an intricate dialogue between the electromagnetic fields generated by the knowing cells in human beings’ hearts, minds, and bodies and the electromagnetic energy fields in the world at large and specific energy fields found in our particular experience with time, place, and space. The African is distinguished by a particular consciousness that is reflected in a special capacity for having intelligence of the

mind and heart. Every knowable and perceivable object in the natural universe is a hieroglyph of divine consciousness (i.e., comprehension and imagination). Divine consciousness is more than thinking, feeling, and awareness: Everything vibrates in a divinely governed universe. The entire universe, which is potentiality contained in itself, is a never-ending totality of possibilities—consciousness.

Consciousness is thus the intelligent energy of the divine. The spectrum of consciousness includes numerous levels, which differ in degree of frequency and density. In fact, the level of consciousness determines the configuration of matter. Level is indicated by vibration. Consciousness is inscribed in and determines the nature of every organism. Each animal, each species of plant, each mineral, and each of their respective components represents conscious energy vibrating at different speeds. In terms of human beings, one vibratory level becomes heart. Another level of vibration becomes liver; another will become lung; another will become the synergetic being known as the human being. The varieties of so-called races of humanity, which are biologically organized in essentially the same way, are also made distinct by the degree of differential organic vibration. Consciousness is, however, more than potentiality contained in itself. As a knowing and knowable vibration, motion, or energy, consciousness is simultaneously potentiality and intentionality contained in the pulse of life.

At the level of the human being, consciousness is always a collective experience and passes from one collective generation (or being) to the next. Like the energy or vibration indicative of it, consciousness is never destroyed. In fact, it is the reincarnation of consciousness, as psyche, that constitutes the reincarnation of a person. A reincarnated person is a new person only in the carnal sense. The collective consciousness, or what some call racial consciousness, is constantly renewed in each succeeding generation. The reincarnated are different from the preceding generation only to the extent that their consciousness vibrates at a new (i.e., different) speed. African people, as a particular vibratory phenomenon, reincarnate consciousness from one generation to the next irrespective of geographical location. Many of the great deep thinkers throughout the African world have spoken through this sense of consciousness, this force in motion, a consciousness that is inborn. Chester Higgins claimed in *Feeling the Spirit: Searching the World for the People of Africa* (1994) that Africa was

born in African people even if they were not born in Africa. The Africa born in African people everywhere is that inborn sense of consciousness, that vibratory fire force in motion that is complete in and of itself yet continually emerging to become the source and the consequence of living.

Consciousness is thus the essence, energy, expression, and experience of the black spirit (or being) in the form of awareness, knowing, comprehension, and existing. It is that which allows African people to reflect, respond, project, and create from, before, and beyond the time of their individual experience. Consciousness is intricately merged with spirit. It is the knowing of what a knowing and knowable spirit knows. The hermeneutics of consciousness in a sense determines or allows African people to conceive of and understand themselves as fundamentally spirit. Having an awareness of themselves as spirit, in turn, allows African people to access realms of knowing that are not limited to just cognition or perception. It also allows them to be accessible to spirits in the realm of the spirit. It connects knowing and awareness to both the perceivable (visible) and the unperceivable (invisible).

Hence, consciousness as (or driven by) an eternal living spirit is not bound by time, space, or place. It connects knowing, awareness, and comprehension to the universal and the divine. Consciousness is thus that which gives congruity to the supra, inter, and inner realms of being. It allows for the retention of the ancestral sensibilities that interpret and give meaning to contemporary experience. It is consciousness—as awareness, knowing, and comprehension—and its subsequent meaning that give particular content, context, and contour to black character and style. The desire to always function at a higher level (i.e., the sense of excellence) is characteristic of the consciousness of African people from time immemorial. Consciousness functions as both retentive and residual knowing and awareness. As retentive energy, consciousness allows for the remembering or retention of all previous information, experience, and ideas. As residual energy, consciousness provides a conduit or circuit for tapping into the residue of human knowing and awareness and thereby creates or inspires new knowing and awareness.

The vibratory spiraling of African people toward higher level functioning, or ascension, is best understood as self-generating consciousness (i.e., energy). In the ancient Nile Valley, it is this sense of consciousness

that is reflected in the Book of Knowing the Evolutions of Ra where the god Neb-er-tcher records the creation and birth of the gods: “I am he who evolved himself under the form of the God Khepera. I, the evolver of the evolutions and developments which came forth from my mouth. . . . I laid the foundations of all things by my will and all things evolved themselves there from.” The same consciousness—the sense of essence, energy, and experience—is symbolized further in the ancient Nile Valley text by the words *Kheper-i*, *Kheper Kheperu*, *Kheper-kuy*, *M Keperu*, which mean “When I Became, the Becoming Became, I have Become in Becoming.” This consciousness of evolving the evolutions, of vibrating knowable and knowing energy, of the pulse that gives human beings life, is continually reincarnated in black awareness (i.e., consciousness). It is found in the word *advancement* in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, in the word *improvement* in the Universal Negro Improvement Association, and in the word *lift* in the Negro national anthem, “Lift Every Voice and Sing.” In addition, W.E.B. Du Bois speaks directly to the complexity of the vibratory radiance (or energy) that he immortalized when he coined the term *double consciousness*.

Consciousness as defined here allows blacks to draw upon a meaning of being that is antithetical to the constructions of blacks by the dominant culture, which include objectifications of negation, nullification, and dehumanization. This consciousness serves as the source of both the potential for liberation and the intention to be free. It is the inner thought or mental vibration that guides the awareness that a person’s actions are or should be in deliberate accord with that person’s destiny. Consciousness also allows a person to be aware of the possibility of the fulfillment of that destiny. Accordingly, without understanding the vibratory energy that configured itself into being, becoming, and belonging to African people, a black person may be incapable, for instance, of fully comprehending why Harriet Tubman, Nat Turner, Sojourner Truth, W.E.B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, and other black leaders and lay people alike react to and determine reality in a unique and special way.

An African-centered understanding of consciousness requires black people to meet the challenge of awareness, knowing, comprehension, and existing through the realms of knowing and levels of awareness that are the very same aspect of being that each black person is attempting to define. Consciousness is

the knowing and knowable vibratory fire-force that is the neverending totality of possibilities emerging from itself and shaping and being shaped in relation to both perceivable and unperceivable reality.

Unfortunately, it is this African sense of consciousness that was deformed and derailed as the direct and indirect intent and consequence of Arab conquest, international enslavement, and European colonization. The de-Africanization and dehumanization of African people required the distortion of African consciousness. The contemporary disconnection of Africans from an African sense of consciousness remains the intent and consequence of Eurocentric intellectual (i.e., conceptual) hegemony and worldwide white political and philosophical supremacy. It is clear that remembering and reexperiencing an African meaning of consciousness is essential to the liberation of the African mind and the development, empowerment, and revitalization of African people worldwide.

— Wade W. Nobles

(*Nana Kwaku Berko I, Ifagbemi Sangodare*)

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COUNCIL OF INDEPENDENT BLACK INSTITUTIONS

The Council of Independent Black Institutions (CIBI) is an umbrella organization of African-centered schools and home schooling, as well as individuals who are advocates of African-centered education. It was founded in 1972 to unify a rapidly developing movement of pan-Africanist oriented independent schools in the United States.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

CIBI's history is linked to the community control schools movement that emerged in the United States in the 1960s. Demands for community control represented an ideological departure from the integrationist strategies employed during the period leading up to and following the Supreme Court's 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in favor of desegregation. School desegregation efforts provided African-descended people with information about the school decision-making process. The basic realization that the same authorities who managed public school segregation also managed public school desegregation led activists in cities such as New York City; Chicago; Los Angeles; Boston; East Palo Alto, California; and Washington, D.C. to initiate organized efforts to gain power over the public schools in their communities. The community control of public schools movement further sharpened understandings of the politics of education and the dynamics of power. Beginning in the mid-1960s and continuing through the mid-1970s, during the height of the black power movement, independent black schools were organized in cities across the United States.

THE FOUNDING OF CIBI

Five black power conferences were held between 1966 and 1970. The concept *black power* defined the spirit of the developing independent black school movement. In 1967, following the Second National Conference on Black Power held in Newark, New Jersey, Jitu Weusi (formerly known as Leslie Campbell), one of CIBI's founders, argued that African Americans had to determine their own destiny in education. In 1970, the California Association for Afro-American Education and Nairobi College in East Palo Alto jointly sponsored a conference to set up criteria for the evaluation of independent black schools and to facilitate communications between such schools. It may be that the first formal reference to these schools as Independent Black Institutions (IBIs) occurred during this conference. IBIs were seen as self-reliant organizations. This conference also produced some of the fundamental concepts that characterized an IBI. The participants' leanings toward cultural nationalism are clearly underscored by the attention given to the role of culture in power relationship. The Nguzo Saba (Seven Principles), developed

by Maulana Karenga in 1965, headed the list of defining characteristics identified for a proposed nationwide system of IBIs.

Shortly after the California meeting, the first Congress of African People was convened in Atlanta, Georgia, in the first week of September in 1970. This meeting was actually the fifth black power conference. The Education and Black Students Workshop chaired by Preston Wilcox was one of 11 workshops convened at the congress. The charge given this working session was to develop plans for establishing a parallel school system incorporating all legally, physically, and psychologically independent schools at every educational level into a national pan-African school system. Within this workshop there were 10 working sessions; one of these was called Independent Black Educational Institutions. Two schools of thought surfaced regarding the most appropriate strategy. One was to continue to pursue community control of public schools serving large populations of children of African descent. These schools, once under the control of the African community, would be converted to IBIs. The second strategy was to either establish new independent institutions or strengthen existing ones. It was the latter strategy that received the most attention. Two reports on the working session were published. The first report was edited by Preston Wilcox and titled *Workshop on Education and Black Students, Congress of African People, Summary Report* (1970). The second report was edited by Frank J. Satterwhite and titled *Planning an Independent Black Educational Institution* (1971).

In 1972, from April 21 to 23, the New York African American Teachers Association convened a meeting of 28 persons, representing 14 independent schools across the United States. John Churchville, Jitu Weusi, and others already involved in building independent institutions brought up their frustration over the inability of the group to develop a consensus around a plan of action. A caucus of the independent school representatives was thus convened during the meeting to discuss what should be done and come up with a mandate.

Two months later, from June 29 to July 3, a national work meeting was held in Frogmore, South Carolina, to act on the mandate from the independent school caucus at the African American Teachers Association conference. The participants in this meeting determined the principles, policies, and programs of the organization and set up a national structure to carry out its objectives. It was at this point that the

national Council of Independent Black Institutions (CIBI) began to take form and function. The original statement of purpose provided that CIBI must be the political vehicle through which a qualitatively different people is produced. The idea was to produce a people committed to truth—in practice as well as in principle—and dedicated to excellence and the will to struggle uncompromisingly for the liberation of all African people everywhere.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CIBI

The formation of independent schools by people of African descent in the United States was not a new phenomenon. African people have been creating their own schools in the United States since the 1790s. However, the founding of CIBI and the movement it characterizes are historically significant for at least two reasons. The first reason is the employment of institution building as a strategy for cultural liberation. CIBI focused on institution building for the independent education of African people at a time when so many other institutions were caught in the maelstrom of school desegregation. For CIBI's members, institution building was a clearly organized act of resistance against the European-centered cultural hegemony and intellectual control that shrouded school desegregation. Further, while undertaken to lay a foundation for national liberation and self-determination, institution building became a means of establishing liberated zones or free spaces where the process of education would be insulated from the cultural assault of Western hegemony.

The second reason that CIBI is historically significant is that the organization's schools sought to deconstruct European-centered views of the world and reclaim, recover, and reconstruct an African worldview—and, most important, to codify this process in their curriculums. CIBI helped to lay a path that had been pursued earlier by the Universal Negro Improvement Association and the Nation of Islam. This attention to the cultural context of schooling was largely missing in the school desegregation movement. In fact, Du Bois noted that many people of African descent feared that the study of African cultural history as distinct from European cultural history would set back school desegregation.

Since CIBI's founding, its member schools have continued to incorporate a pan-African philosophy of education based on a cultural value system (e.g., the

Nguzo Saba). In addition, CIBI schools represent organized partnerships of parents, educators, and community residents who are collectively engaged in building and maintaining institutions of learning. As a united front serving as an umbrella organization for independent African-centered educational institutions, CIBI members have collectively produced instructional resources for classroom and home use. Notable among these is *Positive Afrikan Images for Children: The CIBI Social Studies Curriculum*. This book is the product of the cumulative classroom experiences with African-centered education of some of CIBI's most accomplished instructors. Another example is CIBI's annual Science EXPO. Held every April since 1977, the Science EXPO showcases the application of students' knowledge of science and technology applied to the resolution of challenges facing the African world.

CIBI has maintained standards of self-governance and self-reliance and addresses education as a cultural imperative that cannot be divorced from family, community, and national contexts. In 1995, CIBI produced a definition of African-centered education that makes it inseparable from nation building: *African-centered education* is the means by which African culture—including the knowledge, attitudes, values, and skills needed to maintain and perpetuate it throughout the nation building process—is developed and advanced through practice. Its aim, therefore, is to build commitment and competency within present and future generations to support the struggle for liberation and nationhood. *Nation building* is the conscious and focused application of black people's collective resources, energies, and knowledge to the task of liberating and developing the psychic and physical space that they identify as theirs. This definition is intended to set independent African-centered educational institutions apart from public schools, charter schools, and private schools that have emulated the CIBI model without its commitment to self-determination and sovereignty for African people.

In the early 21st century, CIBI's major challenges include economic stability for its member institutions. Publicly funded charter schools patterned after CIBI schools initially attracted families who were unable or unwilling to pay the tuition that CIBI schools require in order to remain independent. The charter schools attracted not only families dissatisfied with poor quality public schools that earlier might have enrolled their children in CIBI schools but also families with

children in CIBI schools. However, parents who withdrew their children from CIBI schools to enroll them in charter schools often found those schools unsuitable and returned their children to CIBI schools.

The 21st century is also a period in which the vision of intergenerational leadership of CIBI institutions is being realized. The institution building approach developed by CIBI schools in the 1960s and 1970s enabled the transfer of leadership from the founding generation to successor generations. As an organization, CIBI also took steps to prepare its future leaders by changing its leadership structure to ensure representation of younger adults and instituting male and female co-executive officers.

—Mwalimu J. Shujaa

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CREOLE

The term *Creole* originally referred to any person, black or white, born in Caribbean or South American colonies during the European colonization of those areas. These Creole people were believed to form unique Creole societies, with a distinct culture in terms of food, language, values, and so on. Most often now,

however, the term refers to languages created as a result of contact between two or more peoples, as happened between Africans and Europeans on American soil. Creole languages, however, are not exclusive to the Americas. Creole languages emerged in Africa, as well as in other parts of the non-African world.

While the social and historical circumstances leading to the development of a Creole language are rather clear, the process through which such a language emerges remains rather mysterious. Several theories have been put forth to account for the development of Creole languages in the Americas. One of the first theories, the baby talk theory, was quite racist. It argued that Africans, because of their alleged intellectual inferiority, had to be taught an impoverished form of a European language that resulted in a Creole language (which in this context was perceived as a pathological form of the European language).

Some later scholars have argued that enslaved Africans developed a pidgin as a language of convenience that they used to communicate with Europeans and with one another, because captives were linguistically diverse. When they arrived in their new homes, Africans who were enslaved were bilingual and in many cases multilingual. However, they were then denied the opportunity to speak their African languages, and thus prevented from reinforcing these languages, and as more Africans arrived, African languages were used less and less frequently, while the pidgin was increasingly relied on. Over generations, then, the pidgin gradually developed into a Creole language. This evolution involved the substitution of West African words with European words (English, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, and others). However, this substitution of vocabulary took place within the structures that characterized West African languages. Thus a so-called Creole can develop from a pidgin when the pidgin is the result of its speakers being unable to communicate by using their native language or being in a multilingual area where another language is essential for progress and survival.

Four main phases in the expansion process from a pidgin to a pan-African language have often been posited. The first phase involves casual and unsustainable contact between European language speakers and the local people. From this contact, a marginal pidgin evolves that is capable, with the help of gestures, of communicating needs, numbers, trading arrangements, and so on. The second phase begins as soon as the pidgin English, for example, is used by

and between local people. At this stage, it expands in only one way, from the user's mother tongues. This phase helps to account for the indigenous lexical items and the numerous direct translations found in all Creole languages where English was the language spoken by the Europeans. As interracial contact increases, the third phase occurs. During this phase, borrowing lexical items from the European language extends vocabularies. The fourth phase is limited to areas where the European language continues to be the official national language. When the contact between the European language and the Creole language is sustained, and as education in the so-called standard European language becomes more widespread, a process called decreolization occurs. The European language's influence on the Creole language then increases considerably.

However, the notion of a pidgin is problematic to the extent that it assumes that there was linguistic discontinuity between continental Africans and Africans enslaved in the Americas. The idea of a pidgin implies that enslaved Africans essentially gave up African languages and abandoned the African linguistic tradition for the use of a pidgin that was primarily a European invention or simplified version of European languages. Many studies on Creole languages in the Caribbean fail to acknowledge the role of African languages in the creation of these languages. Although researches have identified Africanisms, they have placed more emphasis on finding European grammatical sources. In doing this, they failed to include an adequate and unbiased analysis of relevant African languages.

The distinctiveness of Creole languages is clear when we consider their patterns of grammar and pronunciation, several of which mirror West African linguistic patterns. For example, in many West African languages, the English *th* sounds are not present, and in Creole languages *th* is replaced with sounds such as a *d*, *t*, or *f*. There are also verbal rituals that are reflected in the oral tradition. Furthermore, there is the continued importance of the spoken word. It may thus be useful to think of Creole languages as pan-African languages (i.e., as multilanguage systems that have an African base) and, although the speakers of these languages may be able to understand English or French, for example, the languages they speak are still not English or French. The Creole languages, which are spoken in the Americas (i.e., the Caribbean and North and South America), express the common historical

and cultural-linguistic experience of Africans in the Western Hemisphere. Africans in the Americas persevered in maintaining a language and culture of African origin that include a unique structure of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and cultural style.

— Adisa A. Alkebulan

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CREOLIZATION

Creolization is a term used in linguistics to refer to the process of language creation in societies where speakers from widely different linguistic backgrounds have felt the need to communicate. Such a situation obviously prevailed in the Americas during the enslavement period when Africans, indigenous people, and Europeans found themselves forced to communicate although they spoke languages that varied greatly. The outcome of creolization is Creole languages.

Although creolization is a concept that has become quite widespread, it is nonetheless plagued by great ambiguity. In fact, there is no general consensus as to what exactly creolization entails. There have been three general, and at times not necessarily exclusive, approaches to creolization in the American context, be it North America or the Caribbean. The first approach, which is Eurocentric, has defined creolization as primarily a process of linguistic simplification in which Africans have adapted a European language, with the

Creole language spoken seen as a dialect of that European language. The reasons given for this theorized simplification varied from the African ineptitude and gross physical traits that made learning a European language impossible to its use as a learning strategy. The racist baby talk theory illustrates such an approach, and so does the polygenetic theory. Such theories share the assumption that African languages played no role, or a very minimal one, in the creolization process.

This assumption also informs the second approach to the creolization process, namely, the universalist approach, which posits the activation of some innate language bioprogramme, rather than simplification, as the major force at work within creolization. The activation of the bioprogramme would have been made necessary by the situation of extreme linguistic deprivation in which Africans found themselves as a result of their (1) not being able to transmit their ancestral languages to their offspring and (2) not having access, for social reasons, to the European language spoken on the plantation. As a result, creolization is believed to shed light on universal language processes and structures, and these structures are believed to be reflected in Creole languages. Again, a major assumption of this approach is that African languages were socially irrelevant and, therefore, do not need to be considered when examining creolization.

It is precisely this assumption that is disputed by the proponents of the third approach, the substratist approach. The substratist approach presumes that creolization entails the modification not of European languages but of African languages. Indeed, African languages, this approach argues, continued to play a significant role in the lives of enslaved Africans and must therefore be taken into full consideration where creolization is concerned. This approach highlights and questions the arrogant bias of scholars who have dismissed, many times without much care, African languages and their possible contribution to Creole languages, although similarities between these languages and Creole languages are often obvious. What the substratist approach asserts most clearly is the need for thorough and careful examination of the sociohistorical context in which creolization occurred, rather than the a priori yet unjustifiable dismissal of African languages as irrelevant to creolization.

Over time, creolization has been used to describe areas of cultural change and creativity other than language, such as a cuisine, music, and so on. In the end,

creolization is believed to produce a new culture, a new identity. Generally speaking, creolization is associated with rapid cultural change, although more questions than answers have been formulated about the process, since a lack of conceptual clarity continues. Recently, some scholars have suggested that creolization is occurring on a worldwide scale as a result of globalization (i.e., Westernization), especially in urban areas. Some have even praised this development as enriching and necessary. Interestingly enough, though, what is suggested here is that while Europeans retain their culture intact, other peoples undergo a process of cultural change and identity that brings them closer to the European model. Once again, Europe is assumed to be the ideal target of cultural change—a most Eurocentric stance that, unfortunately, continues to inform, and probably obscure, much of the literature on creolization.

— Ama Mazama

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THE CRISIS

The Crisis is the publication of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and it has provided one of the most important and influential forums in which the black experience has been documented and debated. From the outset, the publication sought to repudiate the typically negative image that the media have provided of black Americans, while at the same time challenging the political and cultural hegemony of the white-controlled

mainstream press. Never pulling its punches, *The Crisis* has done far more than merely draw attention to racial discrimination—it has also disparaged the rationale of such beliefs, pillorying prejudice and providing an alternative view of black Americans.

Founded in the summer of 1910 by W.E.B. Du Bois, the publication took its name, at the insistence of Mary White Ovington and William English Walling, from a James Russell Lowell poem titled “The Present Crisis.” Still, there is no question that Du Bois was very much the inspiration and driving force behind the journal. Du Bois had been keenly aware of the need to establish what he called “a Negro journal” since 1905, and he had already gone some way to achieving this as editor of *Moon Illustrated Weekly* (1906) and *Horizon* (1907–1910). Nevertheless, *The Crisis* started a new genre in black journalism, appealing to a national audience and functioning as a forum for black intellectuals. The first issue, in November of 1910, declared that the publication was to be a newspaper and a review of opinion and literature, while it would also print a few short articles and provide an editorial column to comment on topical issues. For a number of decades, its full title was *The Crisis: A Record of the Darker Races*, and its contents throughout time have reflected its historical importance as the chronicler of and commentator on black history, thought, and culture across the globe.

For the NAACP, an organization that has overwhelmingly fought discrimination through litigation, the entertaining and enlightening *The Crisis* has provided a useful counterpoint. The editorial freedom and critical analysis that the journal has provided has been its principal attraction, though. Along with the rigorous technical and professional layout that business manager Augustus Dill provided during the early years, such attributes easily made *The Crisis* the premier black periodical in the first half of the 20th century. All 1,000 copies of the first issue quickly sold out; within a year, its monthly circulation was 9,000; by 1917, that figure had risen to 50,000. Although its circulation peaked at 100,000 in 1919, and despite increased competition after World War II from journals such as *Ebony* (1945), *Jet* (1951), and *Sepia* (1952), *The Crisis* has continued to play a central role in discussions of issues from a black perspective. Its articles cover myriad subjects, from celebrations of black achievement and success to denunciations of the indignities suffered through racism.

W.E.B. DU BOIS'S CONTROVERSIAL EDITORIALS

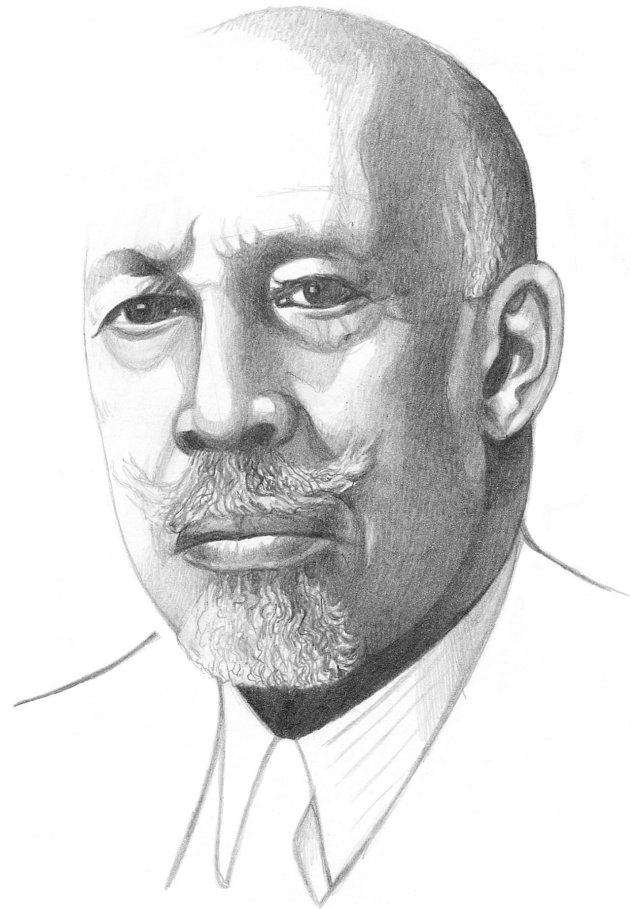
As a journal of opinion, the most important feature of *The Crisis* is its editorial columns. Pertinent, provocative, and persuasive, each editorial takes one current affairs issue and discusses its significance for African Americans. In September of 1911 and January of 1913, W.E.B. Du Bois penned two of his most vitriolic attacks on what he termed “Anglo-Saxon Civilization.” Du Bois was a polemicist without contemporary, and his editorials were characteristic of the deeply sardonic way in which he lampooned the pretense of American racial etiquette.

In 1919, Du Bois wrote some of his most acidulous criticisms of discrimination in the article “The Black Man in the Great War,” as well as in his oft-cited editorial “Returning Soldiers.” Du Bois was a master rhetorician who used his appealing aphoristic style well, as illustrated particularly in the editorial: “We return. We return from fighting. We return fighting.” Here Du Bois was not just castigating discrimination but actually laying down a bold agenda on which protest could continue. In response, the U.S. Post Office delayed the mailing of certain copies of *The Crisis*, and Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer charged that the publication was denigrating and racist against white society. In Congress, Representative James F. Brynes cited the articles as the type of journalism that had fanned the flames of racial violence.

The reaction that Du Bois’s articles provoked nevertheless confirmed that *The Crisis*, by showing African Americans as historical agents, presented an image that subverted the stereotype. With its emphasis on identifying the most important issues of the day and commenting on them as they relate to African Americans, *The Crisis* has always covered a broad range of topics. Its editors discuss everything from medicine to travel, but always in terms of how such issues affect African Americans. Still, denunciations of Jim Crow laws remained paramount until all such laws were abolished.

THE WIDE-RANGING OPINIONS AND IMPORTANCE OF THE JOURNAL

Du Bois’s resignation from *The Crisis* in June of 1934 may have removed the journal’s most prickly



Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois, historian, philosopher, writer, activist

personality from its offices, but it did not reduce the publication’s aggressive journalistic style. Roy Wilkins’s 1935 interview with Senator Huey Long, “Dictator of the State of Louisiana,” illustrated this point when the editor made no attempt to replace the senator’s offensive language with more anodyne phrases. Likewise, as school desegregation began to falter in the late 1950s, and the promise of desegregation wore thin, *The Crisis*, with characteristic irony, recalled the slogan “truly free in ’63” from the 19th-century movement for the abolition of slavery. Throughout its existence the journal has bristled with indignation, partly as an attempt to stimulate debate among its readers. “Do not hesitate to criticize us. We want ideas,” wrote Du Bois in 1911 in an early issue of *The Crisis*. Even today, *The Crisis* seeks a diversity of opinions rather than a single definitive opinion, insisting there is more than one way to tackle discrimination.

Even though *The Crisis* never became synonymous with the Harlem Renaissance in the way that the Urban League's *Opportunity* magazine did, it is important to recognize the type of coverage that the publication has provided for black artists. It is not just that *The Crisis* has actively encouraged black literature and art; for it has also played a significant role in helping to define such work. During the 1920s, the journal was unquestionably a passionate promoter of the work of black artists. Through the influence of literary editor Jessie Redmon Fauset, the journal's front covers were regularly adorned with the illustrations of artists such as Hale Woodruff, Aaron Douglas, and Charles Alston, while its columns were filled with the writings of Langston Hughes, Gwendolyn Bennett, Jean Toomer, and Wallace Thurman. Likewise, *The Crisis* was one of the first journals to organize literary and artistic competitions for black artists, a practice that it continued until 1933.

Still, the most important role that *The Crisis* played was that of ascribing meaning and direction to literary and artistic works. And it was this that made the publication an early advocate of Black Studies. In an article in its June 1921 issue, and in an entire issue in October 1926, *The Crisis* averred that artistic portrayals of African Americans should celebrate and glorify African Americans. Such sentiments undoubtedly reflected its editor's support for the "black is beautiful" doctrine. But they also underline the role the journal played in shaping African Americans' opinions about themselves and their world. The publication of *Brownies Book*, a magazine for "children of the sun," between January of 1920 and December of 1921, similarly attempted to instill pride in younger generations of African Americans. Finally, the list of works by black authors that Arthur B. Spingarn compiled, and that were printed in *The Crisis* between 1937 and 1968, represent an essential bibliographic resource for anyone interested in Black Studies.

The annual special editions of *The Crisis* have served as an important means by which the experiences of black Americans have been debated. Every June, from 1914 on, an entire issue was devoted to the topic of education; in October, the focus shifted to children. Both editions were required reading for anyone connected with the raising of children or the instruction of students, and the circulation of each moved well beyond regular subscribers. Such editions provided a practical means of making significant improvements in the realm of black pedagogy, as well

as being equally important in showcasing examples of black achievement. The practice of printing the photographs of black college and high school graduates similarly provided examples to be emulated.

Although *The Crisis* has eschewed any kind of political affiliation, its columns have nevertheless provided continuous analysis of political events as they relate to black Americans. In 1912, for example, Du Bois declared his support for Democratic candidate Woodrow Wilson, on the premise that Wilson was the candidate most likely to challenge racism in America. Political coverage of the 1924 presidential election focused on the voting records of each of the three main candidates. During the course of this campaign, the journal lambasted Robert LaFollette for not openly condemning the Ku Klux Klan and, at the same time, cautioned its readers that both main parties supported white supremacy. During the presidential campaign of 1932, *The Crisis* was equally careful to avoid openly endorsing any candidate, although this did not prevent its editor from listing the reasons why black Americans should not support Herbert Hoover. This type of coverage was less concerned with aligning the publication with a particular candidate or party than with exploring the possibilities for African American voters.

In recent years, the political endorsements of *The Crisis* have become more explicit, as evidenced by current editor Victoria Valentine's support, in the autumn of 2002, for New Jersey politician and advocate for school vouchers Cory Booker. In response to Valentine's taking a political stand, publications like the *Black Commentator* have been swift to note how such endorsements contravene NAACP policy and the best interests of African Americans.

THE CRISIS IN A GLOBAL ERA

Even though some have insisted that Du Bois wrote according to the shibboleths of European thinking, it should be noted that the focus and perspective of *The Crisis* has never exclusively centered on the plight of black Americans and their struggle against discrimination in the Western world. The Chinese Revolution and changes in British Imperial rule in India, both of which took place in 1912, evoked an enthusiastic response from Du Bois, whose comments reflected a sympathy for all who suffered racial discrimination. Moreover, in an editorial in January of 1933 in response to Japan's attack on China, Du Bois wrote

of the need for all peoples suffering discrimination to unite and face their oppressors together. In short, he drew many parallels between those suffering racial discrimination in Asia and the struggle of African Americans against Jim Crow, thus exhibiting what some have termed his transracial view of the world.

With polylingual editor James W. Ivy taking over in 1950, and with the onslaught of the Cold War, *The Crisis* published an increasing number of articles that dealt with discrimination in other areas of the world. The journal documented anti-Dutch independence movements in Indonesia, as well as mounting racial tensions in Cuba, Brazil, and Martinique. Of greater importance, though, were the articles that Ivy commissioned to be written by Africans about the conditions in their own colonially administered countries. In 1961 alone, *The Crisis* printed two such articles, "Angola Office" and "The National Front for the Liberation of Angola." Articles such as these reflect how *The Crisis* has continually sought to create a sense of common purpose among African Americans and those living under colonial rule in Africa. This view has been presented most clearly in the publication's coverage of the fight against apartheid in South Africa in the 1980s, as well as in recent articles on racism in the global era. The unifying theme of such coverage has been the idea that all who have suffered discrimination because of their race share a common experience.

Since its foundation, *The Crisis* has been a tremendously important journal of black culture and thinking. By devotedly recording the events and issues that have faced African Americans, *The Crisis* has continually helped to define what it means to be black in America. Its broad focus on all aspects of life for African Americans marked an important departure from media that only provided stereotypically negative coverage of minority groups. Similarly, by showing the deleterious nature of all forms of prejudice and discrimination all over the world, *The Crisis* has helped to reconceptualize issues of race in to the context of the modern world. The columns in *The Crisis* have been one of the most significant sources of opinion within black America, with its journalists providing broad coverage of the black struggle for freedom and its editorials helping to flesh out a framework for black intellectuals.

— Andrew Michael Fearnley

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- Rudwick, Elliot M. (1958). W.E.B. Du Bois in the Role of Crisis Editor. *Journal of Negro History*, 43(3), 123–142. Rudwick argues that Du Bois was a theorist whose editorship of the publication encouraged him to develop an inflated sense of his own powers, which contributed to the financial and political problems between the publication and the NAACP.

THE CRISIS OF THE NEGRO INTELLECTUAL

The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual is Harold Cruse's exploration of what black intellectuals from the mid 1940s up until the mid 1960s were not doing, followed by what he thought they ideally should be doing. As Cruse was on a mission to analyze and critique the realm of historical and contemporary black intellectual leadership, virtually every intellectual, activist, scholar, and writer was subject to his pen. Among the people that he took it upon himself to criticize was Marcus Garvey. He claimed that Garvey did not fulfill his mission of repatriation to Africa and the proof of this was the fact that there were no Garvey settlements on the continent of Africa. He also challenged the political unity of Garvey and his movement, the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). In addition, Cruse claimed that there was no place in the black community for black or white Communists. He even blamed Communism for the fall of one of the greatest leadership organizations, The African Blood Brotherhood (ABB), saying that Communism caused a rift among the organization's members.

Cruse's focus was on creating a new approach to resolve the issues left behind by other black intellectuals by synthesizing their works. He recommended that the following four tasks be taken up by all black intellectuals:

1. knowing their own intellectual ancestors and the movements in which those ancestors were involved
2. synthesizing integration and black nationalism into a single and consistent analysis
3. identifying and prioritizing political, economic, and cultural needs for the advancement of the race
4. understanding that American conditions are unique when analyzing the American race issue

Cruse structured his text to include social commentary, biography, historical essays, and political commentary. He concentrated on certain issues affecting the black community, such as the rift between black political radicals and black political conservatives. What Cruse observed as problematic was that intellectuals often had disputes over strategies of protesting and the idea of accommodation. He insisted that black history was a history of conflict between integrationist and nationalist forces in politics, economics, and culture. Politics, economics, and culture were arguably Cruse's greatest ideological concerns. He maintained that these three issues (and blacks' coming to terms with a synthesis of them) were of major importance to black progress. Cruse asserted that, of these three, culture is the most important, because blacks must understand themselves before they will be able to make any meaningful political or economic gains as a whole.

Cruse's book, though written in the 1960s, is still widely read and appreciated by Black Studies scholars and students. Many of the historical truths outlined by Cruse then still hold true today; also, Cruse's analyses of these truths are currently accepted in many intellectual circles. For example, he spoke extensively about the manner in which the American mass media controls society, and particularly black life. He also focused on the importance of black artistic expression, and how it was virtually owned and operated by white publishing companies. He cited the collapse of the American Negro Theatre, which was due to white involvement. Thus, one of the most important things that *The Crisis of the Negro*

Intellectual was able to do was to transcend its own time and find relevance in another generation.

— Deonte Hollowell

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- Du Bois, W. E. B. (1996). *The Souls of Black Folk*. New York: Penguin Books. (Original work published 1903). It was on publication of this groundbreaking book that Du Bois prophesied that the major problem in 20th-century America would be that of the color line.
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CULTURAL GENOCIDE

Cultural genocide is the deliberate and systematic annihilation of a people's culture by another group of people. Cultural genocide's weapons of choice are physical terror and violence, psychological torture, and seduction. Indeed, cultural genocide always entails the negation of the worth of the culture to be suppressed, and it often seeks to enlist the acquiescence and active cooperation of those whose culture is to be destroyed. This is done primarily through intense propaganda and bribery, making cultural genocide at times quite subtle and all the more effective.

As far as Africans are concerned, cultural genocide can only be understood within the context of white supremacy. Most destruction of African culture occurred due to the pervasive myth of European absolute, God-granted cultural superiority and consequent burden to civilize the world (i.e., to mold it in Europe's image). The destruction of inferior cultural forms was to be undertaken with ardor, with a major conversion to European culture as the expected and desired outcome.

Africans first experienced a widespread and systematic attack on their culture during the period of their enslavement on American soil. African culture was described by Europeans as primitive and barbaric. Physically and forcefully uprooted from their original

land, millions of Africans were pressured to abandon their African cultural ways and adopt European culture. This was particularly true in the area of religion and spirituality, where the acceptance of a blond, blue-eyed Jesus Christ was literally beaten into “heathen” Africans, while the worship of African deities and ancestral spirits was conveniently equated with satanic practices and severely and harshly punished.

Africans on the continent of Africa had similar experiences during European colonization in the 19th century and later. Indeed, during that period, numerous Christian missionary schools were established to impose the adoption of European culture and abandonment of African culture. In these schools, Africans were forced to at least publicly accept Christianity and reject their own beliefs and rituals. Failure to do so resulted in brutal floggings and traumatic humiliations. At other times, Africans could receive medical care in clinics set up by Christian missionaries only after they had publicly renounced their religion and recognized the Christian god as the only true god.

Along with the imposition of Christianity came the imposition of European, Christian names on Africans. Naming had always been held as of the utmost importance in African culture. Indeed, the name reflects the essence of the person named. Therefore, when Europeans imposed European names on Africans, they dealt a severe blow to African culture by inscribing Africans in a European-dominated historical and cultural space. In a similar vein, African languages were described as inadequate, worthy not even of being called languages but only of being called dialects. Unsurprisingly, Africans were expected to stop using them and embrace European languages. Again, failure to do so automatically translated into physical and psychological abuse. African children caught speaking their mother tongue in school had to wear signs such as “I am a donkey” or “I am stupid,” pay a fine, and/or wear some symbol that identified them as sinners.

The most effective weapon Europeans used against African languages, though, was bribery, since the scholarships and better paying jobs during the colonial period were reserved for those who demonstrated fluency in a European language. This, unfortunately, remains true to this day, and it is a clear indication that cultural genocide continues unabated. Although brutal punishments may not be common anymore, Africans nevertheless remain under tremendous pressure to emulate Europeans, in the name of *modernization* and

development, which are both euphemisms for the Western way of life.

At times, cultural genocide may become so effectively implemented by the oppressive group that many of the oppressed internalize the racist rationale for the contempt in which their culture is held. As a result, they start identifying with their oppressors’ culture as if, or wishing, it were theirs, while disassociating from their own culture. Africans with this perspective show no interest nor competence in their own cultural and historical traditions. Having been thoroughly brainwashed, and having accepted the European myth of African inferiority and European superiority, they take pride in perpetuating an alien culture. These Africans are culturally dislocated. This dislocation may be so extreme that it leads them to destroy their own culture. Such was the case, for example, in Haiti, when many Africans actively participated in the many anti-Vodu campaigns organized by the Vatican and destroyed African sacred ritual objects such as drums, all in the name of Jesus Christ. This dislocation is also observable on the aesthetic level, with many Africans on the continent and in the diaspora applying dangerous chemicals to their skin and hair, or subjecting themselves to painful and costly operations, in a futile and painful attempt to look white, or at least less black.

However, many Africans have resisted cultural genocide and remained the faithful keepers of African cultural traditions, often at the risk of being greatly ostracized. African history is replete with examples of Africans refusing to accept African culture as obsolete and to participate in its destruction. Haiti again provides a good example of this, with African spirits fully, consciously, and successfully being called upon by enslaved Africans to overthrow slavery, white racism, and white supremacy in the 19th century. In the United States, many Africans publicly rejected assimilation, the expected result of a successful cultural genocide, while encouraging Africans to return to Africa as the cultural source of their being. Such was the message of Marcus Garvey in the 1920s and of Malcom X and other black cultural nationalists in the 1960s. More recently, this is the message of Afrocentricity.

— Ama Mazama

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- Mudimbe, Valentin Y. (1988). *The Invention of Africa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. Mudimbe's book is an excellent study of the conversion process that lies at the heart of the attempted destruction of African culture by Europeans in Africa.

CURSE OF THE DOOR OF NO RETURN

The curse below is one of the most popular of the curses that were uttered for nearly 20 years at each "door of no return," as the various doors along the coast of Africa were called. These were the doors through which Africans were led to the waiting ships to be transported to the Americas and Caribbean to be enslaved.

THE CURSE OF THE ARROGANT DOOR

Through You, and a Thousand Doors Like You, Doors of No Return, Millions of Africans Passed.

Captured, Held Here in Bondage, Men and Women and Children, Few Older Than Thirty, Suffered in Intolerable Conditions.

In This Place, Women, 200 Strong, Would Be Kept Here in This Dungeon, Sometimes For 6 Months

Before a Ship Would Come. Given Two Containers, One For Easing Themselves and One For Food, Many Became so Sick and Weak That They Eased Themselves Where They Slept. On the Floor of This Dungeon the Blood of Menses Combined With Urine and Feces to Make This One Hell-Hole of Evil.

You, the Door of No Return, Was a Silent Witness to Human Brutality. You Saw the Faces of Evil in Those Who Whipped Our Backs as We Passed Through.

You Thought We Would Not Return. You Stood By as We Slipped Through Your Portals to the Americas. You Made History and Became History as We Wept, as We Cried, Where Is God?! Where Is God?!

With Shackles and Leg Irons We Left Here, Uncertain About Our Destiny.

They Called You the Door of No Return. We Vowed as We Left Through This Door, as We Saw This Beautiful Land for the Last Time, That Our Children Would Return.

There are Things That You Did Not See: On The Thousands of Ships That Took 60 Days to Find the Americas, We Tasted Agony Often and Gloried When Someone Died Saying, Gone She to Her Mother's Country or Gone He to His Friend's Home.

You Cannot See From This Beautiful Coast the Cotton Fields of Georgia or the Sugar Cane Fields of Jamaica. You Do Not See the Banana Plantations of Costa Rica or Brazil.

Hear Me! Hear Me Now!

Have We Not Returned?! Are We Not Africa's Children? Is This Not Our Ancestors' Land?

The Dismemberment of Our Cultures, Our Religions, and Our Traditions Often Left Us Broken and Broken-Hearted.

Tortured, Beaten, Lynched, Raped, and Worked to Death in the Americas, We Have Dreamed Pre-Enslavement Dreams and Walked the Nights of This Land With Our Memories, Asking What Evil Befell Us?

Now Who Have You Seen Here? Have We Not Returned? Have I Not Brought Here the Pebbles From the Beaches of the Lands to Which We Were Scattered? And You Are No More the Door of No-Return!

This curse was read by Molefi Kete Asante at Elmina Castle in Ghana during the 1980s and 1990s.

D

DARK GHETTO

Dark Ghetto: Dilemmas of Social Power (1965) is Kenneth Bancroft Clark's seminal sociological and psychological treatise, in which he likened the American ghetto, with Harlem as the prototype, to an urban colony in which the almost exclusively black inhabitants are emotionally and psychologically damaged and scarred as a result of the perpetual racism, greed, insensitivity, discrimination, and fear of a white ruling class that rationalizes racial segregation on the basis of the alleged inherent inferiority, subhumanity, and brutality of the "Negro." Written in the wake of two 1964 events—the Harlem riot and the passage of the Civil Rights Bill of 1964, *Dark Ghetto* was Clark's self-proclaimed "anguished cry."

Although born in the Panama Canal Zone, Clark was raised by his mother in Harlem. Thus, he approached his boyhood home as an "involved observer." Eschewing the notion of objectivity as unrealistic and unattainable, he sought the truth behind the Harlem "pathology": the staggering rates of juvenile delinquency, family instability, drug addiction, infant mortality, and homicide. What he found was a "devouring" ghetto filled with bars, churches, and fortune-tellers—and funeral homes. The only constant he reported is inadequacy, with its ever-present attendants: fantasy, decay, abandonment, and defeat.

Perhaps the most widely reported finding in *Dark Ghetto* is that of the "doll tests," which consisted of showing four identical dolls, two black and two white, to black children across the country, some as young as 3 years old. These children, when given a choice,

tended to reject the dark-skinned dolls as "dirty" or "bad." Further, when asked which doll resembled them, many of the children ran away in tears. Ironically, Clark exhibited a similar aversion to his own ancestry by declaring that the American Negro is no more African than he is Danish, Indian, or Irish.

What these tests revealed is that by the age of 7, most black children are painfully aware of the negative connotations associated with their dark skin. Society, primarily through the mass media, has taught them the unavoidable lesson of their so-called inferiority. This sets in motion a cycle of self-hatred and group-hatred that is intergenerational and generally lifelong. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) used the doll-test findings as a major part of the landmark 1954 Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education*, which ruled that school segregation is unconstitutional.

Clark identified several strategies that have historically been used by blacks in America to effect social change: prayer, isolation, accommodation, despair, alienation, law and maneuver, direct encounter, and truth. He also named two racial fantasies employed in America by blacks and whites alike—accommodation and acceptance, as well as a third fantasy used exclusively by blacks—militancy. Ultimately, he posited that the ghetto is, in simplest terms, the result of a struggle for power between the victims, who want change, and the victors, who resist change. Clark asserted that any real change in the American racial quagmire will require a joint effort of blacks and whites, who share a common destiny.

— Pamela Yaa Asantewaa Reed

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- Clark, Kenneth Bancroft. (1964). *Youth in the Ghetto: A Study of the Consequences of Powerlessness and a Blueprint for Change*. New York: Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited. It was this study that would later be expanded and published as *Dark Ghetto*.
- Clark, Kenneth Bancroft. (1986). *Prejudice and Your Child* (2nd ed.). Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press. (Original edition published 1955). This is an extremely useful sourcebook, as it summarizes the results of the doll tests and other related research. It was this book that brought Clark's work to the attention of the NAACP when they were preparing to challenge legal segregation in America's public schools.
- Karenga, Maulana. (2002). *Introduction to Black Studies* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles: University of Sankore Press. Karenga gives a concise yet comprehensive summary of *Dark Ghetto*, in addition to contextualizing it within the overall Black Studies movement.

**THE DESTRUCTION
OF BLACK CIVILIZATION**

Chancellor Williams's *The Destruction of Black Civilization: Great Issues of a Race from 4500 B.C. to 2000 A.D.* is a book of enduring power that has retained its ability to provoke from the time of its first publication by Third World Press in the 1970s. In it, Williams begins telling of the destruction of black civilization with his own story, the story of an inquisitive young boy who grew up in South Carolina and wanted to know why it was that white folks had all the power and control. Thus it could be said that when he was very young, Chancellor Williams began the monumental task of striving to reveal a vital evidenced history of black people. As an adult, Williams worked 16 years to accomplish this task because, as he explains it in his book, he needed to make it an unhurried summary of history. His research worked at specifically answering several important questions: (1) How did all-black Egypt become all-white Egypt? (2) What were some of the details of that process that assisted in erasing the feats of the African race from recorded history? (3) How was it that the black inventors of writing came to lose this art? (4) Are the African people one race? (5) If so, how do we explain the multiple languages and cultural varieties? (6) Is there some historical explanation for black disunity and black self-hatred? (7) How do we explain black desire for white and Asian rulership?

His profound work recovered a lost and destroyed history, and he intended it to make known the wholly unified guiding ontological system that had persevered from a black past to a black present over several thousands of years. An important aspect of his work involves the utilitarian directive of an African ethos that can guide all black people onward. The search for a black heritage was a major concern for Chancellor Williams, for he believed that only when African descendants learn about their past as a people can they find their true identity, and he perceptively acknowledged that otherwise black people will be gliding in the swales and currents of the heritages of other people.

Williams's admonitions to black people can be described as sobering, and his imperative is prophetic given that he conducted his research in the tumultuous times of the late 1950s through the 1960s. His work is a concise summarization of an intended two-volume review of African history, and it contributed to the revision of history that has sought to make things right and truthful. The belief that African descendants need to know the truth of black history, which remained unacknowledged in the West for centuries, drove Williams's research.

THE MIXED RACE QUESTION

Williams made a distinction between black ancient Egyptians and mixed-race ancient Egyptians, who are also known as Afro-Asians. It is the mixed-race ancient Egyptians who predominate later on in history and who primarily reside in northern ancient Egypt. The ancient Afro-Asians unfortunately sold out the ancient black race, and they even tried to conquer the blacks and deny them their true place in history. The ancient Afro-Asians were the result of miscegenation between male Asians from the northern region of ancient Egypt and female Africans from the southern region of ancient Egypt, specifically from Nubia, which is also known as ancient Ethiopia. When the Afro-Asians seized control of ancient Egypt, Europeans assumed them to be white, which helped to exclude any connection between them and what has been called Black Africa.

According to Williams, at certain times these mixed-race people were seen as being black, but they were actually half Africans who were fighting for control of Black Africa. Black Africa in this instance should be construed as stemming from Nubia, which is seen as the heartland of the ancient blacks. Nubia began in the Sudd Swamplands, included southern

parts of Sudan, and extended up to what is commonly referred to as the first cataract on the Nile River but is actually the last when you are going down the river. Ancient Egypt (or Kemet) is insightfully described as the land of the black people instead of the black lands, and ancient Egypt is described as the oldest daughter of ancient Ethiopia (or Nubia). Williams also noted that ancient Ethiopia should not be confused with modern Ethiopia, as ancient Ethiopia was in southern Egypt past the first cataract and Sudan.

WILLIAMS'S EXPLANATION OF BLACKNESS

The explanation Williams found for the children of the sun is construed as one key element in understanding blackness or black skin tone, which is seen as a blessing from the Sun God himself. Black skin is a shield from the rays of the sun and therefore a strong, valued human attribute, and this, of course, is the opposite of what traditional European rationalism would have black people believe. Williams also mentioned the courage of Queen Candace, who stood tall with a black army before the Macedonian leader Alexander made his way through Egypt (which was heavily populated by this time, in 332 B.C.E., with Afro-Asians). Of course, Alexander had great appreciation for the military might of Nubia, and rather than settling there, he moved on to conquer ancient Egypt just up to the first cataract, where most of the Afro-Asians resided. He did not venture into Nubia. Williams urged his readers to remember not only historical figures like Candace but also Piankhi, Shabaka, Shaka, Shyaam, Nzinga, and Mutota, as well as African towns and cities like Makuria, Alwa, Ethiopia, Meroe, Axum, and Kush, Ghana, Mali, Songhay, and Kuba.

Thus Williams made a meaningful history known. In his exploration of antiquity, he noted Thebes and Thebald, Napata, Elephantine, Nekheb, and places throughout Nubia-Cush in ancient Ethiopia, and maintained their historical significance. Also, Williams encouraged his readers to learn about Musawarat, Nuri, Paopolis, Kerma, Assuan, Soleb, Abu Simbel, Kurusku, Samnah, Philae, Kawa, Dongola, and so on. He stressed that African descendants need to know black history, as it is part of the legacy that was wiped out and that requires continuous acknowledgement. Williams wanted African descendants to know that African constitution, education, democracy, and justice were real, and also to recognize that the original concept of power to the

people was not an enlightened American or European invention but an African reality early on in ancient African civilizations. He wanted them to understand that passed down through the ages was the African value that the rights of the individual never come before the rights of the whole or the community: Although invading Europeans and Arabs destroyed the African self-governing and harmonious social existence, the memory of such ancient unity needs to be maintained by present African descendants. Williams asserted the importance of understanding that certain disruptions and critical societal situations resulted in Africans' interminable struggle to survive and are the prime cause of African disunity.

THE PURPOSE OF STUDYING BLACKS' HISTORY

Williams believed it was imperative to study the past and understand the historical determinants that precipitated Africans' social disruption and disarray as a first step in working toward a necessary change. Williams pointed out the inevitable—that African descendants have to exist with whites in an ultimate cooperative society. Thus he instructed blacks to reformulate and reject the need for white adulation, to strike out pretenses about integrationism that particularly await the beneficence of whites, and to mandate respect on their own terms as Africans. Williams presented a solution and guidelines for adhering to a master plan that would enable global reorganization of African people toward an ideal unity that all African descendants could abide by. The resolve would not only eternally liberate black minds that are white controlled but also set out to rebuild the black greatness that once was. The proffered itinerary would reemerge the genius that always had been an inherent part of African people throughout the world. Affirmation of Williams's concept of the destruction of an all-white and sole standing civilization is the key primordial step in constructing a better humanity.

— Jorge Serrano

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to bring hundreds of African American students to consciousness about the role of Africans in history.

James, George J. (1954). *Stolen Legacy*. New York: Philosophical Library. This is probably one of the most discussed books ever written by an African scholar. It has been supported, defended, maligned, and criticized, yet it remains one of the most useful works for understanding ancient history.

DIASPORA

Diaspora is a word derived from the Greek word *diaspeirein*, meaning “dispersion.” It was applied first to the Greeks in the Hellenic world, and later to the Jews after the fall of Jerusalem. With the emergence of the Zionist movement in Europe during the 19th and early 20th centuries, the term *diaspora* was almost exclusively applied to the Jews, encompassing their experience under genocidal circumstances (as in Nazi Germany) and adverse conditions throughout the Middle East and Europe, as they longed to return to Palestine or Israel, which they claimed to be their homeland, as “God’s chosen people.”

THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

Scholars began adopting the term *diaspora* as a tool to analyze the experience of people of African descent during the 20th century, especially during the 1950s and 1960s. Africans in the diaspora in the United States of America during slavery implicitly expressed the ideas of dispersion and a desire to return to the homeland when they invoked the idea of “Ethiopia,” using biblical imagery, as they pondered the reasons for their suffering. Marcus Garvey’s Back to Africa movement during the first two decades of the 20th century had embedded in it the concept of a homeland to which diasporic black men and women were encouraged to return. However, diaspora as a concept never succeeded in becoming a political tool capable of galvanizing black people and providing a common identity and purpose for those living in the Americas, Asia, and Europe.

The concept of the diaspora has, however, been used implicitly and explicitly by both intellectuals and non-intellectuals, and it has been the focus of and inspiration to many cultural movements and practices in the black world designed to advance black people’s agendas. For the sake of completeness, the following is a list of the contributors to the concept noted by scholars:

Edward Blyden from the Danish West Indies (now the Virgin Islands); T.E.S. Scholes, J.A. Rogers, Robert Lowe, Marcus Garvey, Leonard Barret, Erna Brodber, Lorna Goodison, and Mutabaruka from Jamaica; Molefi Kete Asante, Sheila Walker, and Wade Nobles from the United States; Arthur Schomberg from Puerto Rico; Jean Price-Mars from Haiti; John Jacob Thomas, George Padmore, C.L.R. James, Chalkdust, Bob Marley, Burning Spear, and Peter Stalin from Jamaica; George James, Norman Cameron, Ivan Van Sertima, and Walter Rodney from Guyana; Aime Césaire, Joseph Zobel, and René Maran from Martinique; George Lamming and Kamau Brathwaite from Barbados; Maryse Condé, Ama Mazama, and Simone Schwartz-Bart from Guadeloupe; and Nicolas Guillen from Cuba. The Rastafarian movement, calypso, reggae, and *negritude* have all, in one way or the other, contributed to the acceptance of *diaspora* as a collective term referencing the experience and culture of people of African descent.

In today’s usage, the concept of the diaspora has two meanings and purposes. First, as a layperson’s term, it has been applied to all peoples of African descent who are scattered around the globe in countries such as France, Great Britain, Brazil, Belize, Mexico, the United States of America, and virtually every Caribbean island. Interestingly, some experts have recently included a segment of the Indian population, the Dalits (formerly known as the untouchables), as a black diaspora, and many Dalits now claim to be of African ancestry and identify their struggle with that of the African Americans from whom they take inspiration. These and others make up part of what some scholars have called the Afro-Asian diaspora, whose constitutive element was the Indian Ocean slave trade carried out mainly by the Arabs and Middle Eastern traders and merchants. The third layer of the black diaspora is made up of voluntary migrants who have left their African homeland and are now found in other parts of the world, especially France, Great Britain, and the United States. Therefore, viewed from this vantage point, the African diaspora is a set of communities, not a sovereign state with its own language, and connotes simultaneously a process and a condition.

The Memory of and Desire for Return to Africa

The constituent elements of the diaspora, which become the focus and subject of scientific inquiry through the diaspora analytical model, include the

following: memory of and desire or longing to return to the homeland, commitment and some sense of responsibility to the well-being of that motherland, and solidarity with other communities that claim the same original home. The most readily identifiable characteristics of diasporic African people are race and skin color (black or shades of black pigmentation, contingent upon how blackness is defined in a specific national context); a history of suffering from slavery, colonialism, and/or discrimination based on racism; and a continuous struggle to reconquer their dignity and earn fair treatment from the international community, particularly the more technologically advanced and hegemonic Western world. Unfortunately, viewed from this perspective, the concept has the connotation of victimization rather than of agency on the part of people of African origins, whose numbers are increasing rapidly on the world map.

Indeed, when the number of Africans on the continent is added to that of Africans in the diaspora, the size of the black world is very large. Africa's population is estimated at over 850 million. In Brazil alone, people of African descent number at least 100 million, the largest black population of any country outside of Africa; the U.S. black population is 33 million (accounting for 13% of the U.S. population); and the Caribbean has some 40 million black people. Mexico is said to be the home of over 150,000 black people, mostly African Americans and their descendants. Other countries, in Europe and elsewhere—such as Great Britain, France, Portugal, Belgium, Italy, Spain, and even Russia—have also been home to Africans, especially following the colonial period, and in all these countries combined, the number of Africans is approximately 100,000. Thus, when all people of African descent are put together, including those scattered in the Middle East and Southeast Asia, Africans in the world number almost one billion.

SCHOLARLY USE OF THE DIASPORA CONCEPT

According to the academy, the most useful and innovative paradigm or tool of analysis of the experience of these people of African descent scattered across the globe is the concept of the diaspora. The trend toward this use of the concept, as noted earlier, began during the 1950s and 1960s, but accelerated during the 1990s, becoming the paradigm that has compelled several African American and African Studies programs to change not only their focus and scope but their very

designation. Many noteworthy black scholars have extolled the virtues of the new paradigm as opposed to the traditionally prevailing model. Indeed, the proponents emphasize that, as a concept, diaspora has a built-in comparative perspective of black people outside and within Africa, and it thus allows scholars to have a comprehensive understanding of the black world at one point in time. From the perspective of a diaspora, one learns about the similarities that bind and dissimilarities that separate the discrete experiences of black people scattered across the globe.

Instead of using concepts based on political relationships of hegemony—such as slavery, race, and colonialism—as the model to study black people, the diaspora paradigm makes black people the focus and the subject of the study. This is a recent accomplishment, as up until the last few decades, the most common paradigm in the study of the experience of black people was the national or nation-state model, undergirded by an analysis of race, slavery, freedom or liberation, legal status, and perhaps cultural manifestations within the confines of national boundaries, which prevented scholars from capturing the totality of the experience of Africans on the continent and in the diaspora. Indeed, many now consider this approach to be anachronistic, one that is based on the models created and imposed by an academic community whose perspective has essentially remained Eurocentric, always carrying with it the subtext of domination and quite often relegating Africans and their descendants to a secondary role.

The old paradigm has further overlooked the international dimensions of the diaspora, namely, the impact of the capitalism, socialism, Marxism, globalization, and rapid technological changes that have benefitted the Western world at the expense of people of African descent and their communities—those who are now attempting to become and remain agents of their own destiny. In contrast, the new paradigm provides a comparative perspective of people of African descent and their experiences over the millennia and, therefore, empowers them to move away from European-based paradigms by bringing center stage the black world in its most intricate, relevant, and interlocking global connections.

Politically, the concept of the diaspora implies the idea of separation, but it also implies the unity of a people who are geographically scattered and dispersed. In addition, it carries the notion or desire of eventual unification in a homeland. It stands to reason

then that a diaspora is not static but conditioned by local and international realities, making for the existence of unique identities (creoles, mulattoes, coloreds, blacks, *pardos*) and cultural mixes and resulting in what some have characterized as *overlapping diasporas* shaped by globalization, ethnicity, gender, and class. It is worth noting that scholars who are using the diaspora paradigm are searching for similarities and dissimilarities in experience and response and presuppose that the similarities will be greater in quality and quantity than the differences—if the dissimilarities are greater, the comparative model is not useful. In addition, the diaspora model should ideally go beyond simply uncovering cultural similarities (in music, art, idioms, and African resilience) and dissect the plethora of black people's political, social, and economic experiences, correlating them with those of other diasporas and communities.

USES OF THE ANALYTICAL IDEA

However, in any academic enterprise involving the social sciences, the humanities, and the fine arts, the tools of analysis are never perfect. People and societies change and new circumstances and evidence force members of the academy to adjust, abandon, and sharpen the old paradigms or find new ones. This problem applies to be the diaspora as well. Indeed, the diaspora seems to be the best tool currently available for the analysis of the experiences of the black world, even though scholars see some shortcomings inherent in it. For example, they ask, how can we assume that we benefit quintessentially from a comparative perspective of the experiences of black people situated in totally different environments and political settings that, at least on the surface, have nothing to do with each other? Beyond this paradox, scholars have also noted the problem of periodization in comparative diaspora studies. How legitimate is it, for example, for one to compare Brazil in 1888 with African America in 1863, Haiti in 1890, and Ghana in 1875 regarding their response to slavery and the quest of diasporic Africans for freedom and determination?

Indeed, whereas diasporic Africans in Haiti were independent by 1804, those in Brazil were only virtually free in the early 1880s (*de jure* freedom did not come until 1886), and those in America were still enslaved in 1863. Further, in the late 19th century Ghana did not even exist as the nation we know today. What would be the common thread in such a study,

except perhaps diasporic Africans' sharing of traditional cultural forms like call-and-response in music, *vodou*, *candomble*, *santeria*, and mutual societies? Indeed, the understanding of slavery, race, gender, and class, as well as the remembrance of freedom, were at that point in time too dissimilar among these groups to allow for comparison. To mitigate this problem, some scholars advocate a periodization of longer intervals, such as centuries, as freezing short periods of time leads to distortion and often to findings of more dissimilarities than similarities, thus rendering the diaspora paradigm meaningless. As a result, the difficulties inherent in the concept of the diaspora as a tool for the acquisition and analysis of knowledge have forced some scholars to advocate its abandonment altogether in favor of a black globality model that would focus on Europe, Africa, and the New World.

Finally, there is the question of the place of pan-Africanism in the new academic discourse and how this concept differs from the diaspora paradigm as a tool of analysis applied to the unveiling of the secrets of the black world. Pan-Africanism is a movement that emerged within the diaspora, an organizing political tool that was designed to bring people of African descent together to fight for their rights, whether under colonialism in Africa and the Caribbean or under discrimination in the United States, and to promote the unification of black people, especially those living on the continent of Africa. Indeed, beyond the motherland, it was unrealistic to expect that the Caribbean nations alone, for example, could form a United States of Black People. Furthermore, a major segment of the black world, the African American population, could never belong to that union, given that it owns no soil on which to claim its sovereignty and its national identity.

In conclusion, the concept of the diaspora allows us to follow new vignettes of academic inquiry and grasp the totality of the experiences of the black world. It is through the study of the diaspora as a paradigm that one can properly illuminate the unique political and economic impact of black people on the world scene and realize that without them Europe and the Americas would not be the "peacock" nations that they are today. All in all, therefore, and despite its shortcomings, most African and African American scholars today agree that the concept of diaspora is the best academic tool of analysis we have discovered or recovered over the past few decades.

— Mario J. Azevedo

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- Hines, Darlene Clack, and McLeod, Jacqueline (Eds.). (2000). *Crossing Boundaries: A Comparative History of Black People in Diaspora*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. The essays in this volume provide a basic theoretical framework for the use of the concept of the diaspora as a tool of analysis and illustrate the complexity of the experiences of diaspora communities in the Americas, parts of the Middle East, and Europe.
- Okpewho, Isidore, Davies, Carole Boyce, and Mazrui, Ali (Eds.). (1999). *African Diaspora: African Origins and New World Identities*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. This compilation of 33 articles contains a broad range of material on the phenomenon of the African diaspora.

DIOPIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY

Diopian historiography is the name assigned to the revolutionary turn in the writing of African history introduced by the late Senegalese scholar, Cheikh Anta Diop. Diop was born in 1923 in Caytu (near Diourbel) in Senegal, and he spent considerable time learning from the learned men of the Mourides order of Islam. One of these men was a relative of his, Cheikh Mbacke, who was impressed by the brilliance, eagerness to learn, and discipline of the young Cheikh Anta, who asked him many questions and demonstrated very early the type of inquisitiveness that was necessary for superior scholarship. Mbacke believed that the capacity of the young Cheikh Anta to master the wisdom of the elders and the knowledge of the imams indicated a bright destiny for the young man. He encouraged him to study diligently and to apply himself wisely. Thus, Cheikh Anta attended the French school at Diourbel until the 1940s, when he went to the Lycée Faidherbe in St. Louis, on the Island of Sor, where Mbacke was living at the time.

There were many influences on Diop. He was formed in the crucible of the St. Louis of 1940 to 1955. Among the pan-Africanists who visited the city was one of the most powerful black intellectuals of his day, Edward Wilmot Blyden. He found a community

of young Senegalese men who were devoted to revolutionary change in their condition. Blyden may have met Babacar Sy, Lamine Gueye, Ngalandou Diouf, Mar Diop, Cekuta Diop, Raoul Lonis, Lamine Senghor, Emile Faure, Adolphe Mathurin, Kojo Tuwalu, and Kouyate Garang. There is no indication that Diop met with Blyden, but the environment of St. Louis at that time makes it possible. Here was the leading pan-Africanist of the continent, who, after having been in Liberia for a long time, had come to the French colonial capital to talk to the young African intellectuals. It is certainly not out of the question that Diop may have met with him in the company of all the other young men of the day. And Diop was almost certainly exposed to the work of Marcus Garvey in St. Louis. A Senegalese named Sar Djim Ndiaye, who knew Diop, gave an interview a few months after Diop's death in 1986 in which he said that he had distributed Garvey information in St. Louis in the 1920s and 1930s, and his friend Sama Lam Sar recalled that the influence of Marcus Garvey was very strong in St. Louis in the period of 1930 to 1940.

Diop's importance resides in his pivotal position as the African intellectual who confronted the most powerful myth the Europeans had created about African history. It is the structure and process of his writing of African history that at once made history and made a new interpretation of Africa. This is the meaning of Diopian historiography. He thrust Africa to the center of its own story and made all other issues subsidiary. This was the first time that Africa had been written in the central position in its own story since the occupation of the European powers. Diop is in a class alone by virtue of his intellectual struggles and victories.

There are three distinct aspects to his historiography: (1) battling the culture of disbelief, (2) the assertion of an Africa independent of Europe, and (3) the unity of Africa. It was necessary for Diop to fight the culture of disbelief in the capability of African people to create civilizations of majesty and monumentality. Diop also had to demonstrate that Africa before colonialism was fully capable of running its own affairs. And, finally, he asserted the unity of Africa, despite the fact that there were different local and regional histories. In addition to these three major aspects of the logic of Diop's historiography, there are two main theses that helped to make him the most quoted African historian. One of Diop's theses is that world culture was divided into a two-cradle structure, with one cradle patrilineal and European and the other

African and matrilineal. Therefore, African culture and values were equal to but different from those of all the other cultures in the world.

The other thesis for which Diop is well known is that ancient Egypt was a black civilization and that this would have always remained an accepted fact had not the European historians falsified history. The new historiography of Africa, the Diopian historiography, thus meant a rewriting of the ancient record to show the ancient Egyptians as the black people they were and to defend African culture from those who were invested in the falsified records. Diop was convinced that it was important for the African scholar to revision Africa without the lens of Europe in order to write a correct version of the continent's history. Indeed, Egypt had to be reconnected to the rest of Africa so that African historians would be able to write a logical story.

— Molefi Kete Asante

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DISLOCATION

The concept of *dislocation* was first advanced by Molefi Asante as a critical conceptual component of the Afrocentric Theory in the 1980s, and it was further developed in the 1990s. According to the Afrocentric Theory, each ethnic group occupies a particular space, based on its history, culture, and biology. That space represents the group's *center* or *location*. However, it is possible for a given group to develop a sense of location that is not congruent with its history, culture, and biology. This often happens when the group identifies, consciously or not, with another group, which it perceives as dominant, and loses sight of itself, thus causing dislocation to occur. The identification with another group may occur at two related levels: It may involve the adoption of the dominant group's attitudes and/or the partial or total adoption of the dominant group's culture.

THE IMPACT OF DISLOCATION

Dislocation has become a concern for many Black Studies scholars, as it is undeniable that African people have experienced severe dislocation for the past 500 years under white supremacy. African dislocation can be apprehended in a great variety of areas. It is easily observable, for example, in the adoption of European aesthetics, with Africans attempting to modify their original physical appearance in order to conform to the European model. Michael Jackson's tragic example immediately comes to mind. However, although the singer may represent the most extreme example of such an attempt at physical distortion, he is in no way alone. Countless African people, all over the world, continue to rely on surgery and dangerous chemicals in order to alter the texture of their hair and the color of their skin.

In addition, dislocation is responsible for the adoption of the individualistic and materialistic ethos that is characteristic of the dominant European culture. Dislocation is also quite evident in the adoption of European theories and other intellectual constructs by African scholars and writers. Many African intellectuals, for example, continue to refer to Africa as "underdeveloped" and to African languages as "dialects," while others adamantly argue that there are no philosophers in Africa. Such a discourse obviously reflects an uncritical and probably unconscious adoption by Africans of the European discourse on Africa. In other cases, some black fiction writers go so far as to make their black characters blush, thus holding whiteness as the implicit norm that informs their writing.

The result of dislocation has been massive confusion, disorientation, and self-destruction. Indeed, dislocated Africans tend to dissociate themselves from their own history, culture, and biology and may thus engage in actions that run contrary to the best interest of the African people. Such individuals are often negatively referred to by self-conscious Africans as "negroes." It is important to realize that, given the racism that has been endemic to most of European thought, African dislocation has meant not simply total or partial acculturation but also, quite often, self-hatred. Thus, dissociation from the African community has often been seen as necessary by many dislocated Africans, not simply for the purpose of social and economic advancement but also to advance and prove their humanity to Europeans.

THE DISLOCATION CONCEPT AS AN ANALYTICAL TOOL

Such dislocated Africans were referred to by Ama Mazama, in public and academic settings in the late 1990s, as *malevolent negroes*. There are two types of malevolent negroes: malevolent negroes with a European aesthetic and malevolent negroes with an African aesthetic. The former, generally speaking, are individuals who have fully and openly committed themselves to the defense of white supremacy, at the expense of African people, if necessary. Clarence Thomas, an African American who was appointed to the Supreme Court by George H. Bush, Sr., and who supported the dismantling of affirmative action, may be the best example of a malevolent negro with a European aesthetic. Malevolent negroes with an African aesthetic, on the other hand, are a rather recent phenomenon and are all the more dangerous in that they present themselves as “Africans.” They will not publicly and openly support white supremacy. However, behind the scenes, they will be observed consistently and systematically betraying and undermining African agency. Obviously, the actions of malevolent negroes have been a most serious problem for African people for hundreds of years and have repeatedly caused attempts by Africans to free themselves to abort. Such malevolent negroes are often generously rewarded and hailed by Europeans.

In addition to the malevolent negroes, however, there exists another category: the *benevolent negroes*. These are Africans with good intentions toward their own community. However, because of their dislocation, they analyze the African experience through a European lens and embark on projects that are fundamentally Eurocentric and not necessarily in the best interest of African people. Many Africans from the diaspora, for example, look at Africa as a place that needs to be “civilized” and “developed,” and as a result, they create programs to do just that, while failing to realize that what they are really advocating for Africa is Westernization. In the same vein, some “black” schools, in order to get black students “ready to compete,” may simply further the cultural and intellectual dislocation of African children.

The remedy for dislocation suggested by the Afrocentric Theory is *relocation*. While many debate what it means to be African (i.e., what relocation would entail), there is a general consensus that Africans must accept and embrace their own culture,

history, and physical appearance in order to move from a state of chaos to one where harmony and peace may prevail.

— Ama Mazama

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- Asante, Molefi Kete. (1998). *The Afrocentric Idea*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. In this original work, the author seeks to explain the validity of being centered in one’s historical and cultural place.
- Asante, Molefi Kete. (2003). *Afrocentricity*. Chicago: African American Images. This is the classic book referred to as the first introduction to the concept of Afrocentricity. In this work, Asante demonstrates the numerous ways Africans have been decentered conceptually, politically, economically, and definitionally and provides an alternative, African-centered perspective.
- Mazama, Ama. (Ed.). (2003). *The Afrocentric Paradigm*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press. This book contains additional discussions and examples of the concept of dislocation within the context of Afrocentricity.

DREAM TEAM

Beginning in the mid 1990s and continuing until 2001, the Harvard Dream Team was a gathering of very well-established scholars at Harvard University’s W.E.B. Du Bois Institute for Afro-American Research and Department of Afro American Studies. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., a major literary figure, spearheaded the idea of bringing together a “dream team” of scholars, which included Cornel West, William Julius Wilson, Evelyn Higginbotham, and Kwame Anthony Appiah. Seeking to create an opportunity to jumpstart Black Studies at Harvard, Gates hoped that this group of scholars would be the new intellectual wave of the field. The Dream Team had several successes in the public arena, spreading liberal educational views, highlighting the importance of African Americans in the American academy, and producing useful documents for the field, including the *Encarta Encyclopedia*. The Dream Team, under intense public scrutiny, had several personal and professional circumstances that resulted in diminishing their number and influence at Harvard. However, it is generally

believed that irreconcilable differences with the administration at the university led to the ultimate breakup of the group. By 2003, of the entire Dream Team, only Gates, Higginbotham, and Wilson remained at Harvard.

All of the major players in the Dream Team had their own individual achievements. Henry Louis Gates was featured on *Time* magazine's "25 Most Influential Americans" list in 1997, received a National Humanities Medal in 1998, and was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1999. Gates is coeditor of the encyclopedia *Encarta Africana* (1999) published on CD-ROM by Microsoft and in book form by Basic Civitas Books under the title *Africana: The Encyclopedia of the African and African American Experience* (2000). He is also the author of *Wonders of the African World* (1999), the book companion to the 6-hour BBC/PBS television series of the same name. Gates's most popular works include the *Norton Anthology of African American Literature* that he edited in 1996, which features the writings of Frederick Douglass, Phillis Wheatley, W.E.B. Du Bois, Paul Laurence Dunbar, and others and *The Signifying Monkey: Towards A Theory of Afro-American Literary Criticism* (1988), which focuses on African American vernacular.

Cornel West taught primarily in the field of African American philosophy of divinity while he was at Harvard University. Prior to his tenure at Harvard, which began in 1994, West taught at Yale University, Union Theological Seminary, and Princeton University, where he was chair of the program in Afro-American Studies. He is the author of numerous books, including his most famous book, *Race Matters* (1993), *Jews and Blacks: Let the Healing Begin* (1995), *The Cornel West Reader* (1999), *The African-American Century* (2002), and *Democracy Matters* (2004). He has also recorded a jazz/hip-hop CD called *Sketches of My Culture* (2001). West's visibility outside the academy created friction between him and Harvard's administration, and West eventually left Harvard in 2002 and returned to Princeton.

Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham began teaching at Harvard in 1998. Higginbotham is the author of *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880–1920* (1993). She also is

coeditor with Darlene Clark Hine and Leon Litwack of the *Harvard Guide to African American History* (2001). William Julius Wilson arrived at Harvard in 1996, after teaching sociology at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and University of Chicago for 24 years. Wilson's major works—*The Declining Significance of Race* (1978), *The Truly Disadvantaged* (1990), and *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor* (1997)—are noted for contending that the economic plight of blacks in America is the result of poverty from joblessness rather than race. Kwame Anthony Appiah grew up in Ghana and England. Among his books are *Assertion and Conditionals* (1985), *For Truth in Semantics* (1986), *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture* (1992), and, with Amy Gutmann, *Color Conscious: The Political Morality of Race* (1998). Appiah is also coeditor with Henry Louis Gates of *Africana: The Encyclopedia of the African and African American Experience* (2000). He joined the faculty at Princeton along with his fellow former Dream Team associate Cornel West in 2002.

— Deonte Hollowell

FURTHER READING

- Appiah, Kwame. (1992). A. *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture*. New York: Oxford University Press. Appiah discusses theories of traditional religions in a postmodern context, where he argues that there are limits of symbolist interpretation of religion.
- Gates, Henry Louis, Jr. (1988). *The Signifying Monkey: Toward a Theory on Afro-American Literary Criticism*. New York: Oxford University Press. The purpose of Gates's book is to present a theoretical stance on black literary works from a black perspective.
- Higginbotham, Evelyn. (1993). *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880–1920*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Higginbotham provides an account of the crucial role of black women in making the black church a powerful institution for change in the black community.
- West, Cornel. (1993). *Race Matters*. Boston: Beacon Press. This is West's analysis of America's racial dilemmas.
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E

EBONICS

The term *Ebonics*, a combination of *ebony* and *phonics*, refers to “black sounds.” The term was introduced in the early 1970s, at the Cognitive and Language Development of the Black Child Conference in St. Louis, by a group of African American linguists led by psychologist Robert Williams. The group had held a caucus to come up with a term for black people’s language that would not have the negative connotations of *Black English*—a term that had caused considerable confusion, as people kept thinking of the language spoken by African Americans as a negative form of English.

Ebonics is the language spoken by a majority of Africans in the United States. Like other languages, Ebonics is a regularized code with specific and constant grammatical, phonological, and lexical principles. Robert Williams, called by some the dean of African American psychologists, led the debate to define African American cultural experience from the standpoint of African people with agency as actors in the history of language. When the psychologists and linguists emerged from the St. Louis caucus, the African American attendees at the conference had adopted the use of the word *Ebonics* to refer to all of the characteristics of the language of African Americans. The word *Ebonics* was seen in print for the first time in the 1975 book *Ebonics: The True Language of Black Folks*, which was produced by the Washington University Institute of Black Studies and published by Robert Williams and Associates.

To say “Black English” is to misunderstand the nature of the language spoken and understood by

African Americans. There is neither a white nor a black English, there is only English and the varieties of English called dialects that exist in Australian and American English. There are also regional accents, such as Brooklyn, Boston, Atlanta, Los Angeles, and Dallas accents. Understanding a few of the important terms in language is useful in any analysis of Ebonics. For example, the terms dialect, accent, regionalism, slang, semantics, phoneme, morpheme, and lexicon should be understood in order to appreciate the Africological, that is, Black Studies, orientation to language.

Dialect: a form of speech spoken by a community that does not yet have the power to define itself as standard.

Accent: a dimension of speech pronunciation that varies from the commonly used form

Regionalism: phonological and lexical characteristics of a language spoken in a given region

Slang: a colloquial use of certain terms and words that might be used in a language and abandoned after a while or words that are used by a certain group in society as an indication of group membership.

Semantics: the study of the meaning of words

Phoneme: a unit of sound

Morpheme: a unit of meaning

Lexicon: the totality of the words, terms, proverbs, folk notions, verbal and nonverbal cues that constitute a language.

The Black Studies scholar is interested in Ebonics not as a dialect or as slang, but as a language itself.

This is the central difference between those who locate the discussion of Ebonics from a centered perspective and those who make their analysis from the periphery of African culture.

EVOLUTION OF EBONICS

One does not call English spoken by Mexican Americans “Brown English” or that spoken by Asian Americans “Yellow English,” because we recognize that those groups have legitimate languages of their own. Other Americans may speak Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Korean, or English, but never a language described by a color adjective. Thus, when linguists determined that the language spoken by a majority of African Americans had developed alongside English and used many vocabulary items that were English, they recognized the possible confusion of the language with English and knew that a name had to be given to it to disassociate it from the English language. This was an act of African agency quite in line with the movement in the 1960s for African self-determination and self-definition. The linguists named the language spoken and understood by the majority of African Americans “Black English.”

Actually, when Africans were first brought to the English colony of Virginia in 1619, they did not speak English. They came to America with African languages. In fact, over the following 200 years, Africans from ethnic groups such as Angola, Congo, Yoruba, Ewe, Akan, Wolof, Hausa, and Mandinka were brought to America with their own languages intact. But since all of these languages are different, it was difficult for Africans to speak with each other. Neither could they speak to the whites who dominated them. Thus, using the commonalities of their own languages as well as some English, they were able to create a language, what is now called Ebonics, that would allow them to communicate with each other and with the whites. In many respects, this language was the most creative early achievement of African Americans.

Among the traits of Ebonics is its phonology, which includes a structured grammar and idiomatic expressions that are understood by its speakers. While it is true that some of the features of Ebonics are shared with English dialects, other features occur only in Ebonics. It is the systematic differences that occur only in Ebonics that show its relationship to West African languages. Through Ebonics, many English speakers are influenced by Africanisms. There is not

an English speaker in the United States who does not use the expression “O.K.,” which is an African term that David Dalby, in his article “African Element in Black English,” traces back to the Wolof-Mande region of West Africa. In addition, many other Americanisms originated in Africanisms. Many words—such as *boogie woogie*, *jazz*, *jamboree*, *jive*, *mumbo-jumbo*, *big mouth*, *gumbo*, *juke*, *gorilla*, *goober*, *elephant*, *cola*, *banjo*, *banana*, *okra*, *bogus*, *bug*, *fuzz*, *phoney*, *yam*, and *rap*—are directly related to West and Central African terminology. Ebonics contains the remnants of many African terms that have changed over the years. For example, the Ebonics expression “to kick the bucket,” meaning that someone has died, is traced to two sources, the Ga *kekre*, meaning “dry, stiff” and *bu*, meaning “end,” and the Sierra Leonean Krio *kekerebu*, meaning “dead.”

Pioneering linguist and scholar of African American language Geneva Smitherman has argued that Ebonics is African in nuance, gesture, and tone, as well as in the derivation of its structure and lexicon. Because of the numerous ethnic communities that were mixed in American society, the resulting language was a distillation of an intercultural linguistic heritage. There were nuances of Yoruba, Congo, Wolof, and Ga in every large gathering of Africans in the United States. Sometimes words from those languages entered Ebonics.

The culture inherent in a language is directly related to a people’s history. That is why, like other languages, Ebonics has its own identifiable phonology, syntax, and lexicon. These are three of the most important characteristics of a language. Although it is well known that humans create communicative forms and explore ways to transmit the most intimate ideas in conversation, what is not well known and not often appreciated is the genius of the Africans in the United States in their creation of the language Ebonics.

— Molefi Kete Asante

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- Christian, Mark. (Ed.). (2002). *Black Identity in the 20th Century*. London: Hansib. The essays in this book deal with many aspects of African culture in the Western world. This is a good source of material on identity.

Dillard, J. L. (1973). *Black English*. New York: Random House. This is the authoritative work on Black English by a long-time expert on the language of Africans in the Americas. This book has been referred to by many of the linguists who came after Dillard.

Mufwene, Salikoko, Rickford, John R., Bailey, Guy, and Baugh, John (Eds.). (1998). *African American English*. London: Routledge. This is a comprehensive work on the nature of African American speech. It deals with some of the key issues surrounding the language of Africans in the Americas.

EDUCATION AND BLACK STUDIES

Education is the process of acquiring knowledge and developing the mind and character through formal and/or informal learning. Black Studies represents a radical departure in the formal educational process by bringing into the academy a perspective that is Afrocentric. In various explorations into the lives of African people on the continent and in the diaspora, the discipline of Black Studies has sought to provide students with in-depth discourses on African systems of knowledge. There are many varieties of African education, but most of them have the same basic characteristics. Based on the ideas from Black Studies, most scholars now agree that African education involves

- teaching the unity of humans and nature, an ecological idea
- teaching social responsibility, a social idea
- teaching the importance of character, an ethical idea
- teaching the importance of humility, a spiritual idea

In previous eras in Africa, rites-of-passage initiations were central to all education; vocational skill training was not a major part of the educational process. This meant that those with the ability to train the young used their talents to provide the proper measures for the young to experience and achieve the desired results. These rites constitute the pragmatic manifestation of the core values of a society. When a person was on the road to becoming a man or woman, the initiators would provide the necessary steps and procedures to bring the person to the goal. Then, as in most situations of this type, there would be a celebration. Modern education systems in the West tend to

have similar markers, including the commencement exercises.

In the African traditions, preparations for such rites tended to start at a very early age. The community accepted the fact that the child would one day end the training period, and so they started preparing for it when the child was quite young. Testimony regarding the high level of integration that the educational process had with day-to-day life is seen in the fact that during infancy, lullabies were sung to the African child and served to communicate the whole history of the family to the child. When the child started to learn how to speak, the mother was careful to teach the child the correct manner of speaking, and later on in the child's development, she taught the child the correct manner of walking. The children heard questions such as "What is your father's name?" "What is your grandfather's name?" and "What is your great-grandfather's name?" All the questions were designed to connect the child to family history and cultural memory. Age-group sets were a key part of this system, and the character and memory of more mature children were developed through the use of fables, myths, and a complex process of training that resulted in the memorization and identification of hundreds of family livestock. In ancient African societies, there were no uneducated children.

By the time Ghana became independent in 1957, colonialism had almost completely destroyed the fabric of African culture and African people. From the early 1400s, the European system of education and the work of Christian missionaries had been implemented to instill in Africans a sense of inferiority about everything that was African. Everything in the education of African children was presented to substantiate the view that they were backward, primitive, and heathen. The primary purpose of this system of education was social control, to make Africans politically and economically valuable to and dependent on European societies. Over time, this system became in varying forms a worldwide educational system designed to support and maintain the continued dominance of the Western world over all others. It is this system that demanded the establishment of a more democratic movement in education.

Black Studies is linked to this development because it was born out of the context of the 1960s student movement for Black Studies. With their professor, Nathan Hare, as their advisor, students at San Francisco State University in 1968 demanded courses

relevant to their experiences—courses that would be taught from a black perspective. Today, Black Studies programs exist in colleges and universities throughout the country, including doctoral degree programs such as those at Temple University, the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, the University of California at Berkeley, Harvard University, and Michigan State University. These programs have begun in varying degrees to lay the foundation for a significant paradigm shift in the education of blacks throughout the world.

— *Bart McSwine*

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- Wilson, Amos N. (1993). *The Falsification of Afrikan Consciousness*. New York: Afrikan World InfoSystems. This book describes the role that racist historiography played in the destruction of African consciousness.

ELDER SCHOLARS

The Elder Scholars were a group of academicians, writers, activists, and lay historians who lived primarily on the East Coast of the United States during the 20th century. They wrote and debated the ideas of African cultures and civilization in many forums. Some of the most prolific and best known of these scholars were Chancellor Williams, John Henrik Clarke, Edward V. Scobie, and Yosef ben-Johannan. They became legends in the African American communities of the East Coast largely because of their activist stance on political and intellectual issues. Collectively, their lives were devoted to the quest for the truth about the history of African people, and they made an important contribution to this quest by serving as sources for the first generation of Black Studies scholars.

CHANCELLOR WILLIAMS

Chancellor Williams (1902–1996), the grandson of slaves, was born in Bennettsville, South Carolina. He earned his master's degree from Howard University and doctoral degree from American University. He was an astute educator and prolific writer. His early questions were social and historical interrogations derived from his observations of the social relations in his community. He frequently questioned the disparity in opportunity between blacks and whites. This became his most constant compass in the intellectual work that he was to do during his lifetime. Williams believed that it was impossible for whites to dominate African people for so long and with such ferocity unless there was something in whites or in blacks that made these cruelties possible. He wanted to search for the answer to what that something was.

In his search for the truth about the black race, Williams conducted field studies in African history in Ghana, West Africa, with the main objective of determining the independent achievements of the African race and the nature of black civilization before either Asian or European influence penetrated the continent. His study spanned over 10 years, during which time he surveyed 26 countries and centered on 105 traditional African culture language groups.

Chancellor Williams succeeded Leo William Hansberry, his former professor and mentor at Howard University, and became the History Department's specialist in African History. He held the position until his retirement in 1972. In recognition of his work as a historian, and for his contributions to African education and black history during the critical transitional era when colonies became independent nations, Howard University's History Club changed its name to the Chancellor Williams Historical Society.

The empirical research for Williams's doctoral dissertation, an unusual portrayal of the life of black storefront churches as viewed from inside, was published as his first novel, *Have You Been to the River?* He authored the essay "And If I Were White" and eight books, among them *The Rebirth of African Civilization*, *The Raven*, *The Second Agreement with Hell*, and *The Destruction of Black Civilization: Great Issues of a Race From 4500 B.C. to 2000 A.D.* *The Destruction of Black Civilization*, which challenged Eurocentric views of African history, offered theories on black American empowerment based on African models, and proposed a master plan for black unification and development.

The work spans 6,000 years of African history, revealing common social patterns within the continent's cultures. *The Destruction of Black Civilization* continues to be a top seller in the black community.

EDWARD V. SCOBIE

Edward V. Scobie (1918–1996) was born on the island of Dominica, where he excelled as a student and an athlete. He was the island's top swimmer and table tennis player. In 1941, he joined the British Royal Air Force, and as a navigator in a bomber command he completed many missions over Germany during World War II. He was still enlisted when he returned to England in 1945, which was the site of the Fifth Pan African Congress. By attending sessions at this meeting, Scobie met and talked with some of the notable black scholars and African patriots in attendance: Kwame Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta, W.E.B. Du Bois, George Padmore, and C.L.R. James. The content of these sessions was the compelling force that shaped Scobie's worldview and his subsequent academic and literary careers.

Returning to Dominica after the war, Scobie became editor for the *Dominican Herald*, published two works, *Flamingo* and *Tropic*, and served two terms as mayor of Roseau, the capital of Dominica. He was also one of the founding members and vice president of the Dominican Freedom Party. Scobie moved to the United States to take an appointment as Associate Professor at Livingston College. Later, positions at Rutgers and Princeton followed. He was Professor Emeritus in the Department of Black Studies of the City University of New York for 25 years. His were the largest and most popular classes in the department.

Scobie was the author of *Global Afrikan Presence* (1994); however, it was his stellar work *Black Britannia* (1972) that brought him international acclaim. The book provides a broad but comprehensive outline of the role of blacks in the Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, French, and British worlds, and it remains an important history of blacks in the British Isles. Scobie was considered the best specialist on the life of Africans, particularly those from the Caribbean in Britain. He was the dean of the subject of blacks in Britain.

JOHN HENRIK CLARKE

John Henrik Clarke (1915–1998), the grandson of slaves and son of sharecroppers, was born John Henry Clark in Union Springs, Alabama. He matured to

manhood in Columbus, Georgia, where black boys were not allowed to imagine themselves as conduits of social and political change. Beginning in his early youth, Clarke began to search for African people in the Bible because he saw no image of "his people" in God's book. He studied the history of the world, and the history of African people in particular, and queried the color of Christ and the angels, as well as the absence of blacks in pages of his Sunday school lessons.

Clarke was an ardent student, but he couldn't spend much time on formal education because he was often taken out to work to help supplement his father's meager income. Nevertheless, the foundation for his early education was the public school libraries in Columbus, Georgia, where he borrowed books by signing his employer's name to the notes he composed. He continued to borrow five books a week through the method he devised until he left Columbus at the age of 18. Although Clarke left school in the seventh grade, he remained an avid reader throughout his life. A reading of Arthur Schomburg's essay "The Negro Digs Up His Past" made him determined to go to New York City to meet Schomburg and learn the true history of African people. When Clarke was 18, he and a friend left Georgia by freight train headed for the North.

Clarke arrived in New York in 1933, with the ambition of pursuing a career as a writer. On his arrival he decided to take the necessary steps to build a life of scholarship and activism in New York. He traveled to the Harlem Branch of the New York Public Library (now The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture) and introduced himself to Arthur Schomburg. Clarke demanded to learn the history of African people within the hour—Schomburg's lunch hour. Schomburg directed him to first read the history of Europe to understand how black history was stolen. From that first meeting they became close friends, with Schomburg mentoring Clarke and suggesting specific books on world history for him to read. The sudden death of Schomburg in 1937 was a devastating blow to Clarke. However, he was surrounded by many of the literary giants of the time, and he proceeded to join the Harlem History Club, to become a member of the Harlem History Workshop, and to study with Leo William Hansberry, John Killens, Williams N. Huggins, and John Jackson. They in turn mentored him in a similar manner to Arthur Schomburg, and these men became the major forces that helped to shape the life of John Henrik Clarke. He changed his

name from Henry to Henrik because he admired the Scandinavian rebel playwright Henrik Ibsen, who addressed social issues in his work, and he added the letter “e” to Clark.

A self-proclaimed nationalist and pan-Africanist, Clarke was a largely self-taught historian who took undergraduate classes in history and world literature at New York and Columbia Universities and the New School for Social Research. His long search for the true history of African people took him to libraries, museums, and archives in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe, and Latin America.

Clarke was also a writer, with a book of poetry, *Rhyme and Rebellion* (1948), to his credit, as well as over 50 short stories that were published in the United States and abroad. His best-known short story, “The Boy Who Painted Christ Black,” has been translated into more than a dozen languages. His publications in the form of edited books, major essays, and book introductions are many. Among the major texts by Clarke used in the disciplines of history and African American Studies at colleges and universities are *Africa, Lost and Found* with Richard Moore and Keith Baird, *Africans at the Crossroads: Notes on an African World Revolution*, *Introduction to African Civilizations* with introduction by John G. Jackson, *Marcus Garvey and the Vision of Africa*, and *Malcolm X: The Man and His Time*. His articles and conference papers on African and African American history and culture have been published in leading journals throughout the world. In 1986 the Cornell University Library was renamed the John Henrik Clarke Africana Studies Library, and in 1993 Clark University Woodruff Library Center in Atlanta, to which he donated thousands of books, dedicated a wing of the library in his honor. His lesson plans and course outlines, known for their thoroughness and meticulous structure, were donated to the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture.

Clarke was the recipient of honorary degrees from the University of Denver, the University of the District of Columbia, and the Medgar Evers College of the City University of New York (which was awarded posthumously). However, in 1995 he completed his dissertation and earned a doctoral degree from Pacific Western University in California. He was a professor in Cornell University’s Africana Studies and Research Center and for 20 years in the Department of Black and Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College of the City University of New York, from which he retired in

1985 with the distinguished title of Professor Emeritus.

Clarke shared his life with many luminary world figures: Kwame Nkrumah, Paul Robeson, Betty Shabazz, Malcolm X, Zora Neale Hurston, James Baldwin, Martin Luther King, Jr., Richard Wright, Julian Mayfield, John G. Jackson, Cheikh Anta Diop, John O. Killens, Hoyt Fuller, Chancellor Williams, Drucella Dundee Houston, Marcus Garvey, Jr., Leonard Jeffries, and Yosef ben-Jochannan, whom he embraced as his brother. Clarke will be remembered for his many contributions to society and to his people, as well as for saying, “History is not everything, it is the starting point. History is a clock that people use to tell their time of day. It is a compass they use to find themselves on the map of human geography. It tells them where they are, what they are, but more importantly, what they must be.”

YOSEF BEN-JOCHANNAN

Yosef ben-Jochannan (1918–present), a noted scholar and lecturer, is affectionately called “Dr. Ben.” He was born in Ethiopia and grew up in the Caribbean, and traveled extensively with his parents through Cuba, Puerto Rico, and South America. He attended the University of Puerto Rico and then Cambridge, initially with the intention of becoming a civil engineer. Instead, he studied law before deciding on a career in cultural anthropology. Ben-Jochannan migrated to the United States in 1945, where he continues to maintain a home in Harlem.



Dr. Yosef ben-Jochannan, one of the Elder Scholars who brought awareness of the Nile Valley civilizations to the African American community

Ben-Jochannon has an exemplary command of ancient and contemporary history and is respected for his meticulous research into the roots of African history. For decades, his argument has been that the educational system has attempted to perpetuate the myths that Europeans are the sole contributors to civilization and that Egypt was originally European. He has conducted research in Africa, India, and Europe, and he was a UNESCO specialist in cultural anthropology of East Africa. Ben-Jochannon has written many books about the black presence in Egypt, among which are voluminous history books. The most well known of his books are *Africa: Mother of Western Civilization* and *Black Man of the Nile and His Family*, which was originally published in 1972 and rereleased in 1989.

Ben-Jochannon uses his work to challenge and expose Europeanized African history and to reveal the distortions made concerning African contributors to world civilization. His work has been called a corrective lesson in “ourstory.” Ben-Jochannon is a retired Adjunct Professor of History and Egyptology at Cornell University’s Africana Studies Research Center and Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Languages, Al Azhar University, Egypt. He has also taught at Malcolm-King College, Marymount College, Temple University, and Hunter College of the City University of New York. He is multilingual and speaks Hebrew, Spanish, Portuguese, *Agu* (an ancient Ethiopian language), Arabic, and Greek and has a reading knowledge of Italian and classical Arabic.

IN CONCLUSION

The Elder Scholars are often acclaimed as the generation that laid the foundation for the more scientific Afrocentric work that was done by the scholars of the 1980s and 1990s.

— *Adjua Barbara E. Adams*

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EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

On January 1, 1863, U.S. President Abraham Lincoln declared free all enslaved Africans residing in territory in rebellion against the federal government. This Emancipation Proclamation actually freed few people, because it did not apply to enslaved Africans in border states fighting on the Union side, nor did it affect enslaved Africans in Southern areas already under Union control. Of course, the states in rebellion did not act on Lincoln’s order to free the enslaved Africans. However, the Emancipation Proclamation did suggest that the Civil War would be fought to end slavery.

Lincoln had been reluctant to write a proclamation freeing the Africans. He had articulated his view of the African on several occasions, and he was a firm believer in the doctrine of white supremacy. Lincoln, therefore, initially viewed the war only in terms of preserving the Union. But when the political and moral pressure kept mounting in the country, the President became more sympathetic to the idea that blacks should be free in those states in rebellion. On September 22, 1862, he issued a preliminary proclamation announcing that emancipation would become effective in those states still in rebellion on January 1, 1863. The proclamation did not end slavery in America, which was not achieved until the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution on December 18, 1865, but the Emancipation Proclamation did make that accomplishment a virtual certainty after the war.

— *Daryl Zizwe Poe*

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ENSLAVEMENT RESISTANCE

Resistance to enslavement started in Africa and continued in the Americas. Most enslaved Africans resisted, in small and large ways, day in and day out. This resistance to enslavement took several forms.

DAY-TO-DAY RESISTANCE

A small resistance on the part of an enslaved African suggested to others that there was more than one way to survive the monstrosity of enslavement, and more than one way to escape it. It may be argued that an African's nurturing another enslaved African, be it a child or a mate, was itself an act of resistance in a context that held that African life was worthless. And practicing African culture, which was often done at the risk of loss of life, was also clearly an act of resistance.

The choice between rebellion and survival, when available, was often shaped by general prevailing events, such as living with the global antiblack violence that generally arose in the wake of a prior rebellion or conspiracy to rebel, or by very personal circumstances, such as an African's child being sold while she was away on an errand for the owner of the house. Individual acts of open defiance were often assumed to have their origin in the personal vendetta; an enslaved African who was humiliated by an especially cruel public punishment (and they were all cruel and often public—the slaveholders made sure not to lose the deterrent effect the discipline would have on other enslaved Africans) might attempt escape or set valuable property afire.

In order to avoid, even temporarily, what were often body- and mind-numbingly severe workloads, an enslaved African might cut off the last three fingers of one hand, pretend not to understand a set of work instructions, “accidentally” break a necessary and expensive tool, or simply hide out in the woods with the intention of not returning until a particular demand was met. Volume upon volume of enslaved African

narratives attest to such small personal insurrections, some of which were visited directly upon the slave-owner or members of his household, and some of which were directed toward the self of the enslaved person—who as property possessed, if nothing else in the world, a will of his or her own.

An enslaved person seeking personal retribution or reprisal on behalf of the collective might attempt to poison or otherwise sicken the master, the mistress, or other members of the household; pregnancies were aborted (though it was just as often likely that the fertility of enslaved women was diminished because of sheer overwork, gross malnutrition, and violent physical treatment); newborn infants were murdered outright to prevent them from being enslaved and/or eventually sold away from their parents. It is also clear from existing enslaved African narratives that the image of the stereotypical “shiftless, lazy negro” stemmed as much from blacks being worked beyond exhaustion as it did from resistant slaves working more slowly and dully than their true capabilities would allow. While these small acts of resistance, more often than not, permitted black people to survive physically and psychologically, sometimes the gamble was lost and punishment would be as swift and fatal as it was for (real and imagined) conspirators who chose to participate in rebellion on a larger scale. Retribution for small acts of rebellion sometimes precipitated group revolt. A case in point is that of Margaret Bradley, an enslaved woman who was convicted in 1803 in York, Pennsylvania, of attempting to poison two whites. Over the subsequent 3 weeks, blacks burned 11 buildings in protest of the verdict.

Another factor that has been documented to have precipitated numerous rebellions in diverse locations was the suspicion of enslaved Africans that they had been freed, but that the white plantation owners had refused to inform them and act on it. In one such instance, in 1734, near Somerville in what was then called East Jersey, the conspirators (as the insurrection was not executed) were arrested, beaten, and mutilated, and two were condemned to be hanged, although one escaped that fate.

ARMED RESISTANCE

In addition to numerous mutinies on the ships during the Middle Passage, there were also many instances of armed rebellions on the plantations. While insurrection was predictable in the slaving environment,

claims of the docile, happy, and well-cared-for enslaved African notwithstanding, there were environmental and human factors that tended to support uprising or to increase the chances of its success. A higher proportion of enslaved Africans born in Africa; a black populace, including the enslaved and the free, that exceeded the white population in size; and the very presence of free blacks as an example of black liberty all tended encourage insurrection. Even during periods when the white population was temporarily decreased—for example, during the summer, when rich whites often vacationed further north—successful rebellion was seen as more possible. Vesey, Prosser, and Turner all planned their revolts—the most famous cases of armed resistance in the United States—for dates in July or August.

The Gabriel Prosser Revolt

Of the three insurrectionists at the time of the planned revolt—Prosser, Vesey, and Turner—Gabriel Prosser was the youngest, born into slavery just outside of Richmond in 1776. Growing up in the years of the American, French, and Haitian Revolutions, young Prosser must have been exposed to talk of resistance, freedom, and equality.

Prosser was a powerful, physically imposing black man (6 foot, 2 inches tall and muscular from years of blacksmithing) who could read and write. As a blacksmith, Prosser had an extremely useful trade, extensive knowledge of the terrain in and around the state capital, and the acquaintance of many from all social strata, making him well suited for his chosen work of insurrection.

During the summer of 1800, Prosser and his generals (his brothers, Solomon and Martin, and three other enslaved Africans) added recruits and constructed an ambitious plan. Prosser's well-constructed plan, however, was never executed. It was betrayed, in advance, to Governor Monroe, who promptly called in 600 militiamen. If that weren't enough, torrential rains kept the rebels—said to number several hundred to a thousand—from the rendezvous point, and they were forced to disperse.

Vesey's Conspiracy

Denmark Vesey, who was born in either Africa or the Virgin Islands, was enslaved for several months on the island of St. Domingue (which is now Haiti),

before being brought to Charleston, South Carolina, as the property of Captain Joseph Vesey. In creating his rebel alliances, Denmark Vesey capitalized on his facility with language—he could speak French, Creole, and English—and on his connections with the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) and Presbyterian churches and with enslaved and free blacks (although all of his coconspirators were enslaved). Each of Vesey's generals kept a separate list of his personal recruits, and the lists were not shared. The group acquired swords, firearms, and ammunition, which they had strategically hidden throughout the city. They decided on a summer Sunday for the revolt, as blacks could legally congregate on Sundays and many white citizens would be summering elsewhere. Although they were betrayed months before the scheduled revolt, authorities scoffed at the story and took few early protective measures. Two weeks after the betrayal, spies were dispersed to gather information; Vesey was named, and again authorities scoffed. It took 2 additional weeks to accomplish his capture.

The Nat Turner Rebellion

The best-known executed rebellion of enslaved Africans within the United States was the insurrection led by Nat Turner, a black man in Southampton County, Virginia. Turner was born into slavery on October 2, 1800 (the year of the Gabriel Prosser Revolt), and was believed by many to possess second sight. Convinced that it was his divine mission to fight against slavery, on August 20, 1831, Nat Turner and his coconspirators began a bloody coup, sparing no white person, irrespective of age or gender.

Turner's original small group of men swelled to 50 or 60 as they went from house to house, killing the white inhabitants with axes, guns, swords, and clubs. In all, they were reported to have taken the lives of 55 plantation-owning men, women, and children in 48 hours. Through sheer resourcefulness and survival instinct, Turner managed to elude the hastily assembled militia by living in the woods for 6 weeks before he was captured.

Aftermath of the Rebellions of Prosser, Vesey, and Turner

Following the arrest and "trials" of Prosser, Vesey, and Turner, each was convicted and hanged. Only Turner's confession was dictated in full before his

execution by hanging. In each instance, most if not all of the leaders' conspirators were executed; and the rank and file followers were largely convicted and hanged, or convicted and sold farther South; literally hundreds of blacks, both enslaved and free, were whipped, otherwise maimed, or outright slaughtered because of their connection, or imagined connection, to the insurrections. Although the scope and impact of the insurrections were largely minimized by whites, panic related to the revolts was widespread. The resulting fear following the Turner rebellion drove Southern legislatures to tighten restrictions on enslaved Africans and pushed the fight for abolition almost wholly into the North.

Other Rebellions

Another important form of armed resistance was the constitution of Maroon communities and the waging of guerrilla warfare by their members against plantations. Maroon communities existed everywhere enslavement prevailed. In the United States, such communities were found in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Louisiana, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, and Georgia. The most famous Maroon communities, however, were located outside of the United States, in Brazil, Jamaica, and Surinam. The Maroons often duplicated African models of social organization and engaged in African cultural practices. The successful war fought to overthrow slavery in Haiti, which was waged by Africans against their French enslavers, also needs to be mentioned here, as it was the only fully successful military victory of enslaved Africans over their white oppressors.

ABOLITIONISM

In the latter decades of slavery in the United States, while insurrection and armed revolt persisted, resistance also took an alternate path. Freed blacks such as Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth, who were both literate and passionate, began to express their plea for the abolition of slavery in written venues and in public forums. Of the freed blacks advocating for the end of slavery, David Walker was considered by many as one of the most militant.

Born in Wilmington, North Carolina, just before the start of the 19th century, Walker was free because his mother had been freed. He settled in Boston,

where he opened a used clothing store and became an activist, contributing frequently to *Freedom's Journal*, the first newspaper in the nation owned and operated by blacks. In 1829, he wrote an "Appeal," a radical document that encouraged blood for blood in defense of black life and railed against the return of blacks to Africa. Walker published and distributed it through seamen who traveled to Southern ports; even more creatively, Walker sewed copies of his document into the lining of the clothes he sold, decreasing the chance of detection. Because of the seditious nature of the "Appeal" in the slaveholding South, Walker's life was threatened and a reward was offered for delivering him to the South.

CONCLUSION

Resistance to enslavement was quite widespread. It took many forms, but each time, what African people asserted was their humanity, in a most inhumane, white-created, context. What inspired Africans was the insurmountable will that most of them had to be free to determine the modalities of their own existence. This remains a valuable lesson for present generations.

— Dawn L. Cannon

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ETHIOPIANISM

Ethiopianism is the name scholars have given to the race redemption ideas that black theologians and theorists in different parts of the English-colonized world derived from biblical Ethiopia. The term was originally used in the 1890s in South Africa to describe secessionist black churches, which were called Ethiopian denominations after the perennially free black nation of Ethiopia. The expression was not used to describe Ethiopian elements in black American thought until the 1970s, when scholars of black nationalism first discerned signs of an Ethiopian ideological tradition in America.

From the late 18th to the late 20th century, the ancient African country Ethiopia symbolized an idealized mythical space, an African Zion, for people of African descent globally. The peculiar mystique Ethiopia has held among Africans worldwide stems from its recognition as a major biblical civilization, its history of uninterrupted independence, and its having a longer Christian heritage than most of Europe can claim. As a distinctive emblem of black precocity, power, and promise, esteemed Ethiopia gave suppressed Africans during slavery, colonialism, and segregation a particularly strong sense of racial pride and inspiration. Its significance even surpassed that of dynastic Egypt, an African state that black Bible readers greatly respected for its might and majesty but generally viewed as a slave society.

An attachment to Ethiopia among African Americans began before the American Revolution. Starting in the 1760s, some enslaved Africans who had converted to Christianity and conformed to English culture, like the authors Phillis Wheatley and Jupiter Hammon, occasionally used the term *Ethiopia* to mean all Africans everywhere. The Ethiopian nomenclature or some related cognomen also appeared in the names of early black religious congregations, such as the Ethiopian Anabaptist Church in Georgia and the Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York. By the 1800s, an emergent black American intelligentsia that included the influential Methodist bishop Richard Allen had begun to employ religious rhetoric that proclaimed the Ethiopian's worldwide deliverance, spiritually and secularly.

Thus the literary custom in the West of using *Ethiopia* as a generic term for all Africans stimulated

increasingly widespread use of the term, as did sacred scripture, most notably, "Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall stretch forth its hands unto God" (Psalms 68:31–32). This prophecy, which African converts to Christianity first adopted during the 18th century's great religious revival, referred to spiritual submission to the Hebrews' God. However, black clergy such as Peter Williams, Jr., of the St. Philip's African Church in New York, interpreted the passage as a salvation-liberation text. Williams and other black clerics—Absalom Jones, Daniel Coker, and J. W. C. Pennington—evolved from the verse the vision of a resplendent African past and future.

In the antebellum era, protest pamphleteers such as David Walker and Alexander Young used various Hebraic and Hellenic sources to identify the Nile Valley as the origin of all Africans. This theorized common Nilotic identity made Africans collectively, whatever their provenance and predicament, inheritors of a shared and acclaimed ancestry. Black publicists also crafted from biblical Egypt and Ethiopia a cyclical view of black history, one in which the inception, regression, and renewal of African ascendancy was predestined. These beliefs—an esteemed black identity, history, and destiny—constitute the core of a salvation ideology that is in direct opposition to racist denigration and racial despair.

The Exodus motif dominated the dialogue of enslaved blacks. That of Ethiopian deliverance dominated free black discourse. After the Civil War, the rhetoric of black redemption was nationalized. The Ethiopian prophecy appeared as a motto for the black race in Southern newspapers like the *Black Republican* of New Orleans and in speeches of mass leaders such as Benjamin "Pap" Singleton of Kansas. In the Reconstruction era, the gospel of Ethiopian salvation was also prominently reflected abroad in the race manifestos of the eminent black scholars Alexander Crummell and Edward Blyden, noted advocates of Liberian emigration. The Ethiopian ideology and contemporary Ethiopia gained added significance worldwide with the Ethiopians' stunning defeat in 1896 of an Italian army sent to colonize the country. The victory verified modern Ethiopia as God's chosen instrument of global black redemption. At the end of the 19th century, Ethiopian renaissance was a conspicuous theme in black drama, poetry, and history, as evidenced in works of the noted writer W.E.B. Du Bois. African redemption was also a

marked feature of educated West African thought. It was the critical theme, for instance, in the classic *Ethiopia Unbound*, which the pioneer Gold Coast nationalist J. E. Casely Hayford authored in 1911.

The ideas that comprise the Ethiopian tradition constitute a myth of African redemption. According to St. Clair Drake, it is a “retrospective myth of a glorious past and prospective myth of divine deliverance.” The Ethiopian mode of thought addresses the problematic present of African peoples through the portrayal of a utopian African past and projection of an optimistic future. The myth of race resurgence attained its apex between the two world wars. The theme of black redemption permeated the era’s major “New Negro” movement, the Universal Negro Improvement Association. The ideology of race salvation Marcus Garvey preached was steeped in Ethiopian millennialism. So was the massive reaction of Africans globally to the second Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935. Leaders of the worldwide protest, such as Willis N. Huggins of Harlem, liberally invoked the Ethiopian mythos to rally the black masses against fascist imperialism.

The Ethiopian thought style is associated presently with Rastafarianism, the well-known Caribbean religious movement that emerged in Jamaica in about 1930. The religion, which takes its name from Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie’s precoronation appellation, Ras Tafari, traditionally regarded the now-deceased monarch as God. Because of broad public awareness of Rastafarianism, generated by popular reggae music suffused with Rastafarian symbolism, views have arisen that Ethiopianism originated in the Caribbean instead of North America, where the myth began and from which it extended to elsewhere in the Atlantic world. The belief’s diffusion always proceeded from African American Protestants who spoke Ebonics rather than from Afro-Catholics.

Although the Ethiopian ethos was the first and longest ideological formulation of Africans in the diaspora, it ultimately declined as a force in black American thought between 1940 and 1960. A critical factor in its decline was the final collapse of Garveyism. Italy’s defeat of Abyssinia in 1936 also adversely affected visions of Ethiopian redemption. Modern society’s growing secularization undermined spiritualist ideas such as that of a divinely driven revival of African glory. And, paradoxically, Africa’s decolonization diminished Ethiopia’s significance. With the continent’s independence, people of African

descent everywhere can draw inspiration from sovereign nations throughout the ancestral homeland instead of only within the Nile Valley.

— William R. Scott

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ETHNIC NOTIONS

Ethnic Notions was the first major work of acclaimed African American filmmaker Marlon Riggs (1957–1994). Narrated by actress Esther Rolle and featuring commentary by noted scholar Barbara Christian, legendary filmmaker Carlton Moss, and others, the documentary explores the origins and evolution of black stereotypes in America.

Riggs traces the development of the loyal Tom and faithful Mammy, the carefree Sambo and childlike Coon, the savage Brute and animal-like Pickaninny in popular media such as songs, cartoons, films, advertising, and common household artifacts. As he locates each figure within its proper historical context, it becomes evident that they were not simply arbitrary products created for mass entertainment. To the white ruling class, these caricatures functioned as important elements of social control.

In particular, Riggs’s insightful analysis of the Sambo figure demonstrates how racial myths were constructed according to the shifting politics of white supremacy. During enslavement, it was necessary for white slaveowners to maintain support for the system

by presenting slavery as a benign institution in which enslaved Africans were content with their oppressed condition. In accordance with this theory, Sambo was characterized as ignorant, shiftless, and unable to function outside the confines of the slave system.

By the mid-1800s, impersonations of Sambo by white minstrel performers had become a mainstay in popular stage productions throughout the North. As the abolitionist movement grew, the illusion of the docile figure helped ease white fears of black resistance. And as Riggs notes, the fact that Sambo was so popular with Northern audiences during this period dispels the myth of an utterly benevolent North sympathetic to the antislavery cause. After enslavement, Sambo was transformed into several manifestations of the Coon, a figure whose unsuccessful efforts to adopt white speech and mannerisms presumably confirmed the inherent inferiority of blacks and their inability to assimilate into the dominant culture. The emergence of the Zip Coon was a thinly veiled attempt by the white ruling class to undermine black political agency during Reconstruction.

In the early 1900s, white anxiety over an expanding black labor force in the North gave birth to the Urban Coon, whose carefree lifestyle revolved around liquor, gambling, and raucous behavior. This more dangerous version of the Zip Coon served to legitimize increased violence against blacks and the suppression of black advocacy for quality employment, housing, and education. These caricatures permeated American popular culture, despite the fact that neither the slave system nor the urban industrial economy could have succeeded with the existence of such indolent characters as Sambo and Coon.

The psychological damage suffered by blacks because of these dehumanizing stereotypes is explored in *Ethnic Notions* through actor Leni Sloan's dramatization of the life and career of black minstrel Bert Williams. In a tragicomic monologue, Williams articulates the shame and irony of having to perform in blackface in order to secure employment in the mainstream theater industry. His poignant statement, "It's no disgrace being black, but sometimes it's terribly inconvenient," reveals the internal conflict suffered by many black performers whose exploitation of black cultural norms ultimately negated the reality of the black experience.

Ethnic Notions concludes that any system of oppression is successful once the oppressed group willingly perpetuates negative stereotypes of itself,

and contemporary blacks in the media must accept some responsibility for the present-day manifestation of racial myths. However, with increased representation in major media outlets, black creative artists as well as audiences are now in the best political and economic position to challenge and eventually eradicate stereotypes with more conscious, authentic images of black history and culture. *Ethnic Notions* handles the complex subject of American race relations with great clarity and insight, and the Emmy-winning documentary has become required viewing in many high school and university classrooms.

— Stephanie Yarbough

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EUROCENTRISM

Eurocentrism is a political, cultural, social, and economic world system that emerged with the expansion of Europe during the voyages of conquest from 1492 to 1600. When Europe expanded into Africa, Asia, America, and the Pacific regions after Christopher Columbus's voyages to the Americas, it brought to those regions the religion, language, customs, traditions, and symbol systems of Europe.

In one sense Eurocentrism may be seen as the advancement of the European ideal, but in another sense it may be seen as imperialism, exploitation, and the promotion of greed. These two senses of the same phenomenon have created tension between Europeans and other peoples, particularly when Eurocentrism, as an intellectual tendency, has been imposed upon those peoples.

During the period of the colonization of Africa, beginning with the 15th century and ending with the

independence of many nations in the 1950s and 1960s, Europe sought to make the Africans Europeans in their names, desires, opinions, fashion, religion, and tastes. Those who rejected such imposition assumed the role of militants, belligerents, and alternative thinkers. The colonizers thought that because they were imposing what was “best” for the Africans, the Africans would accept Eurocentrism without conflict or protest. In many instances, this was the case, but in many others it was not the case.

Eurocentrism is thus, in the words of Samir Amin, “the great taboo,” because it is the accepted reality. A person from the colonized world who speaks against Eurocentrism is labeled radical, as the Eurocentric system is all inclusive, encompassing education, law, science, and knowledge. To challenge Eurocentrism is thus to challenge what is widely assumed to be the way things are.

It is this issue that has thrown light on the way the Afrocentrists have articulated their arguments in Black Studies. Afrocentrists are the first challengers of the notion that any group or culture should impose its will on the rest of humanity. Afrocentrists have contended that if Eurocentrism was just the expression of European ideas, values, literature, and so forth, there would be no problem. However, the imposition of Eurocentrism as the only way to view reality amounts to ideological slavery and therefore must be rejected. Thus, a pluralism without hierarchy is the best approach to dealing with imposing ideologies.

— *Molefi Kete Asante*

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EUROPEAN SLAVE TRADE

What is referred to as the “European slave trade” created the division of the black and white races in world history. The capture, exploitation, and dispersal of Africans by European nations, for the purpose of free labor, created a distorted image of Africans that continues to affect the African-European relationship. The European institution of slavery took on a harsh, brutal, and dehumanizing form. However, the enslavement of Africans predates European contact with West Africa. From the 10th to the 14th century, Arab nations bought and sold African captives in Islamic markets. A large number of those enslaved were African women, who were purchased to work as servants or concubines. The captives were relocated north across the deserts of northwest Africa to the Mediterranean coast. There, in markets such as Ceuta (which is now Morocco), Africans were purchased to work as servants or laborers in Spain, Portugal, and other countries. This marked the start of what is referred to as the European slave trade.

The inception of the European slave trade occurred when the Portuguese and Spanish developed a relationship with North Africa after the Moorish invasion of the Iberian Peninsula. Although Spain and Portugal had access to the natural and human resources of Africa along the northern coast, they were not content with this trade and moved further south along the western coast of Africa. Between 1420 and 1441, Spain and Portugal were the first European nations to trade for natural resources with indigenous Africans. In 1442, the Portuguese explorers returned from the western coast of Africa with gold dust and 10 Africans. This essentially began the enslavement of Africans by European nations.

Although Portugal was the first European nation to establish a permanent relationship with indigenous Africans, the Spaniards followed in 1562. Soon afterward, the British made their appearance in the trade of Africans. Then the Dutch became involved in human trade in about 1620, followed by the French in about 1640. The Swedes, Danes, and Prussians attained the full extent of their involvement in the 18th century.

In 1482, the Portuguese forced their way onto the Guinea coast in present day Ghana to control trading with Africans. This location was referred to by the Portuguese as *Elmina* (which means “the mine”)

because of the productivity of the nearby gold mines. Although originally built for trade in gold, ivory, and other resources, this trading post was the first of many trading posts built by Europeans along Africa's western coast that was used to export Africans.

From its outset, the relationship between Europe and Africa was economic. Portuguese merchants used the trading posts to trade with Africans. They exchanged items such as brass and copper for such products as pepper, cloth, beads, and Africans. Europeans did not have the power to overcome African states before the late 19th century, and gold production, centered in Akan gold fields in the back-country of present-day Ghana, remained in African hands.

However, after the voyages of exploration, European nations began a frenzied scramble for the human resources of Africa they needed to clear the lands and build the cities of the Americas. Thus, before the start of the 1500s, nearly 200,000 Africans had been relocated against their wills to Europe and the Americas. By the mid 1500s, the colonial powers of the Caribbean islands and Brazil had begun to invest in cultivating sugar, a crop that demanded constant attention and strenuous labor.

By 1619, over 150 years after the Portuguese first traded humans from Africa, European explorers had brought more than a million Africans to European-controlled plantations in the Americas to be enslaved and used as free labor. This relationship continued for nearly 300 years. It is estimated that Europeans made more than 54,000 voyages for the purpose of trade in human beings. As a result, a conservative estimate of 10 to 12 million Africans were transported to the Americas. Some estimates put the number at 50 million. In a span of 20 years, from 1680 to 1700, the British alone were responsible for exporting over 300,000 Africans and relocating them in the West Indies and the North American continent. By the mid-1700s, the British had become the largest slave traders.

By the early 1700s, tobacco, sugar, indigo, and rice plantations had switched from European indentured labor to enslaved African labor. By the mid-1700s, Brazil, Saint-Domingue, and Jamaica were the three largest colonies in the Americas receiving Africans. In the 1830s, Cuba emerged as the main Caribbean plantation colony. Throughout the history of human trade, however, more Africans were brought to Brazil than to any other colony.

The human traffic to the United States, mainly centered in Rhode Island, ended in 1807, the first year Congress addressed the question of abolition, as agreed to by the compromise between Northern and Southern states writing the Constitution in 1787. The French enslavement of Africans ended 1848. After the Napoleonic Wars ended in 1814 and 1815, the British decided to end their trade. The Dutch trade, which largely ended during the war with France in the late 1700s, was abolished in 1814. However, although the trade of Africans ended in the early 1900s, slavery continued to exist through to the end of the 1900s—and its effect still continues to negatively affect the African world community.

— Justin Gammage

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EXODUSTERS

The Exodusters movement, which was officially called the Kansas Fever Exodus, was a largely spontaneous, mass movement in the spring of 1879 of some 20,000 black people from the border states of Kentucky and Missouri; from the former slaveholding states of Tennessee, Mississippi, and Louisiana; and from Texas to Kansas. The blacks' motivation for leaving when Reconstruction collapsed was the persistent threat of violence from whites. Henry Adams, a formerly enslaved man and army veteran, speaking primarily of his experiences in Louisiana, testified before a U.S. Senate committee investigating the Exodusters that the freed people were endangered daily by white violence. Indeed, they were subjected to murder, rape, and arson, as former plantation owners sought to intimidate them into a kind of passivity that would make them easier to manage. Added to this were debt peonage, the convict lease system, the

abuse of black women, inadequate to nonexistent school facilities, and the absence of health care, all of which had the effect of remanding black people to the days when the enslavement and its attendant processes ruled the land.

In actuality, three factors set the stage for the movement: The first was the Homestead Act of 1862; the second was the panic of 1873; and the third, which resulted from the first two, involved the search for a more suitable and hospitable environment. The Homestead Act, especially when applied to the vast open spaces of the trans-Mississippi West, made the acquisition of land relatively uncomplicated and unambiguous. According to the original legislation, the only thing that any potential settler, regardless of race or class, needed to do was pay a filing fee, live on and improve the property for a period of 5 years, and then take title to 160 acres of free land. Pointedly, the objective here was to populate the open space; develop its previously untapped resources; and better preserve, protect, and defend the founding concepts of the envisioned American nation—freedom, liberty, equality, and justice.

However, with the country in dire financial straits, some cutting of public expenditures was mandatory. And one of the more expensive costs for the federal government at the time was the expense of troops stationed in the South during Reconstruction to protect the lives of black people, as well as their newly acquired property and limited access to social and democratic rights. Thus, the Economic Panic of 1873, in which gradually, and then with increasing haste, the troops were withdrawn, signaled to the traditionalists that obstacles to their desire—namely, the redemption of the Southern way of life—were being removed. By the time of the Hayes-Tilden Compromise of 1876, Reconstruction existed more in name than in fact. The consequences of the soldiers' removal as attitudes changed, priorities shifted, and the search for a new order was initiated, are found in the testimony of Henry Adams mentioned above. And though Frederick Douglass in his speeches and writings sought to dissuade blacks who wanted to leave the South, at the same time, Richard T. Greener and others were encouraging them to leave, and the prospective migrants easily understood that increased mobility might bring increased opportunity.

The third factor was the early investigation and exploration of other places that might be more hospitable, as the gains promised by the government and

its agencies—the fabled 40 acres and a mule—were eroded in the face of white terrorism intended to return things to the way they were in the social world of the antebellum South. Benjamin “Pap” Singleton played a major role in this. Little is known of Singleton before his involvement with the Exoduster movement. What is known is that he was born into slavery in Nashville, Tennessee; escaped to Canada as an adult; relocated to Detroit, where he ran a boarding house that was a station on the Underground Railroad; and returned to Tennessee after the war was over. During the late 1860s and early 1870s, his experience working as a coffin maker persuaded him that black people would be better off if as many of them as possible could either increase their independence or move out of the former states of the Confederacy to places where they might find more and better opportunities. Westward migration, then, seemed like the best of all possible options at the time, and black people hoped that Kansas, because of its history and because it had been the birthplace of John Brown, might just fill their needs.

Therefore, early in the 1870s, Singleton and several of his associates journeyed to Kansas. Upon their return, they convinced several families that they had less to lose by choosing to go west than by staying where they were. By 1874, Singleton had begun to post fliers encouraging black people to relocate and, between 1877 and 1879, his group assisted a few hundred families to settle in the state, develop colonies, and prepare the way for those who were to follow. Singleton also made additional trips to the state, including one in 1877, at which time Singleton aided in the development of a colony in Cherokee County.

Unfortunately, what was not expected was that the response to the fliers would be so massive, thus quickly overwhelming the modest infrastructure that had been put in place. Many of those who arrived that spring of 1879 in St. Louis, and in other communities along both the Mississippi and Missouri rivers, were destitute, in questionable health, without skills, illiterate, and full of anxieties generated by changed circumstances in the places they had left. All they really brought with them was the hope that they might find a new life on the prairie.

As might have been expected, white Southerners did what they could to redirect or halt the movement altogether, as at first small groups, and then much larger congregations, gathered by the riverside to begin their journey to what they believed was a “promised land.” Once they arrived in Missouri, however, these people

quickly came to be perceived as refugees whom no one really wanted and who presented problems that both black and white citizens in St. Louis, Kansas City, Topeka, and other communities along the way were woefully unprepared to address. But address them they did, relocating people to outlying areas, and eventually on to Kansas itself, although some of these people did return to their former homes in succeeding years, as they were disappointed by the conditions they encountered.

— *William M. King*

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FAMILY

The family is the basic relational unit of most societies and cultures. In the African cultural context both on the continent and in the diaspora, family is defined primarily by blood relationships connecting kinship networks across many households. These primarily blood or *consanguineous* relationships are also defined by marriage, adoption (both formal and informal), and appropriation of *para* or *play* kin defined by social function rather than by either blood or conjugal relations. While some family members within Africana diaspora cultures may occupy a single dwelling, the family is defined not by where its members reside but by the various forms of relationship that make up the kin network across households. This kin network connecting several households is often referred to as the extended family.

THE FAMILY IN AFRICA

In traditional West African societies, the cultural origin of most black families in the United States, families were defined by their extended, multigenerational network character and blood relations patrilineally (i.e., along a male line), as seen among the Yoruba of Nigeria; matrilineally (i.e., along a female line), as seen among the Ashanti of Ghana; or in some instances twineally (i.e., along dual lines of inheritance), as seen among the Ibo of Nigeria. Family size and kin networks were extended by marriage between members of different lineages, since marriage to a blood relative was prohibited. Within a lineage group, children within the same age cohort were considered

siblings to each other. While conjugal relationships between husbands and wives were important for defining smaller family groupings or households into which children were born, uncles or aunts often were referred to as “father” or “mother” and had the social and cultural responsibility for the children of their brothers and sisters that parents have for their children in Westernized nuclear families. This system, based on blood relationship through lineages and well-structured lines of responsibility and inheritance, provided both fluidity and security for members of the extended African family. In addition to these structural parameters, African families were defined spiritually by the recognition of all members of a lineage across generations, including the unborn and the dead or ancestors. This meant that much day-to-day living included rituals of inclusion and acknowledgment of ancestors as active family members. This also meant that both elders and small children were valued, cared for, and provided an important place in the family and wider social structure of the African community.

THE FAMILY IN AMERICA

In the diaspora, particularly in the United States, the experiences of enslavement and Africans’ social, cultural, and spiritual resistance to enslavement have been critical elements in determining both the structure and function of black families. While the cruelties and dehumanizing methods of chattel servitude made it impossible for Africans enslaved in North America to maintain the complex family systems of the traditional African societies, Africans were able to hold on to the value for blood relations, the valuing of the extended kin network, reverence and respect for

elders, and the centrality of children to the family structure. The continued focus on the primacy of consanguineous or blood relations in defining family engendered a strong sense of responsibility and obligation between blood kin across the extended network.

After the Civil War, though Africans were legally “freed people,” black families continued to be subjected to the social, cultural, political, and economic policies of their former enslavers. In the decades following, and into the 20th century, these policies designed to maintain racist control through Jim Crow laws had a tremendous debilitating effect on gender relations, relations between parents and children, and extended family relations, while at the same time creating increasing class stratification and tensions between family groups.

Throughout the 20th century, scholarship on the African family in America was largely shaped by a two-pronged debate between the pathological deficit view and the cultural relativity or African cultural retentions view. Largely influenced by the work of the renowned black E. Franklin Frazier, and later that of Daniel P. Moynihan, the *pathological deficit* view argues that as a result of the destruction of traditional African values, customs, and cultural norms in slavery and to some extent because of ongoing racist policies, black families after the Civil War had no cultural basis for building healthy kinship patterns. This view often presents black people as perpetual victims with neither a past nor a future of any relevance outside of the context established by European American cultural and institutional norms. The *cultural relativity* or *African retentions* view emerges out of the work of W.E.B. Du Bois, Melville Herskovits, and later Robert Hill, Andrew Billingsley, Wade Nobles, and others. This view, rather than assuming that black families are only deficient reflections of European American norms, argues that there are *Africanisms* in black family relationship styles that explain the differences between black and white families. From the start, researchers with these different views of black and white families in America ask radically different questions in their research and scholarship. Researchers with the pathological deficit view are primarily concerned with the question, “Why are black families not able to achieve the success experienced by white families in America?” On the other hand, those with the cultural relativity or African retention view are curious to know, “Despite the historical, social, political, and cultural barriers set before black

families, how have they been able to survive and exhibit such resilience in the face of overwhelming odds?”

From the middle of the 20th century through the early years of the 21st century, the pathological deficit view championed by Frazier and Moynihan has held sway in shaping governmental policy as well as the public discourse about the family in African America. This view and the scholarship behind it have provided the rationale for the economic policies of every U.S. president from Lyndon B. Johnson to George W. Bush. Despite this reality, however, and despite repeated predictions of the eventual dissolution of the black family, the cultural values retained from family life in West Africa, the maintenance of extended kin networks, as well as the resilience learned through resistance to enslavement and racism have ensured the ongoing adaptability and longevity of the African family in the United States.

— Makungu M. Akinyela

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FANONIAN CONCEPT OF VIOLENCE

Les damnés de la terre, which is literally translated “the damned of the earth,” was originally published under its French title in 1961, shortly before the death of its author, Frantz Fanon, on December 6, 1961. Fanon had written the work over a 10-week period of astonishing labor after learning that he had leukemia. The philosopher-psychiatrist was one of the most infamous revolutionaries in the French-speaking world, having formally joined the *Front nationale libération* (FLN), the group that led the fight for Algerian independence. Although there was a price on his head, Fanon managed to evade capture and met with Jean-Paul Sartre, the most celebrated living philosopher of the time, and persuaded him to write the preface to the work. The work had an immediate great influence on the French-speaking world. Two years later, in 1963, it was translated into English and published as *The Wretched of the Earth*.

There are few books that have had as much impact on contemporary thought as *The Wretched of the Earth*. It was described by the Black Panthers as “the handbook of the Revolution,” and it immediately became essential reading for all left-wing intellectuals. The right wing attacked it viciously as a warmongering text, and members of the more orthodox left attacked it as “unscientific.” Yet its impact has been such that its readership ranges from college students reading “canonical texts” in universities to high school dropouts trying to figure out their situations as they live in the midst of poverty, squalor, and violence. Even a quick read of this classic, controversial text will explain these responses.

THE CENTRAL ARGUMENT

The main thesis of the book is that freedom must be taken, never given. Because of this, the English title misrepresents the text, since Fanon did not consider colonized people and those subject to international racist policies to be “wretched.” They lived as “damned” people because they all, even the innocent among them, suffer the same plight. The colonizers structure their relationship to the colonized as one of legitimate possession. This means that they see themselves as having a right to the conquered people’s land. Thus, when the conquered and colonized fight to regain what they, too, consider to be rightfully theirs,

they are accused of attempted theft. In both instances, there is, in other words, a situation of perceived theft. Fanon challenged the nonviolent resolution of this face-off—decolonization. The colonized paying for the land would, in effect, be like their paying robbers to return the goods the robbers stole from them. What’s more, colonizing groups also bring a set of values that present their actions as rightful and just, and they bring along their military forces to support them. These values usually ascribe greater worth to the lives of colonizers than to the lives of the colonized. Since the decolonization process requires retrieving the land, standing up to the military, and denying the superiority of the colonizing group, an analytic of violence emerges. When the colonized are asked to be nonviolent, it means that they are asked to request change in a form that is acceptable to the colonizers. In some cases, that means so-called change without the colonizers losing anything.

TYPES OF VIOLENCE

Fanon asserted that violence creates many shifts. First, it is an act of *seizing* freedom. Second, it creates a situation in which innocents suffer, which strengthens the opposition to the colonial relationship. Third, it stimulates new sets of values by toppling the colonizers from the status of gods. Fourth, it cannot be maintained, which means that new resolutions must occur. And fifth, and perhaps most controversial to left-wing thinkers, he argued that the logic of colonialism is such that its best agents are those that are a contradiction of the entire system and are most willing to take on its instruments of violence—namely, the police and soldiers. These are the *lumpenproletariat*, the criminals and outsiders. Added to this are the peasants, since colonized countries often lack an industrial base. His response to first world intellectuals who demand a period of “development” before taking action was similar to Martin Luther King, Jr.’s response in his “Letter from Birmingham Jail”: If they were in the position of the colonized, they, too, would see why they cannot wait.

Fanon then took on third world mainstream leadership by arguing that after decolonization, the new guard of elites would prop themselves up as mediators between the old colonizing forces and the new regime. We know this today as neocolonialism. The money stolen by these elites in former Zaire and other parts of Africa come to mind. Money is borrowed to build the nation, then stolen by these elites and placed in foreign

banks while the people continue to incur debts on the interest. Fanon's message is summed up in the phrase, "Every generation has its mission." The mission after independence is to build up the infrastructure of the nation. The individuals who inherit the nation after independence are often a weak national bourgeoisie, people whose power is linked not to material capital—which would affect the infrastructure of the nation—but to cultural and service work. In other words, they often depend on their status as race representatives mediating between the old regime and the new. The new struggle, then, becomes fighting this bourgeoisie in the hope of achieving a genuinely postcolonial society. Fanon closed the book by asking for a material and conceptual struggle. The material struggle is to build up the nation's infrastructure—that is, roads, hospitals, sanitation, schools, and so on. The conceptual struggle involves new ways of knowing and understanding ourselves as human beings. He described this as "shedding our skins and setting afoot a new humanity."

The Wretched of the Earth has proven to be a very prescient book. Many of the problems about which Fanon warned have come to fruition, and the third millennium has been greeted by struggles for the dignity of humankind in a very regressive era. The image of Fanon has been rewritten many times, as the spate of books and articles on him attest. In the end, the man makes the most sense in the context of an appreciation of the revolutionary force of his ideas. He called upon us in that influential work to question the interpretation of the world that has been offered to us so that we can, in another voice whose echo resounds from a century and a half past, change it.

— Lewis Gordon

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FESTIVALS

The diverse traditions of festivals among Africans and their descendants in the diaspora derive from complex

social, cultural, and historical legacies. The origins of some of the earliest festival—or carnival—events in the African diaspora have frequently been attributed to European celebrations such as Roman Saturnalia and Catholic Shrovetide or pre-Lenten festivities. The etymology of the word *carnival*, in fact, reflects the religious association with the prohibition of meat eating during the Lenten season (deriving from two Latin words: *carne* meaning "meat" and *vale* meaning "goodbye"). While the word itself may originate in the language of Europeans, carnival traditions among people of African descent in the diaspora can be traced to celebrations of the fertility of women and mother earth that originated thousands of years ago in Egypt. A critical examination of carnival traditions reveals a strong African cultural aesthetic, combining sacred and secular rituals. This African aesthetic has persisted in attenuated fashion in the diaspora.

Masking (also known as masquerade, or *playing mas*) is an integral element of carnival, and it reflects the masking traditions of African cultures that employed these in various rituals. The mask is inspired in large part by the reverence for ancestors, a common theme in many African cultures. The Yoruba, for example, link the mask to the power and presence of the dead; the mask creates a threshold of protection against the penetration of the profane and maintains distinctions between the worlds of the living and the dead. Masking various parts of the body is accomplished with diverse materials, such as feathers, raffia, cloth beads, and sequins. These materials are widely employed by participants in the festivals of the African diaspora, from the black Indians of New Orleans to Bahians in Rio de Janeiro, to Trinidadians in Carnival, to West Indians in Toronto's Caribana. Carnival revelers "playing *mas*" in Trinidadian and Bahamian carnivals, for example, parade in costumes designed with bright strips of multilayered fabric that resemble *Egungun* costumes worn in the festivals of Benin and Nigeria; netted face coverings represent a boundary between the worlds of the living and the ancestral spirits that is to be breached only at one's personal peril; white-chalked faces evince ancestral spirit worship; feathers, considered among the Yoruba to be powerful in invoking positive life force energy (*ase*) and wealth, are also important elements in costume decoration.

Africa-inspired drumming, outlawed during slavery, plays a central role in carnival music traditions, although the earliest reports of carnival music included



African Ohum Festival, Ghana

European-style minstrel bands and court music, sometimes performed in mockery of the colonizers. Caribbean calypso and steel pan music evolved from *chac-chac*, drum sounds, and rhythms from Africa. Carnival performances have launched many regional musicians into the international music scene.

While enslaved, Africans were sometimes called upon to perform for the entertainment of slave owners, but they were only permitted to assemble for their own celebratory purposes during certain occasions, most notably the Christmas holiday season. During these limited occasions, they would celebrate by donning costumes, dancing, and drumming (where permissible). After Emancipation, however, freed Africans elaborated the tradition of carnivals throughout the diaspora, incorporating costumes, music, and dances that reflected those found in African as well as in the European and Asian cultures to which Africans were exposed in the “New World.” The aesthetic fusion of such diverse cultures created multivalent traditions that, nonetheless, are woven with some similar threads throughout the African diaspora. Originally centered in the colonies of the New World, the carnival tradition has spread to Europe, as well as to Canada and the entire United States. Enclaves of Caribbean immigrants in these regions inspired many of these new carnival traditions.

Some of the earliest carnivals in the African diaspora were occasions for expressions and characterizations of class struggles. Carnivals represented one of the few venues where those of different classes and statuses mixed, and where it was possible, at least for a brief interval, for their statuses to be reversed. The development of festival or carnival traditions among

Africans in the diaspora was characterized by periods of segregation (from European and free black celebrants), periods of suppression (due to laws enacted against them), periods of violence (from police actions), and periods of integration (with European celebrants and traditions).

Some of the most well known carnivals are found in the Caribbean region. Carnival celebration dates there vary; many occur around the Christian Lenten holiday, others occur during the summer months. Many of the events that were originally celebrated during the pre-Lenten season changed their timing to avoid conflicting with the popular Trinidadian carnival. The Trinidadian carnival also exerts a substantial influence upon the conduct of festivals held in North America and Europe.

Characterized as raucous and wild events in the early period, carnivals have transposed into well-organized and often well-financed events. In many areas, they have evolved into tourist attractions—commodified cultural events that draw large crowds and can generate substantial personal and national income. Carnivals also became highly politicized sources of nation building for Caribbean elites immediately following independence, forums for airing commentary on social and political issues, and windows of visibility for those aspiring to political office or promoting a particular cause.

CARNIVAL IN THE CARIBBEAN

Trinidad has one of the oldest and largest carnivals in the African diaspora. Their carnival reflects the callaloo culture created by the diverse groups who came into contact there. Historically, Trinidad was the province of Arawak and Carib Amerindians, and it later became home to the French, Spanish, British, Africans, and East Indians. Trinidad’s carnival incorporates elements from all of these cultures. One early carnival tradition was called *Canboulay*, a term thought to originate from *cannes brulées*, which is French for “burning cane” and signified enslaved Africans’ practice of using sticks to extinguish accidental and premeditated fires on sugar cane plantations. *Canboulay* incorporated the stick-fighting traditions of East Indians and West Africans, and until it was banned in the 1880s, it was a vital part of the carnival. One of the most important ongoing features of Trinidadian carnival is the competition between bands, singers, and dancers for cash prizes. And every

year, kings and queens are chosen the day preceding the carnival marches or processions. It has been said that carnival in some countries is celebrated as a diversion from the cares of everyday life, but in Trinidad, everyday life is seen as a diversion from carnival. Most residents begin preparation for the next year's carnival immediately after the conclusion of the present event.

The 1960s and 1970s witnessed a revival of the carnival traditions in the smaller islands of the Caribbean. Festivals there occur around Christmas or in late July or early August, often marking the August Emancipation Day or independence throughout many former British colonies. Notable among these are the carnivals on the islands of Anguilla, Antigua, Barbados (called "Crop Over" festival), Grenada, British Virgin Islands, and Jamaica (in late July or early August), St. Vincent's Vincy Mas, and St. Lucia (in June or July). Most mark the carnival date with various festivities including boat races, parades, fireworks, music and band competitions, and dancing. Dominica's Mas Dominik and Guyana's Mashrami (or Mash) occur annually in February. Junkanoo in the Bahamas, Jonkonnu in Jamaica, and carnivals in St. Kitts-Nevis and Montserrat are staged annually between Christmas and New Year's Day.

Rara is a ritualized carnival celebrated in Haiti. This festival occurs during the 6-week period preceding Easter. It is rooted in the culture of Vodou, an African-derived religion, and is punctuated with African cultural traditions, particularly from the Congo and Angolan regions. There is a hierarchical order in the Rara bands that "make rara" in the streets (rather than at a specific site), and participants, "major *joncs*," are elaborately costumed in garments created from paper, mirrors, cloth, and sequins. Rara music is performed with *vaccines* (bamboo tubes), Petro and Congo drums, *lambi* (conch shells), and tin horns. Rara serves both unifying and competitive functions in Haitian communities, and it also acts as a mechanism of social control. Carnivals are critical in the construction of pan-Caribbean identity and the assertion of solidarity among Caribbean immigrants in North America and in Europe.

CARNIVAL IN NORTH AMERICA

New Orleans boasts one of the oldest carnival traditions in North America. The pre-Lenten festival Mardi Gras, like Trinidad's carnival, reflects the diverse

influences of many cultures—African, Caribbean, Amerindian, North American, and European. The antebellum Catholic influences of French and Spanish residents inspired the pre-Lenten festivals, which began after Christmas and lasted until Shrove Tuesday or *Mardi* (French for "Tuesday") *Gras*, while the enslaved Africans were allowed to assemble for song and dance only on Sundays. New Orleans has a dual tradition that initially held one event that was exclusive, for invited gentry only, and another for the masses. Postbellum, the excluded masses of freed blacks created their own pre-Lenten festival that combined the African and Amerindian cultural traditions of many residents whose historical contact led to mixed ethnicities. The black Indians (also known as tribes of Mardi Gras Indians) are well known for their elaborately plumed costumes that resemble those of both Plains Indian and African cultures. These "tribes" are separated into downtown and uptown factions whose styles are distinguished by their costume designs and materials.

The over a half million Caribbean immigrants in New York City inspired the annual celebration of carnival in Brooklyn. Organized during the civil rights and black power and black pride era of the 1960s, the Brooklyn Labor Day Carnival (which was later renamed the West Indian-American Day Carnival, Inc) displays costumes that reflect pan-Caribbean influences. In addition to local talent, the Brooklyn carnival attracts some of its best performers—musicians, dancers, and singers—from Caribbean countries; they travel to Brooklyn to participate in various carnival competitions. Events commence on the Thursday preceding Labor Day, with each succeeding day's music dedicated to a specific Caribbean musical genre (Thursday, calypso; Friday, reggae; Saturday, steel pan). Sunday, or *Dimanche Gras*, climaxes with costume competitions in preparation for the march in Monday's Labor Day event. While ostensibly promoting pan-African solidarity, the Brooklyn carnival, ironically, serves as a means to differentiate the Afro Caribbean from other people of African descent in the United States.

Toronto's Caribana is held annually on the first weekend of August and is sponsored by several expatriate West Indian groups. In addition to the function of identity construction and pride elevation, Caribana generates substantial tourist revenues for the city, drawing well over a half-million visitors. In line with the carnival tradition of the Caribbean, the competitive spirit is alive with king and queen competitions,

and thousands of participants *play mas* in elaborate costumes and invite the crowds who watch to join in the festivities. Smaller carnivals have emerged in other North American cities including Hartford, Boston, and Miami.

CARNIVAL IN EUROPE

Like New York City and Toronto, London is home to a large number of Caribbean immigrants, primarily from the former British colonies. West Indian immigrants brought their cultural traditions with them, and they created carnival in their new home as a vehicle to promote cultural solidarity and identity. The Notting Hill Gate Carnival is held on the British Bank Holiday and features the cultural traditions of many Caribbean countries, as well as creolized traditions that resulted from cultural contact. Just as the people are transnational, so are the variegated cultural traditions that emerge in this festival.

CARNIVAL IN SOUTH AMERICA

Rio de Janeiro's pre-Lenten carnival (*carnaval* in Portuguese) and its Afro-Brazilian music and dance, particularly the samba, have been important symbols of Brazilian identity since the 1930s. Bahia, the site of the largest population of people of African descent outside the African continent, was the center of the Luso-Brazilian slave trade, and Afro-Bahians' influence is significant in the Rio carnival. The Rio carnival really radiates all over that country. It is organized by two categories: the street and the club. The street aspect is generally organized by neighborhoods or *blocos*. The clubs are middle-class organizations whose walls become permeable during carnival. The Salvador carnival has become competitive with the Rio carnival, and African-derived musical forms such as *axe* predominate in both. *Carnival* is the occasion for temporary social maneuverability; persons of lower socioeconomic status have opportunities to mix with the middle and upper social classes during various club balls. Critical actors in the carnival are the samba schools whose members are the poor and black, marginalized members of Brazilian society. Their social position is inverted, however, as they demonstrate a superiority as teachers of the samba dancing that is so integral to the carnival. However, not all aspects of racial and class-based segregation disappear during the carnival. Thus festivals or carnivals in the African

diaspora serve many functions. They are the occasions for commemorative celebrations, social maneuverability, and the informal transmission of culture.

— Rosalyn Howard

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FISK JUBILEE SINGERS

The Fisk Jubilee Singers are the premier choral ensemble of African American musicians, who garnered international acclaim performing concert-arranged versions of the *spirituals*—the great sacred songs of their ancestors—while raising funds to support Fisk University.

In January of 1866, only 6 months after the American Civil War ended, Fisk University was founded in an abandoned army hospital barracks in Nashville, Tennessee. The university was established under the auspices of the American Missionary Association with the purpose of training former enslaved Africans to be teachers. With hundreds of eager students, Fisk struggled financially in its early years, and by 1868, it was on the brink of collapse. Recognizing the musical talents of many of the young students, music teacher and treasurer George White

organized a chorus of Fisk students and appointed an 18-year-old student named Ella Sheppard assistant choral director.

BUILDING A CONSTITUENCY

The chorus began singing in neighboring towns for donations for their school—despite the dangers they faced from local whites, who were threatening and assaulting Fisk students for teaching at rural schools. In October of 1871, White took the first group of nine singers on a fund-raising tour of the Northern states. Despite the reluctance of the students' parents and the opposition of other teachers at Fisk, and with no support from the American Missionary Association, the group started in Cincinnati and followed the network of abolitionist homes and churches that had previously assisted enslaved Africans in escaping to Canada. They sang in churches, at private parties and teas, and in busy streets. They endured filthy boarding houses, were treated badly at hotels and on railways, and suffered ill health from the lack of adequate clothing in the cold weather, as they remained dedicated to acquiring funds to keep Fisk alive.

Initially, the group sang the popular songs of the day in their performances, and they only sang the spirituals privately. They had not thought of singing the spirituals in public because the songs were, as Ella Sheppard said, "sacred" to their parents. But with the prompting of their musical director, they began to use the spirituals for their encores. Ella Sheppard later related, "It was only after many months that gradually our hearts were opened to the wonderful beauty and power of our songs." Their singing of the spirituals was so well received that they began to incorporate more of them into their repertoire. Ella Sheppard began teaching and providing musical arrangements of the familiar spirituals and new melodies as the group drilled and rehearsed while on tour. The highlights of their first tour included a performance at Oberlin College in Ohio for a national convention of ministers, sold-out performances in Connecticut with hundreds being turned away in New Haven and Hartford, and a performance before President Ulysses S. Grant in a concert hall full of congressmen and diplomats.

POPULARITY AND ACCLAIM

From this first tour of 6 months, they were able not only to pay Fisk's debts but also to donate \$20,000 for

the purchase of 25 acres of land on which Fisk University is located. The self-determination and self-reliance of the group did indeed ensure the future of their school, and their bold confrontation with Northern racism triggered some significant social changes. After they were refused accommodations on the Pullman cars, George Pullman integrated the cars—and they stayed integrated for another quarter century. Schools were opened to black children for the first time in New Jersey by the embarrassed Board of Education when a New Jersey hotel manager put the group out after learning that they were not minstrel singers. And, they set an example for other black schools, such as Hampton Institute, which began their own choral ensembles.

With only 2 weeks of rest after their first tour, the Fisk Jubilee Singers (who had begun to call themselves the Jubilee Singers) reorganized, and in April of 1873 the group of 11 singers launched their first tour abroad when they traveled to the British Isles. With a full and difficult schedule, their concerts, portraits, and songbooks were sold out, and books and newspapers were chronicling their history and success. In the spring of 1874, the Jubilee Singers returned home with \$50,000 for the construction of Jubilee Hall. Despite all of the singers' sacrifice, Jubilee Hall remained only a hole in the ground because the American Missionary Association had been borrowing heavily from what the singers earned to stave off its own bankruptcy. Thus the exhausted Jubilee Singers were asked to go on yet a third tour. With only 3 of the original 11 singers remaining, the group set out for an extensive tour in America and Europe. They traveled to Great Britain, Switzerland, the Netherlands, France, and Sweden, as well as to Germany, where they did an astonishing tour of 68 concerts in 41 towns in 98 days, not including impromptu performances in churches, trains, and private homes.

Returning to Nashville, the Jubilee Singers were honored by Fisk for raising over \$160,000 to complete Jubilee Hall and save their school. Jubilee Hall remains today as one of the oldest structures in use at Fisk University, and it was designated a National Historic Landmark by the U.S. Department of the Interior. In 1884, the Jubilee Singers began a 6-year world tour, and the Jubilee Singers tradition became a permanent institution at Fisk University. Today, the ensemble is made up of students from various disciplines at Fisk and from all over the United States, and

the singers continue to perform for audiences throughout the world. In 2000, the Fisk Jubilee Singers were inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame. Thus the contributions of the Jubilee Singers extend far beyond Fisk University. They not only introduced the spiritual to the world but also helped preserve the music of African American ancestors for posterity.

— *Mawusi Renee Simmons*

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Dr. John Hope Franklin, historian, intellectual, organizer

FORTY ACRES AND A MULE

“Forty acres and a mule” was the refrain heard and repeated during and after the Civil War when Africans were expecting a redistribution of land. This came about because on January 15, 1865, the American government passed Special Field Orders No. 15, which when they were executed immediately thereafter allowed General W. T. Sherman to give abandoned land in Charleston, Beaufort, Hilton Head, Savannah, Fernandina, St. Augustine, and Jacksonville to African people in the United States. These orders were passed 5 months before the end of the Civil War. Then, on May 26, 1865, when the fighting between the North and the South ceased, all legislation passed during the war, including these orders, were declared null and void. The land that Sherman, with the cooperation of the Freedman’s Bureau, had been able to allocate to African people was taken back and redistributed to Southern plantation owners by President Andrew Johnson. Thus the idea of 40 acres and a mule became one of many empty and broken promises made by the American government to African people in America.

Special Field Orders No. 15 designated 40-acre sections of “tillable land” in Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina to be used exclusively by African people in the United States. African people were the only ones allowed to reside in these 40-acre sections and were under no rule except that of the U.S. Congress and military. Under Special Field Orders No.15, African people could not be conscripted into the military, even though African men were highly encouraged to enlist “as soldiers in the service of the United States, to contribute their share towards maintaining their own freedom.” Sherman appointed General R. Saxton the Inspector of Settlements and Plantations to oversee the division and acquisitions of the designated land and land titles. Due to the large job at hand, T. W. Osborne and Davis Tilson were also recruited a few months later to help Saxton in distributing the confiscated land. Although there was no specific mention of the allocation of mules, with Sherman’s permission, the army was to loan out mules and horses seized during the war to those who settled in these designated areas. It is said that over 40,000 African men and women had been given an accumulation of 400,000 acres of land under these orders (at 10 acres a person), opening the door for the debate on whether 40 acres and a mule was to be per family, per person, or for African men only. Regardless of the logistics, these numbers were really representative of the collaborative efforts of the Freedman’s Bureau and

Sherman, as Sherman alone was never able to execute these orders in the way he wanted to because when the Civil War ended he lost some of his power.

On March 3, 1865, Congress created The Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, also known as the Freedman's Bureau, to follow Sherman's lead and rent out 40-acre plots of land to African people. This land came with the promise that it could eventually be bought. The Freedman's Bureau controlled over 800,000 acres of abandoned and confiscated land throughout the Southern confederate states, the states bordering the confederate states, the District of Columbia, and territory occupied by Native Americans. On May 25, 1865, a month after Lincoln's assassination, Johnson stated that these plots of land needed to be taken back and redistributed to the whites who owned them before the war. The former plantation owners knew that owning land enabled economic power and stability, and they therefore pressured Johnson to take back the land from African people as quickly as possible. Many African people who rented and owned these lands violently resisted because they knew that this land belonged to them and that they were entitled to it. Despite their efforts, the land was still stolen back by the government.

The dream of "40 acres and a mule" continues to be a prominent issue for African people in America today, especially with the current lawsuits filed for reparations. Those in support of reparations have calculated that 40 acres and a mule is worth around \$43,000 in today's society, and they assert that it should be repaid in a way that economically benefits all African people in America. Whether or not reparations are ultimately made, 40 acres and a mule has become part of the many hypocritical moves by the American government promising African people in America something that never became a true reality.

— Aimee Glocke

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FREEDOM SONGS

Freedom songs are a corpus of songs that were used during the civil rights movement of the 1960s and afterward as a unifying force in the African American struggle for freedom and human rights. The use of music in the fight for freedom was evidenced throughout the history of Africans in the Americas, particularly in the songs known as spirituals. But as a specific group of songs, *freedom songs* refer to the songs that were sung at sit-ins, mass meetings, prayer vigils, protest marches, boycotts, rallies, freedom rides, picket lines, courthouses, and jails. The first documented and identified body of freedom songs came from the student sit-in organizers in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

Freedom songs are songs of protest and self-assertion, inspiration and encouragement. Through the freedom songs, disenfranchised African Americans have been able to respond courageously to injustices and comment boldly on events in their struggle for civil rights. In essence, the freedom songs were tools for survival that drew together people of differing backgrounds and experiences in a centralized struggle for human rights.

The majority of the freedom songs were adapted from the wellspring of African American musical styles that were rooted in African cultural traditions. Most of the songs and styles of singing were based on spirituals, gospel songs, and hymns. The original meanings of the older spirituals, messages of justice and liberation, were relevant to the latest circumstances. In many of the older texts, pronouns were changed from first-person singular to first-person plural, fostering the sense of community and group solidarity. The repertoire of songs was expanded to include many popular African American musical forms and singing techniques of the 1960s (e.g., rhythm and blues). Melodies were retained, song texts were modified, and old and new styles were blended to create the freedom songs that captured the verve and potency of the movement.

THE MEANING AND HISTORY OF SONGS OF PROTEST

The singing of a particular freedom song usually lasted for extended periods during sit-ins and marches. As a result, new verses were composed not only to fill up the time but also to express the complexity of the dissent and protest against oppression. At some times, individuals inspired by an event or a testimony composed new verses, and at other times, verses evolved spontaneously out of the group experience. The counteractions of song and protest resulted in a new energy that propelled the group into further committed resistance. The freedom songs that surfaced in the midst of protest can be divided into two basic categories: group participation songs and professionally composed songs.

The *group participation songs* were often versions of existing songs that were improvised, with the help of a song leader, by groups engaged in civil rights activities. As the civil rights movement gained momentum in a community, local song leaders would join in the crusade. The song leaders performed in a variety of styles as they learned the songs of the organizers, added to them, and sorted through songs in the traditional repertoire to find songs that encapsulated the feelings of the current struggle and the local sentiment. At mass meetings in rural counties of Southwest Georgia, for example, song leaders used the lining-out hymns and call-and-response songs of that area as the basic repertoire. Sometimes the older songs were sung without change, and sometimes words were changed to identify and authenticate a specific local incident or event. An ideal mass meeting would combine songs from the standard freedom song repertoire, unchanged in song form and text, with songs modified and updated by recent events.

Strong song leaders in different regions would band together to develop "freedom choirs." These groups of musicians not only led the group participation songs at mass meetings and other activities but also performed their *professionally composed songs* as they traveled across the country in support of civil rights issues. Freedom choirs included the Montgomery Gospel Trio, the Selma Freedom Choir, the Nashville Quartet (the American Baptist Theological Seminar Quartet), the Birmingham Choir (Carlton Reese's Gospel Freedom Choir of the Alabama Christian Movement for Civil Rights), Guy Carawan and the Freedom Singers, the SNCC (Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee)

Freedom Singers, and the CORE (Congress of Racial Equality) Singers. The performances of these ensembles brought attention to the movement, and the freedom songs gained increased importance as a means of conveying the nature and intensity of the struggle to audiences outside of the setting of civil rights movement activity. Some of these groups used money raised from their performances to pay the bail for the release of imprisoned freedom fighters throughout the South. Other song leaders, such as Fannie Lou Hamer from Ruleville, Mississippi, individually carried the freedom song tradition to mass meetings and marches across the state of Mississippi, and later throughout the South and the nation.

Some of the freedom songs of the civil rights movement have a long history of being used as African American protest songs. The song *Old Freedom* dates back to the enslavement period and, with changes in the song text, was used as a marching song by protesters in the 1906 Atlanta race rebellions. It was again used in the 1930s by organizers of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union; found its way to the sit-ins, mass meetings, and freedom rides of the civil rights movement; and was sung frequently at SNCC conferences.

We Shall Overcome is one of the most popular of the freedom songs, and it became the theme song for the nonviolent constituency of the civil rights movement. Adapted from a combination of the melody of an older hymn called *I'll Be Alright* and the text of *I'll Overcome Some Day*, an older gospel song composed by Charles Tindley, *We Shall Overcome* was first used by the Food and Tobacco Workers Union in Charleston, South Carolina in the 1940s. During that period, Zilphia Horton, Director of the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee, introduced it to union gatherings all across the South. *We Shall Overcome* has been sung at great mass rallies by thousands of voices around the world and in many languages.

Four major collections of freedom songs have been published: The SNCC songbook, *We Shall Overcome* (1963); *Freedom is a Constant Struggle* (1968); *Songs of the Spirit Movement* (1968); and the NAACP songbook, *Lift Ev'ry Voice* (1972).

The freedom songs played a vital role in the civil rights struggle and gave people renewed courage and a sense of unity. The serious study of the freedom songs provides a historical account of events, the various responses to oppression, the array of protest strategies, and personal reflections and testimonials of

the civil rights movement, an important epoch in the history of African American people.

— *Mawusi Renee Simmons*

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FREEDOM SUMMER

Freedom Summer was a massive outpouring of political activism during the summer of 1964 when hundreds of black and white college students traveled to Southern states like Mississippi to recruit African people in America to vote. The recruitment efforts included not only registering African people to vote but also educating African people on voting rights. Although civil rights organizers had been working on the Freedom Vote campaign in Mississippi since 1961, Freedom Summer was to be much more intense because it was a presidential election year and recruiting African people to vote was essential to winning the campaign for civil rights.

Although the right to vote was received by men with the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment in 1870 and by women with the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920, disenfranchisement inhibited African men and women from truly exercising their right to vote. This disenfranchisement occurred in such legal sanctions as poll taxes and literacy tests, as well as outright physical attacks of terror, intimidation, brutality, and even murder. For African Americans, registering to vote in places such as Mississippi literally meant

risking their lives and, consequently, only 6% of all African American people in Mississippi were registered to vote. Because this was the lowest percentage of registered voters in the country, Mississippi became the new battleground in the fight for African people to be able to exercise their right to vote in the United States.

ORGANIZING FREEDOM SUMMER

Freedom Summer was organized by a coalition of some of the most well known civil rights organizations of the time: the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). These organizations made up what was known as the Mississippi Council of Federated Organizations. Because the white community protested African people's right to vote in Mississippi and other Southern states, volunteers leaving for the South had to be prepared for the strong possibility of encountering violence. College students were trained by SNCC workers in nonviolent protest methods at Western College for Women in Oxford, Ohio. Most of the students were around 21 years old, white, and from wealthy families. The students were asked to bring money for bail, expenses, and medical costs, as well as money for transportation home at the end of the summer. After about a week of training, the volunteers were sent to Mississippi. Their goals for the summer were to build freedom schools, open community centers where African people could obtain both legal advice and medical services, register African voters, and establish and organize the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.

College students who participated in Freedom Summer knew that they might encounter violence, harassment, and even death. Many local governmental officials in Mississippi anticipated the arrival of the volunteers by increasing their police force, reinforcing their weaponry, and preparing their jails and prisons. Many political leaders passed laws that would inhibit disruptive activities they thought might occur over the course of the summer. Violence did erupt—when white supremacist groups, community members, and police attacked the Freedom Summer workers numerous times over the duration of the summer. African American homes, churches, and Freedom schools were burned down. Over 1,000 Freedom

Summer volunteers were arrested, and many were deliberately beaten while in police custody.

Despite the threat of violence, the Freedom Summer workers were able to accomplish many of their goals. Freedom schools were established throughout Mississippi to teach African American history, leadership, reading, writing, and mathematics to African men, women, and children. Many Southern schools at this time were insufficiently funded and did not have the appropriate supplies, suitable textbooks, or the educated faculty to properly teach the children. The Freedom schools challenged these inequalities and drew about 3,000 students to the 30 schools throughout the South. Although these Freedom schools were deemed illegal by southern lawmakers, both teachers and students still participated in them despite the danger involved. Those who attended the schools risked intimidation and violence, while those who taught in the schools risked imprisonment, as teaching in a Freedom school was punishable by up to 6 months in prison.

CREATING SPACE AND OPPORTUNITY FOR PARTICIPATION

Freedom clinics were also established, attracting doctors from all over the country to provide basic health care at no charge to African people in Mississippi. And legal clinics were created to educate African people in their legal rights, as well as to oversee the Freedom Summer activities to ensure that no constitutional rights were violated. Lawyers from the National Lawyers Guild, the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, and the American Jewish Committee, as well as many law school students, traveled to Mississippi to take part in the legal aspect of the summer's protests.

Although the possibility of violence came with the job, the most well-known case of brutality in the summer of 1964 was the murder of the three civil rights workers James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner. Chaney, Goodman, and Schwerner were arrested for a traffic violation while investigating a church bombing and physical attack on church members in Philadelphia, Mississippi. No one knows what actually happened after they were released from jail, but a few weeks later, the bodies of the men were found in a nearby dam. The black man, Chaney, had been beaten to death, and the two white men, Goodman and Schwerner, had both been shot. These murders received extensive coverage in the media, and many

believed that it was because two of the three murdered men were white. Had they all been black, the media most likely would not have covered the story at all, as in the search for the bodies of the three civil rights workers, the bodies of three missing African Americans were found, and their murders did not receive any news coverage.

THE POLITICS OF FREEDOM SUMMER

The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) was also established during the Freedom Summer to challenge the historically racist Democratic party. Although many African Americans at this time were Democrats, the Southern Democratic party excluded both African voters and African representatives. This is why African people were not only recruited to register to vote but also to join the MFDP, which more than 80,000 did. Although the MFDP won much national support in places like California, President Lyndon Johnson refused to support the new party. When the MFDP was not included at the Democratic National Convention, delegates from five states threatened to walk out of the convention if the MFDP was not seated. President Johnson was forced to intervene and allowed the MFDP representatives into the convention as at-large delegates. However, the delegates were soon thrown out of the convention after refusing to swear full allegiance to the Democratic party. Fannie Lou Hamer went before the Credentials Committee and the media to discuss how difficult it was for African people in Mississippi to vote and how important the MFDP was for African people. Although the MFDP was not able to accomplish all that it had intended, the party did show the country that political power could be seized and utilized in the advancement of civil rights.

Although the risks were high for all those who participated in Freedom Summer, the achievements made it all worth the risk and effort. Freedom Summer had a huge impact not only on Mississippi but on the entire country. Freedom Summer laid the groundwork for the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and Freedom schools became the blueprint for future programs such as Head Start. The main idea was if Mississippi's overt racism and discrimination could be conquered, then anything was possible in the struggle to advance civil rights.

— Aimee Glocke

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GABRIEL PROSSER'S REVOLT

Gabriel Prosser was an enslaved African who was born in approximately 1775 in Henrico County, Virginia, and belonged to Thomas Henry Prosser, owner of the Brookfield Plantation on which Gabriel Prosser lived. Gabriel Prosser has been described as literate and religious; he was also a skilled blacksmith, which allowed him to leave the plantation more frequently than unskilled Africans could. His status among other enslaved Africans notwithstanding, Gabriel Prosser had no tolerance for the slave system, and he took every opportunity to vigorously challenge it—especially for routinely meting out capital punishment for the least infraction. Thus Prosser and his brother Solomon were brought to trial for threatening the life and property of a white man, who then brought suit against the brothers' owner. While Gabriel Prosser received a rare judgment in that he was not hanged, he was branded on his left hand and held in jail. Still, he continued his defiance against the slave system, and at the age of 24 he planned one of the largest and most highly organized slave revolts in North America.

Prosser, inspired by the Haitian Revolution, developed the plans for a systematic uprising that was ultimately to include over 1,000 enslaved Africans in the area of Richmond, Virginia. He selected this area because of the large numbers of enslaved Africans there who would be available to join the insurrection. Prosser assessed the enslaved African population as many times larger than the white community (estimated at 32,000 and 8,000, respectively). He planned

the revolt strategically, holding numerous meetings that included his wife Nanny, his brothers Martin and Solomon, and Jack Bowler. Prosser's team of insurgents planned to collect various weapons and strike at harvest time to ensure a good food supply. They established guidelines for approaching the enemy and reducing the number of civilian casualties. The guidelines instructed the rebelling slaves not to kill elderly women, children, the poor, or religious persons who were deemed friends of the antislavery cause.

Gabriel Prosser's plan for the rebellion had three areas of offensive action. First, the group would confiscate the munitions in the city; second, they would seize the powder houses; and third, they would advance into town in two flanks opposite of the city and kill all white males except those supportive of their actions. They would then capture and hold Governor James Monroe, and after the city of Richmond was taken, they would seize other cities and free all slaves. After control was established over the state of Virginia, Prosser would become its leader. If the plot called for an immediate adjustment to their plans, the group decided that they would conduct guerrilla warfare and live as maroons until freedom could be established.

Prosser anticipated that vast numbers of Africans would participate in the revolt. Some sources suggest that Prosser's group was approximately 1,100 strong; other sources suggest that thousands of Africans came to carry out the attack on Richmond, Virginia, on August 30, 1800. The rebelling slaves met at Old Brook Swamp, 6 miles from Richmond. As they headed toward the city, they encountered a violent storm with torrential rains that washed out roads and

bridges. That same night the revolt was betrayed by two house slaves from the Meadow Farm plantation who feared that their owner would be killed.

Governor James Monroe called for martial law and ordered troops and militias to occupy the area. Many Africans merely suspected of participating in the insurgency were captured and summarily hanged. Thirty-five members of Prosser's group were executed—all went to their deaths refusing to divulge any information about the plan. Prosser managed to escape down the swampy lowlands of the Chickahominy River. A bounty of \$300 was immediately established to help in the capture of Prosser. A few weeks later, Prosser was caught aboard a ship, the *Mary*, which was docked in Norfolk, Virginia. On October 7, 1800, after being interrogated by the governor, and after refusing to reveal any of the details of the complex plan, Prosser was hanged. The American slaveholding society used the Gabriel Prosser rebellion to directly influence more harsh slave laws in the North and the South. The Gabriel Prosser Revolt served as an important model for other revolutionary plans, including the Louisiana Slave Revolt of 1811, the Denmark Vesey Conspiracy in 1822, the Nat Turner Revolt in 1831, and the Christiana Revolt in 1851.

— *Katherine Olukemi Bankole*

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GHANA EMPIRE

Around the 3rd century B.C.E., nomadic groups herding animals in West Africa on the fringes of the Sahara became a threat to the Soninke people who lived south

of the desert as farmers. The Soninke formed a confederation and defended themselves against the nomads and eventually formed the kingdom of Ghana.

During the 3rd century C.E., the Mande-speaking Soninke people were united by a great king who led them to conquer the city of Kumbi Saleh in what is now western Mali. Kumbi Saleh was an important city along an important north-south trade route. The king of the Soninke was known as the *Kaya maghan*, “king of the gold,” and as *Ghana*, “war chief.” He belonged to the royal clan of Ouagadou, and the Soninke first named their kingdom after this royal family. In time, the land of the Ouagadou (or Wagadu) became known as Ghana. It was a kingdom associated with gold, and it lasted about 600 years before being conquered from the east by Mali.

Ghana was well placed to take advantage of trade between the north and south. Located between the salt mines and the goldfields, Ghana was a great source of commerce and trade talk. Camel caravans crossing the Sahara brought goods such as copper, fruits, and salt from the major mines as well as from Taghaza. The caravans also brought clothing and other manufactured goods, which they exchanged for kola nuts, hides, leather goods, gold, and ivory. Taxes collected on every trade item entering the kingdom were used to pay for the government and huge army that protected the kingdom's borders; the city of Kumbi Saleh, with its political control and economic prosperity, was considered the hub of the universe.

The location of the goldfields was kept strictly secret by the Soninke. By the 10th century, Ghana was the size of Texas or Nigeria, including parts of Senegal, Mali, and Mauretania. The emperor was acclaimed as the “richest king in the world because of his gold” by Arab traveler Ibn Haukal, who visited the region in about 950 C.E. Demand for gold increased in the 9th and 10th centuries, as it was required by the Islamic states of North Africa for minting into coins. As the trans-Saharan trade in gold expanded, so did the state of Ghana. The trans-Saharan trade also brought Islam to the empire, initially to the rulers and then to the masses.

Locally obtained iron ore was used to make tools and weapons, which made agriculture easier and more efficient; made possible the use of iron-tipped spearheads, lances, knives, and swords; and gave ancient Soninke soldiers technological superiority over their neighbors who used bone and wood. The Soninke were thus able to capture more farming and grazing

land from their weaker, less-organized neighbors. The Soninke were also able to obtain horses from the Saharan nomads with whom they were in contact.

In 1076, shortly after Ghana reached its zenith, the city of Kumbi Saleh fell to the Berber Almoravids, who swept across the desert from what is now Mauritania in an effort to control the gold trade and purify the Islam practiced in Ghana. The invaders subsequently withdrew, but the kingdom of Ghana was weakened. Sub-kingdoms, which had previously paid tribute to the Ghanaian king, gradually made the trade routes through Ghana dangerous. In addition, in the 11th and 12th centuries, the Bure goldfields were opened up to the south, drawing traders further east, and a terrible drought accelerated the deterioration of the environment through overgrazing, adding to the suffering in Ghana. In 1242, the once great empire fell

to the mighty king of Mali, Sundiata, who defeated Ghana at the battle of Kirina.

— *Mario Root*

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H

HAITIAN REVOLUTION

The Haitian Revolution, in the eyes of many, represents the most thorough case study of revolutionary change anywhere in the history of the modern world. Indeed, it can be argued that it was the force behind the abolition of slavery in the Caribbean. After over 10 years of battle, enslaved Africans were able to overturn the colonial status of Haiti by successfully defeating the great military powers of the world and establishing a new political state led by formerly enslaved Africans in the Western Hemisphere. As a French colony for less than a century, Saint-Domingue (as Haiti was known during colonial times) became the center of a historical drama that has effectively reshaped and challenged the ideals of freedom and liberty that were being played out in the French and American Revolutions. The Haitian Revolution struck a blow to the racist European and North American view of a hierarchical world forever dominated by white people.

Stumbled upon by Christopher Columbus in 1492, and renamed by him Hispaniola, meaning “Little Spain,” the territory of Saint-Domingue was a favorite target for raids by English, Dutch, and French buccaneers whose base was an island off the northwest coast of Saint-Domingue called Tortuga (which takes its name from La Tortue, meaning “The Turtle”). As incursions increased, and as the French began to outnumber the other pirates, a battle ensued for territorial control. The battle came to an end in 1697 with the Treaty of Ryswich that concluded the War of Grand Alliance. In the treaty, France claimed and Spain

ceded the western third of the island of Santo Domingo (as the Spanish referred to the island).

In the ensuing years, immigrants from France populated Saint-Domingue, for they saw that great profits could be made in the production and exportation of sugar, indigo, coffee, and cocoa from the island. Saint-Domingue attracted those who wanted to make a quick profit, as well as those, like ex-convicts, who were looking to start a new life. These people gladly settled there, but the same could certainly not be said about the hundreds of thousands of Africans who were imported and enslaved to provide free labor so that French planters could achieve their grand dreams of wealth. By 1791, Saint-Domingue had become the wealthiest of France’s territorial possessions, accounting for 40% of its foreign trade. As such, it was often referred to as “the pearl of the Antilles.” The astonishing wealth accumulated by French planters became renowned, and the expression “wealthy as a Creole” became common in France.

EXPLOITATION OF AFRICANS FOR PROFIT

The commercial success of Saint-Domingue came at a very high price, however, for it prepared the foundation of a revolutionary revolt from which France has never truly recovered. The enormous wealth generated from Saint-Domingue was achieved on the backs of enslaved Africans. By all accounts, the system of slavery was horrific: Africans working from dusk to dawn were regularly tortured with ruthless cruelty and left to die after white planters had sufficiently extracted a life’s worth of labor in the briefest time imaginable.

Out of the mix of white planters and Africans came three classes of people who fought for control and status. The three groups were known as the *grands blancs*, *petits blancs*, and *gens de couleur*. The *grands blancs* consisted of important whites, owners of large plantations, wealthy merchants, and high officials of the state. The *petits blancs* were all other whites, such as shopkeepers, artisans, and small planters with only a few enslaved Africans. Finally, the *gens de couleur* or free colored people, those with African blood in their veins, usually as a consequence of the union of white planters and African women who were often raped and kept as concubines. By 1790, they numbered about 28,000.

The *gens de couleur* were an ambitious lot, who owned land, endeavored in commercial enterprises, and enslaved Africans themselves. They were social climbers who sought status equal to that of the *grands blancs*, thereby posing a threat to the *petits blancs*, who felt indignant that someone with African blood could be above them on the social scale. The growing presence of the *gens de couleur* was largely due to the Black Code (*Code Noir*) of Louis XIV, which permitted an African to gain his or her liberty either by purchasing it or by receiving it as a gift from his or her master.

As the *petits blancs* became more and more threatened by the social gains of the *gens de couleur*, discriminatory laws were enacted that increasingly curtailed the *gens de couleur's* freedom and that were designed to humiliate them.

Back in France, the French Revolution had begun, and between the years 1788 to 1793, the affairs of Saint-Domingue became inextricably tied to the events of the revolution. Indeed, word of the revolution in France served as an inspiration for the *gens de couleur* as well as the whites, although to different ends. The *gens de couleur*, inspired by the words of the *Declaration of Human Rights*, sought to regain the freedoms that were increasingly being denied to them and, ultimately, to declare an independent Saint-Domingue with their class as rulers. The whites, on the other hand, were seeking, through independence, greater commercial possibilities outside the restrictive colonial boundaries imposed by France and, instigated by the *petits blancs*, the firm and permanent establishment of whites as the dominant group on the island. In this endeavor, the *grands blancs*, who controlled colonial affairs, took two miscalculated measures that would spark the fire of revolution: First, they sent a delegation of 37 deputies to represent

Saint-Domingue in the newly revived State Assembly in Paris; second, they drew up a list of grievances (*Cahier des Doléances*) that effectively sought permission for white planters to govern the colony without interference from France.

These actions caught the attention of Léger Félicité Sonthonax, a radical Jacobin closely associated with *Les Noirs* (The Friends of Blacks). The Jacobins were determined to eradicate all traces of counterrevolution and royalism, which they identified with the whites of Saint-Domingue. In the ensuing debate between the Jacobins and the royalists, the National Assembly ultimately passed an ambiguous resolution, which while granting political rights to the *gens de couleur*, still left open the interpretation of colonial authority. As the whites were not inclined to extend freedoms to the *gens de couleur* on the island, they were determined to take the island by force, if necessary. Bloody skirmishes thus grew between the *gens de couleur* and the whites, but all designs for control of Saint-Domingue were completely derailed when the Africans revolted.

AFRICANS' INSURRECTION

On the night of August 14, 1791, at Bois Caiman in the northern part of Haiti, Vodun priest Boukman Houngan and priestess Mariessaint Dede Bazile held a service that laid the plans for a general slave uprising. Six days later, blacks began to slaughter every white man, woman, and child they could lay their hands on. Whites, for their part, retaliated and did the same, slaughtering all the blacks they could. Spain and England sent troops into Saint-Domingue on the pretext of trying to put an end to the insurrection and to prevent it from spreading to their neighboring colonies. The *gens de couleur*, although they were known to be quite cruel to enslaved Africans at times, escaped the wrath of the Africans. They thus sought to use the African uprising to their advantage in wresting control of Saint-Domingue from the whites. Out of this maelstrom rose the major players of the revolution: Henry Christophe, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, André Rigaud, Alexandre Pétion, and, above all, Toussaint Louverture. Indeed, it is often said that the leadership responsible for this unique historical event was almost entirely the work of one individual: Toussaint Louverture.

The French general in charge of the colony was Laveaux; the leader of the *gens de couleur* was André Rigaud. Overwhelmed by the Spanish and British invaders, Laveaux sought the help of Toussaint, who

was reputed to be a brave and brilliant military strategist. Toussaint agreed to help, and on his journey to Saint-Domingue managed to defeat several Spanish regiments. Soon afterwards, Toussaint returned to France all the territory Spain had recently won from her. To defeat the British, Toussaint temporarily withdrew from public sight as he prepared his troops for the better equipped and more disciplined British. He emerged with a better coordinated and smoothly functioning army, which decisively defeated the British and completely removed them from the island. By 1796, Toussaint was an undisputed hero. He was feared and respected by his soldiers and loved by the Africans who had been given their freedom in 1793 by the French Commissioners (Sonthonax, Polvèrel, and Ailhaud) who were attempting to gain their support against the armies of Spain and England. Moreover, the whites respected him, and Laveaux was indebted to him. Only the *gens de couleur* were suspicious of him. They gave their allegiance to Rigaud, not to Toussaint.

Then, in a series of brilliant tactical maneuvers, Toussaint sought to consolidate his powers. He assigned to potential white rivals administrative posts that effectively sent them to France (and away from Saint-Domingue) to carry out their “duties.” All that remained was the battle for supreme leadership between Toussaint and Rigaud. Rigaud, however, was no match for Toussaint, who easily defeated Rigaud’s army, following which Rigaud fled to France never to be heard from again. After 1799, as nominal governor of Saint-Domingue, Toussaint revived prosperity in Saint-Domingue. Historians have called Saint-Domingue’s return to prosperity between 1799 and 1802 amazing. It was also during this period that Toussaint gained the cooperation of the president of the United States, John Adams; negotiated an advantageous treaty with England; gave his people a new constitution that gave him not only all political power for life but also the authority to name his successor. In effect, Toussaint had been able to achieve many of the feats that another important figure in this drama—Napoléon Bonaparte—had failed to achieve.

FRANCE’S ATTEMPT TO RECAPTURE THE ISLAND

Napoléon was determined to recapture Saint-Domingue. As the richest of France’s former colonies, Saint-Domingue played a major role in Napoléon’s plan for a New World empire. On December 14, 1801,

Napoléon sent his brother-in-law, Charles Leclerc, with a formidable army to capture and remove Toussaint as governor, reestablish slavery, and return Saint-Domingue to France. In January of 1802, Leclerc arrived in Cap Français (currently named Cap-Haïtien), but he was repelled by Henry Christophe, who rallied the Haitians against the French army. On February 5, Christophe set fire to the city and withdrew to the neighboring hills. By some accounts, the war of independence is said to have begun with these events. For 3 months, Toussaint vigorously fought back the invading French army. On April 26, 1802, Christophe surrendered. On June 10, Toussaint accepted an invitation to dine and discuss matters of the colony that resulted in his being captured and taken aboard a ship soon bound for France. He died on April 7, 1803, in the Jura Mountains of southeastern France.

However, although Toussaint was now out of the way, Leclerc’s plans to reestablish slavery and return Saint-Domingue to France were never carried out. Leclerc and his army were decimated by yellow fever. The black generals, who had been captured by Leclerc, were once again fighting against the French. As Leclerc’s army was systematically being annihilated by yellow fever, his letters to Napoléon pleading for reinforcement became frantic. On November 1, 1802, Leclerc himself succumbed to yellow fever.

The cost of the Saint-Domingue campaign was increasing. In a futile attempt to save face, Napoléon named Rochambeau as Leclerc’s successor. Rochambeau, however, was incompetent and, moreover, Napoléon was not prepared to fully support him. In May of 1803, the Amiens Peace Treaty was broken, and France found itself at war with England. With Saint-Domingue slipping from his hands, and in desperate need of capital, Napoléon abandoned his plan for a New World empire. In April of 1803, Napoléon sold the territory of Louisiana to President Thomas Jefferson, doubling the size of the United States at that time. Meanwhile, Rochambeau, in a desperate attempt to control Saint-Domingue, waged desultory warfare by hunting Africans with 1,500 bloodhounds bought from Jamaica and hanging, shooting, drowning, or burning all the Africans he could catch. Christophe and Jean-Jacques Dessalines responded by massacring every white person within their reach. On November 16, 1803, at Vertières, the final battle took place—Rochambeau was defeated. Three days later, Rochambeau and his few remaining men capitulated to the English in Jamaica.

INDEPENDENCE

Dessalines proclaimed the independence of Haiti on January 1, 1804, in Gonaïves. He chose to call the island Haiti, an aboriginal word meaning “mountainous,” rather than the French name Saint-Domingue. Haiti, the Caribbean, and the rest of the Americas would never be the same again.

The Haitian Revolution immediately sparked unrest throughout the region of the Caribbean, especially in communities of Maroons in Jamaica and among blacks in St. Kitts. Also, immigrants fleeing an independent Haiti had a profound effect wherever they went. In the Spanish-colonized Caribbean, for example, Haitians are credited for revitalizing agricultural production in Cuba and Puerto Rico. In North America, Haitians influenced language, religion, politics, culture, cuisine, architecture, medicine, and the conflict over slavery, especially in Louisiana.

The Haitian Revolution sent a wave of fear through whites throughout the world. In Great Britain, anti-slavery movements gained strength and colonial Africans themselves became more restless such that in 1808, Britain abolished its transatlantic slave trade and dismantled the slave system between 1834 and 1838. As for the French, their slave trade was abolished in 1818, although slavery survived as an institution in Martinique and Guadeloupe until 1848. Above all, however, the Haitian Revolution, as the only instance of complete African victory over the evil of slavery, served and continues to serve as a great source of inspiration and pride for Africans engaged in the fight against white supremacy worldwide.

— *Garvey F. Lundy*

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HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL

The Highlander Folk School was founded by Myles Horton in Monteagle, Tennessee, with the purpose of training people to organize against big business. It was intended as a union training center. When Horton founded the school in 1932, the condition of the working class in the United States was quite dreadful. The nation was still in the throes of the Great Depression, millions of people were out of work, and those who were working often put up with abuse from their employers because of the scarcity of work. Often men and women would be fired from their jobs because they complained about the working conditions. The situation in the South was far worse than the situation in the North. Consequently, the Highlander Folk School became known as a place for the dispossessed to learn how to control their own lives and to speak out of their own interests. This was the image of the school until the 1950s.

During the 1950s, the activities of the school became increasingly connected to the civil rights movement. In some respects, the worker and civil rights movements merged at the Highlander Folk School. It was the only place in the South where blacks and whites could meet as equals and plan social activism. Because of this, the school earned a negative reputation with the local authorities, members of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), and judges in the South. Those who attended the Highlander Folk School to learn about civil disobedience, union organizing, or voters’ rights were often criticized, abused, and attacked. The Highlander Folk School was called

“communist” by some who wanted to discredit it in the eyes of the public. Monteagle public officials revoked the school’s charter in 1960, but the resourceful Myles Horton responded by relocating the school, first to Knoxville and then to New Market. In the 1980s, the school’s focus shifted to balancing environmental concerns with the struggle for economic recovery in the South. Black Studies sees the Highlander Folk School as important because it was the venue for some of the important training of African American activists during the 1950s.

— *Molefi Kete Asante*

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HIP-HOP

Hip-hop is one of the most misunderstood cultural expressions of the second half of the 20th century. Though often interethnic and resembling a street gang culture, the hip-hop explosion included hip-hop deejaying, break dancing, rap music, and graffiti art performances, mirroring life in marginalized black neighborhoods. The term *hip-hop* was used at various stages of its development as old school hip-hop DJ-MCs and their fans expressed their feelings about the emerging generation of youth. Similar to responses to the black cultural thrusts of the 1940s, 1950s, and early 1960s, hip-hop was described in the 1980s and 1990s by its critics as a passing fad, an offhand cultural statement, and a rebellious art form. Despite these public criticisms, the artistry of multitalented hip-hop artists, producers, and practitioners burst loudly and proudly onto the American cultural scene.

As hip-hop was muscling its way into the marketplace of ideas, some observed that it was the hip-hop DJ whose skills as a musical technician and genius represented the first transition of hip-hop from the streets to professional performance outlets. Later, these legendary DJs were often backstage during public performances, as it was the rap artists’ duty to please the crowds on stage. DJ Love Bug Starsky, for example, was known in the community for chanting “hippity-hop, don’t stop, keep on the body rock.” Other MCs, including DJs Kool Herc, Hollywood, Kurtis Blow, Grandmaster Flash, and the legendary Afrika Bambaataa contributed to elevating the culture in other ways. Herc helped to increase hip-hop’s visibility in the neighborhoods and the professional arena by hosting shows all over New York and by encouraging the competitive break dancers he called “B-boys.” Bambaataa was at the same time moving his Zulu Dancers and B-boys into the clubs, a cultural site where B-boys, most of whom were recognized gang members, could settle their disputes in more positive ways. Bambaataa, which in Zulu means “affectionate leader,” became a hip-hop legend. And with the commercialization of the culture, the artistry of hip-hop and rap music rose to become a multibillion dollar enterprise in both the domestic and international marketplace.

RAPPIN’ AND STYLIN’ OUT: RAPPERS AS CONTEMPORARY GRIOTS AND TRICKSTERS

Rap music began in the South Bronx of New York City in the early 1970s. With the rap music explosion came Sugar Hill Gang’s “Rapper’s Delight” and Kurtis Blow’s “The Breaks,” which were followed in the late 1970s by Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five’s “The Message,” a song that graphically depicted hard times and desperation in urban America. In 1980, it was Soulsonic Force’s “Planet Rock” that took center stage. However, with the huge commercial success of Run-D.M.C.’s “Walk This Way” and the Beastie Boys, the heart of rap turned toward consumerism. At the same time, many popular rap songs spoke in opposition to the ideology of the dominant culture, the greed of independent and major record companies, and the partying needs of hip-hop’s practitioners.

Still, a number of celebrated rap stars and group acts—Run-D.M.C., Chuck D and Professor Griff of Public Enemy, Ice-T, Niggas Wit Attitudes, Ice Cube, The 2 Live Crew, Sister Souljah, the Geto Boys,

Dr. Dre, Snoop Doggy Dogg, and Tupac Shakur—at one time or another were accused of glorifying violence, chanting racist and anti-Semitic remarks, or spouting sexually explicit, offensive, and obscene lyrics. These rap artists defied and opposed the censorship attempts of Tipper Gore and Susan Baker of Parents Music Resource Center, C. Delores Tucker of the National Political Congress of Black Women, and the Reverend Calvin Butts of the Abyssinian Baptist Church.

During rap music's evolutionary development, rappers employed a number of themes in their lyrics, including racism, discrimination, oppression, unemployment, equal rights, women's rights, free speech rights, racial unity, black-on-black crime, sexism, abandonment, love, decay, despair, and violence. Rap music quickly became a very complex, persuasive, and powerful rhetorical device and communication medium for the fans and critics of many rappers. A skillful rapper was widely known as a cultural hero and wizard of words, capable of bringing to life fictive images mirroring real life events and situations. Rap artists from coast to coast were not only able to skillfully play the role of contemporary tricksters and griots by appropriating the personas of players, gangsters, preachers, teachers, feminists, revolutionaries, and entertainers, but they were also able to make those portrayals, through the backing of marketing experts, serve as popular fantasy tales and illusions that somehow had the power and influence to challenge their peers, authority figures, their friends, themselves, and strangers. Rappers sought to make a profit from offering commentary on pressing social, political, ethical, and economic issues.

Television ratings increased in the 1980s, due in part to the recruiting of rap artists to promote consumer products. MC Hammer sipped Pepsi, Kid-N-Play courted Sprite, and Young MC gave Taco Bell a soft-sell pitch. On prime-time television, Heavy D made guest appearances on *Roc*, while Will Smith's *Fresh Prince of Bel Air*, Queen Latifah's *Living Single*, and L.L. Cool J's *In the House* appealed to young white, black, Latino, and Asian teen and adult viewers. Rap artists were also featured in cartoons targeting children, including *Street Frogs*, *Kid-N-Play*, and the notorious *Hammertime*, all of which were broadcast on Saturday mornings. Almost from its inception, then, hip-hop developed an often ambiguous relationship to consumerism, as seen in the rampant purchasing of various hip-hop-related consumer

goods; the increase in cable viewership of *Yo! MTV Rap*, *Video Jukebox*, and Black Entertainment Television's *Rapcity*; and the regular appearance of hip-hop DJs on cable television shows such as Russell Simons's *Def Jam Comedy* on HBO, which employed former New York DJ Kid Capri; as well as the appeal in rap to crossover from the recording studios to the soundstage.

As a result of some of the choices made by rap artists such as Ice Cube, Queen Latifah, MC Lyte, Ice-T, Tupac Shakur, Run-D.M.C., the Fat Boys, Tone Loc, Big Daddy Kane, L.L. Cool J, Kid-N-Play, Will Smith, and Salt N Pepa, some critics have concluded that commercialization killed the social and political thrust of hip-hop.

However, rap remains socially, politically, philosophically, culturally, and rhetorically significant. It has deep roots in the African American oral tradition. Rap belongs to the work songs; the blues; the black radio DJ tradition; the soul and funk music traditions of James Brown and George Clinton; the rhetorical traditions of black comedians such as Rudy Ray Moore, Redd Foxx, and Richard Pryor; the lyrics of poets such as Langston Hughes; the boasting of Muhammad Ali; and the oral traditions of playing the dozens and signifying.

Rap represents not only a combination of conscious poetry and musical genius but also a continuation of African and Caribbean oral traditions with roots that stretch to West and Central Africa. Like their ancestors, African American male and female rappers—who are essentially contemporary griots, praise singers, and poets—draw their energy from the combination of personal style, an innovative story, the skillful use of words, and a reading of the nation. Rappers create and invent stories using multiple social texts. Rap is the heir of the blues, soul, R&B, jazz, funk, and other African-originated musical and rhetorical traditions and also has its own personality. Like traditional African epic narratives, rap explains African American interpretations of why the world exists as it does. Like newscasters such as Ted Koppel, Bryant Jennings, Sam Donaldson, and Cokie Roberts, rap's messengers are able to set an agenda by creating and sharing provocative news stories about a variety of local, national, and global events, as well as by outlining vicarious details pertaining to positive and negative realities, events, and activities in the rural communities and urban neighborhoods of African Americans.

Rap may also function as a farce, to the extent that it enables young black male and female rappers to employ trickery and deception in the telling of historical tales about African American realities and possibilities. By employing such trickery, rappers school the community and the nation. Rappers use very elaborative braggadocio tales to insinuate themselves into the personas of cultural, political, and religious nationalists, Afrocentrists, black feminists, gangstas, Africana womanists, players/pimps, humanitarians, preachers, and teachers. The rapper's narratives communicate the hopes, dreams, values, fantasies, aspirations, fears, frustrations, and sufferings of working-class people living below the poverty line.

The Wizardry of the Hip-Hop DJ

The wizardry of the hip-hop DJ represents an important manifestation of the culture. Hip-hop DJs have invented a variety of hip-hop and rap formats—house, hip-house, techno-house, and hip-hop music—for live performances, prime-time television shows, and cable programs. These progenitors of hip-hop gave rap its edge. With the aid of two turntables and a repository of old records, as well as the creative ability to master techniques like scratching, cutting, mixing, punch phrasing, and looping—and a creative imagination and good MC rapping voice—the early hip-hop DJ brilliantly introduced innovative styles and recyclable sounds from a trilateral pan-African aesthetic tradition. Herc, Flash, and Bambaataa were widely recognized as bearers of contemporary African cultural traditions.

The hip-hop experiment began shortly after Herc emigrated from Jamaica to New York in 1967. Herc purchased and named his own sound system, the Herculords, and patterned his deejaying style after the Jamaican tradition of “toasting.” Herc's smooth talking over instrumental and dubbed versions of 1960s hit records was intermixed with “shout-outs” and screams of “Rock the House” to keep the crowds dancing. Besides creating his own style of playing the same sound repeatedly, Herc was known for “cutting from one record deck to the other as he talked through the microphone,” as Dick Hebdige put it.

Herc was the first hip-hop DJ to make the transition from the parks to the professional arena, but Flash, Theodore, Bambaataa, and others were creating their own DJ sounds as well. The Grandmaster, whose parents came from Barbados, became an expert at

“punch phrasing,” which Hebdige describes as “where the DJ hits a particular break while the record on the other deck is still playing.” Grand Wizard Theodore invented the technique called “scratching,” and Bambaataa, whose parents were from the Caribbean, mixed funk beats with percolating synthesizer and rhythms. Bam, as he prefers to be called, demonstrated incredible range in alternating between white pop and black funk to keep white, black, and Puerto Rican couples dancing. With a rap group he helped to form, and which was called Soulsonic Force, Bam produced one of the first hip-hop singles, “Planet Rock.” As hip-hop expanded into the mainstream, Bambaataa's reputation rose.

Mastering the poor man's technology back in the 1980s, hip-hop DJs such as Herc, Hollywood, Flash, Bambaataa, Terminator X, and Dr. Dre played a significant part in the evolution and development of the black deejaying tradition by becoming experts in reconfiguring eclectic sounds, techniques, styles, profiles, African-originated orality, and recyclable African-American musical beats. By the 1980s, others were creating and experimenting with polyrhythmic sounds, repetitions, and break beats with their turntables, digital samplers, computers, drum machines, multirecorders, and hyperinstruments. Old school studio DJs such as Hank Shocklee and Daddy-O combined samples with complex sounds to manipulate musical beats, while others used Macintosh computers to reinvent unique sounds from the bass and the keyboard. These DJs carefully blended musical beats, rhyming stories, and exciting sounds by relying heavily on improvisation, wit, and intellect.

HIP-HOP DANCING AND AFRICAN AMERICAN AND AFRICAN DANCE QUALITIES

Hip-hop dancing, known initially as break dancing, first became popular through local performances in parks and clubs in New York. Then it attracted attention at local dance contests and competitions in New York, New Jersey, and Philadelphia. The hip-hop dance craze soon spread to the West Coast and the motion picture industry through both Hollywood and independent feature films such as *Flash Dance*, *Wild Style*, *Beat Street*, *Breaking'*, *Breakin' 2: Electric Boogaloo*, *House Party*, *House Party II*, *Class Act*, and others. The dance patterns gained mass appeal in the 1980s and 1990s through the performances of dancers in music videos and on comedy shows aired

on cable television. Like rap, the dance patterns in break dancing, popping, locking, moon-walking, the Electric Slide, the Pee-Wee Herman, the Smurf, the Cabbage Patch, the Running Man, the Kid-N-Play, the Heavy D Shake, the Flavor Flav, and M.C. Hammer's Chinese Typewriter on MTV all evolved from the same pan-African aesthetic matrix. Essentially, these dance movement patterns resembled similar dance qualities and traits characteristic of African and Afro-Diasporic dancing. Their roots can be easily found in earlier dance patterns and styles, ranging from the ceremonial and polyrhythmic stomps performed in traditional African societies to various movement patterns performed in Brazil, Cuba, Haiti, Jamaica, and on and off plantations in the United States.

After break dancing arrived on the cultural scene in the mid-1970s, the B-boys who were in groove with "the break points in the DJ's performance" created down and upright movements of play-fighting in which they robotically scuffle their feet, hands, heads, and bodies back and forth. However, with the spread of the break-dancing fever uptown, newer movement exchanges and patterns evolved between the East and West Coasts. With its mimelike movements, the Electric Boogaloo reached New York via Los Angeles, Cleveland, South Carolina, and other mediating points. Since the 1990s, newer dances have surfaced. "Freaky style" dance patterns, limited to hip and pelvic thrust motions, also played a significant role in the 2 Live Crew's "As Nasty As They Wanna Be" freedom of speech controversy, which included some very public defenses by Henry Louis Gates of the use of profanity. With the popularity of Daisy-Duke Shorts, freaky dance styles, including the Butt, the Butterfly, and the Tootsie Roll, have spread in dance clubs all across America.

GRAFFITI ART AND FASHION: VANDALISM AND CONSUMERISM

Graffiti, which has been characterized as a display of symbolic writings and disturbing images on public surfaces, first appeared in New York in the mid-1960s. By the 1970s, graffiti writings had gained widespread visibility as a form of folk art and as an important communication channel for gang cultures. Graffiti emerged as part of hip-hop after appearing on subway walls and trains in the first independently produced hip-hop documentary, *Wild*

Style, where they were characterized as prolific writings belonging to crews. In the early days, these crews used graffiti as a symbolic gesture to identify territorial space. Graffiti was also used to celebrate the culture, and eventually to replace violence with nonviolence. However, the mass media characterized graffiti artists, as they did rappers and break dancers, as a menace.

Campaigns spearheaded by local law enforcement agencies, politicians, and taxpayers tagged these visual artists as social deviants and outcasts with nothing to do. Like other cultural manifestations of hip-hop, graffiti artists made the transition from the community to professional art galleries in the early 1980s. Like any new and bold fashion statement, graffiti-originated fashion designs, whether they originated on the East or West Coast, were tagged as "bizarre and weird." In addition to this descriptive characterization, the styles and profiles of some of the practitioners who invented and promoted the culture's material aspects continue to appropriate the collective hip-hop imagination and attitude. The fake gold chains called "dope-ropes," oversized casual pants, the X Cap, and high-top fade haircut worn by fans of hip-hop, as well as other hip-hop manifestations—including graffiti-originated expressions from spraypainted images on the walls of buildings to airbrushed images on clothes, picture books, posters, magazine covers, cartoons, and canvases displayed in art galleries—have generated much capital. Fans intrigued by video images of rappers in fancy cars, wearing gold chains and baggy clothes, associate these artifacts with success in hip-hop.

Besides Def Jam Records, Def Jam Comedy, and the more recent Phat Farm clothing line, Russell Simmons, one of the most successful black entrepreneurs in the hip-hop business, has made a significant mark in the fashion industry. He invested in a profitable industry, and he has helped others—such as April Walker of Walker Wear, Chuck D of PE mail-order clothing, and Naughty By Nature (NBN) of Naughty Wear—do the same. Now that hip-hop has penetrated the marketplace of ideas as well, well-established white designers have increasingly invested in one way or another in the hip-hop clothing industry, including Tommy Hilfiger, Polo, Guess, Girbaud, Nautica, Versace, and Marc Buchanan. In addition, advertisers representing a number of major multinational corporations have jumped on the bandwagon. Many use rappers in advertisements and promotions

to market leather jackets, jeans, food service chains, and sportswear from various manufacturers, including Timberland, Rockport, and Nike. *The Source*, the most widely read hip-hop magazine, has also tapped, promoted, and profited from the lucrative business in hip-hop fashions that can be said to have saturated the market.

— Ronald J. Stephens

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I

IMPERIALISM

Imperialism is the process by which a nation extends its territory by imposing its authority and thus gaining political and economic control of other areas. Here the term is being used to refer specifically to the process by which European nations achieved world hegemony through an aggressive system of exploitation accompanied by enormous violence and inhumanity against Africans, Asians, and Native Americans. Imperialism wreaked havoc on the African continent, and the mark it left on Africa helped to define the meaning of imperialism to the world.

African people and their resources were plundered and exploited from the 15th century on into the 20th century. It is usual to take an economic perspective on imperialism, but a concentration on economics alone diminishes the reality of the utter devastation of many people and nations. Furthermore, such a view rationalizes degeneracy. It is estimated that millions of lives were lost during the height of Europe's hegemony. Indeed, as a consequence of the destruction and exploitation of African and Asian nations, Europe gained hundreds of millions of dollars in wealth during the most intense period of imperialism. In 1914, at the height of Europe's imperial period, more than four fifths of the world was under the control of one or the other of the European powers. Although most colonized nations won independence in the decades following World War II, the phase of imperialism referred to in the literature as neo-colonialism and globalization continues to plague most of the world.

PHASES OF IMPERIALISM

The first phase of imperialism began in 1440 with the arrival of the first shipment of enslaved African people and gold in Portugal. This period, which lasted until 1870 when the colonial phase began, involved an investment in human flesh, unknown in scale and scope before this time. These shipments of African people to other lands might be called the first experiment in organized modern capitalism, as the accumulation of profit from the trade of enslaved Africans made imperialism, as a whole, possible. The modern global economy, which Europeans once dominated and now European Americans dominate, was created by the inhumane exploitation of African people.

The enslavement of Africans by Europeans is not properly considered trade—it is accurately defined as a *holocaust*, meaning the destruction of a people. The rise of and support for the enslavement of Africans may have led directly to what African American scholars see as the moral decay of the modern world. From the 15th through the 20th centuries Europeans developed a network of international trade and fought for its control. The trade of enslaved Africans was the single most important element of this effort. Portugal established a strong foothold early, establishing a trading monopoly in the East. Once Portugal united its political ambitions with those of Spain, attention was turned to establishing colonies in the Americas.

The Dutch replaced the Portuguese in the East and carried the technique and institutions of commercial empire building to their furthest development. The Dutch efforts were supported by their role in supplying enslaved Africans to the colonies in the Americas.

The Dutch established the Dutch United East India Company in 1602, an early example of the modern-day multinational corporations that promote globalization. The British ultimately seized the Dutch monopoly in the East, making its British East India Company the formal ruler of Bengal in 1764. This presaged the efforts of imperialism as a whole to erode national sovereignty and establish multinational corporations as international governing bodies. Having acquired the legal “right” to supply Spain with enslaved Africans, the British gained enough capital and power to begin the industrial revolution. They then made the trading of enslaved Africans illegal, to limit challenges to their ascendance as the dominant European power. The stage was thus set for the creation of the British empire.

Colonialism, the second phase of imperialism, began in Africa in 1870 and lasted until most African nations won their independence in the 1960s. European merchants and institutions accumulated huge sums in profit from shipping along the infamous triangular trade routes connecting the colonies, the West Indies, and Africa or England, with the trade based primarily on the exploitation of African people and their resources. This accumulation of wealth was invested in establishing European financial institutions, including the stock exchange and large banking institutions. The resulting economic system was used to expand and deepen the exploitation of peoples of color and their land and natural resources, with an emphasis on Africa. Increasing profits and increasing systematization of the economic infrastructure led to increased competition among those European nations that were vying for power. The competition and greed of Europeans in turn resulted in a global devastation and inhumanity that was never before seen in human history.

European colonialism was an integrated system that sought to eradicate African economic, political, military, social, and cultural autonomy. Through increasingly violent and oppressive measures, European powers established a system of absolute exploitation; every gain, profit, and benefit realized by Europeans was realized at African expense. King Leopold of Belgium personified the European colonial ethos: His exploitation of the people of the Congo and their resources earned his government an estimated \$1,500,000 per year in profits. This exploitation cost the lives of approximately 11 million Congolese people between 1890 and 1920.

The third and contemporary phase of imperialism, given the name *neocolonialism* by Kwame Nkrumah, is now referred to as “globalization” by contemporary scholars. African and African American scholars see globalization as an extension of the two previous phases of imperialism, with the hegemony of the European and European American self-proclaimed elites more fully entrenched than in the past. Consistent with imperialism as a whole, globalization seeks to oppress Africa and Africans more than other peoples.

Globalization, also referred to in some literature as “The New World Order,” is viewed by African and African American scholars as an attempt to rob the world of its humanity and dignity and to enslave the world to the demands of a small group of corporate, banking, and political leaders. The intent of this group is to further establish centralized worldwide economic management, including international institutions for banking and trade, with multinational corporations as the glue that holds the various components in power.

Thus, imperialism, in its phase as globalization, is the process by which all nations are forced to pursue a common set of economic policies, so that commercial interests supercede all other interests, including health care, education, and food production. Due to free trade legislation and the establishment of covert financial institutions, multinational corporations freely exploit the planet, dominate social systems, and deploy the most powerful and dangerous technologies in history, superceding national governments; state power often slips away, overwhelmed by corporate dominance.

Of primary importance to the understanding of the ongoing process of imperialism and, hence, to the understanding of the process by which it will be defeated, is an appreciation of its dependence on optimal consent and minimal resistance from the majority of the world’s people. From its very inception during the 15th century to the present day, imperialism, in which a tiny minority benefits from exploiting the majority, has required the implicit or explicit consent of the majority of the voting public of the imperial nations to maintain its power. In order to gain support and consent for immoral, inhumane foreign and domestic policy, a culture characterized by inhumanity and immorality was created in the exploiting nations and then spread to the petite bourgeoisie of exploited nations. Today, a similar effort is working toward creating a “One World” culture—devoid of traditional cultural ties through history,

devoid of human feeling, worshipping material gain. The purpose of this culture, according to some, is to grant consent for the continuation of exploitation.

Throughout the period of imperialism, the greatest and strongest resistance has continually come from diasporic Africans. African resistance has also fueled global resistance; for example, Touissant L'Ouverture's revolution fueled the French Revolution as the civil rights movement gave new life to world revolution. As Molefi Asante, Amilcar Cabral, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, Maulana Karenga, and countless other African scholars have acknowledged, resistance to cultural domination through the internalization of traditional African culture is the most powerful weapon against the contemporary efforts of imperialism.

— *Kismet Beckman*

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INDIGENISTE MOVEMENT

The Indigeniste movement, or *Mouvement Indigéniste*, started in the 1920s as an attempt by Haitian intellectuals to properly define Haitian culture as African, rather than an extension of French culture, as it was then commonly assumed to be. This movement was a catalyst for literary and social change in the way

Haitians, and blacks around the world, viewed themselves and their culture. It was largely inspired by the ideas of Jean Price-Mars (1876–1969), considered by many as the greatest Haitian intellectual of the first half of the 20th century. Price-Mars was a multitalented man. Trained as a physician, he served as Minister of Foreign Affairs, as well as Haitian Ambassador to France and the Dominican Republic. He was also a prolific and extremely influential writer.

The Indigeniste movement, with which Price-Mars is closely associated, is primarily identified as a literary movement. Haitian writers such as Carl Brouard, J. B. Cineas, and Jacques Roumain, author of the famous *Gouverneurs de la Rosée* (*Masters of the Dew*), founded *La Revue Indigène* in 1927. *La Revue Indigène* regularly renounced slavish imitation of French literature and looked to peasant culture for inspiration. It can be said, however, that these writers fell short of their goal, for they wrote in ultra modern French instead of Creole, the language of the peasants that Price-Mars championed as the true language of the Haitian people. Another Haitian literary group swept by the Indigeniste movement was the group of poets known as the *Griot*, which included François Duvalier—the future dictator of Haiti. Others, however, took a nonliterary road in the call to return to Africa and pursued the scientific exploration of African civilization and its presence in Haitian culture. In this pursuit, Jacques Roumain founded the Bureau of Ethnology in 1941, while Price-Mars himself founded the Institute of Ethnology and became chair of Africology and sociology there.

The historical development that inspired the birth of the Indigeniste movement was the U.S. occupation of Haiti from 1915 to 1934. Resistance to the U.S. occupation by Haitian intellectuals was ambiguous and modest, at best. Haiti's claim to be the first free black republic in the Western Hemisphere had always been a source of pride and shaped its national identity. However, this identity (for the elite in particular) was always circumscribed by an emotional attachment to France, Haiti's former colonial ruler. With the American occupation in full force, Haitians endured humiliating racism that undermined the glory and principles of the founding of their republic. In addition, the occupation failed to deliver what many intellectuals had secretly hoped it would—a dramatic change in the technology and material wealth of Haiti.

In a series of lectures and articles, as well as in the 1928 publication of *Ainsi Parla l'Oncle* (*So Spoke the*

Uncle), Price-Mars identified the cause of Haitian malaise as the Haitians' failure to embrace their own traditions and their denial of the African origins of their culture. With his wide breadth of knowledge of African culture, Price-Mars systematically identified the African roots of Haitian culture and Vodou. He called for elevating the pride of Haitians and for fortifying their resistance to the American occupation through the glorification of the Haitian peasants. He believed that in their ways was the source of Haitian strength and national pride. Price-Mars devoted five chapters of his book to the assertion of the African roots of Haitian culture: Chapter II, "Popular Beliefs"; Chapter III, "Africa, Its Races and Its Civilization"; Chapter IV, "Africa and the External World"; Chapter V, "African Animism"; and Chapter VI, "The Religious Sentiments of the Haitian Masses."

Price-Mars's message that we can be ourselves only if we do not reject our ancestral heritage resonated in the hearts of many. Indeed, the Indigeniste movement inspired many other similar movements around the world, such as the Négritude movement in France and the Harlem Renaissance and Afrocentricity in the United States.

— *Garvey F. Lundy*

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INSTITUTE OF POSITIVE EDUCATION

The Institute of Positive Education was founded in 1969 in Chicago, Illinois, by Haki Madhubuti and his wife Safisha. It sponsors African-centered learning for youngsters and adults. The institute served as the legal entity for the establishment of the New Concept School in 1972 and it leases space to the Betty Shabazz International Charter School founded by the Madhubutis in 1998. Annually, New Concept instructs about 35 school-age youngsters in an environment that fosters pride in and knowledge about African

systems of thought throughout history and the diaspora. Parents of New Concept's students pay an annual tuition of \$3,000, and the school's enrollment was once as high as 150 students, before the establishment of the Betty Shabazz International Charter School, where parents can send their children for free to receive an African-centered education from preschool through eighth grade. The charter school has an enrollment of approximately 300 students. New Concept is one of only three such schools in the United States that date back at least 20 years. About New Concept, Haki Madhubuti says, "We're not talking about words on paper but creating a world in which children are being anchored properly. I see our mission as nothing less than providing the necessary foundation for a child to deal with the world from a secure and self-aware position."

THE SCHOOLS THE INSTITUTE SPONSORS

Safisha Madhubuti served for 16 years as principal and a teacher at New Concept before leaving the school to finish her doctoral degree at the University of Chicago. Today, she teaches in the School of Education at Northwestern University under the name of Carol Lee. She says, "Students who graduated from New Concept have grown to be lovers of black people and contributors to the world. They are well mannered, not into gangs, not into drugs." The parents of New Concept's students have been doctors, lawyers, plumbers, secretaries, and welfare recipients. Some parents volunteered in lieu of paying the annual tuition. Most of the parents, however, have been public school teachers. Safisha Madhubuti provides insight into this, saying, "The average dropout rate in the Chicago public schools is around 50%. There are high schools in Chicago where the dropout rate is 75%. I personally cannot name a single child who attended New Concept for even a year who did not go on to graduate from high school. Not one."

Mornings at New Concept and Betty Shabazz start with the "unity circle," just before 9:00. The children and staff gather around a large white circle painted on the gymnasium floor. The children recite the "Black National Pledge" developed by the Council of Independent Black Institutions. Using call-and-response, the teacher begins by saying "We are African people." The children respond with "We are African people. Struggling for national liberation. We are preparing leaders and workers to bring about a positive

change for our people. We stress the development of our bodies, minds, souls, and consciousness. Our commitment is to self-determination, self-defense, and self respect for our race. We extend the right hand out for the fruition of Black power, for the triumph of Black nationhood. I pledge to my African nation to the building of a better people and a better world. My total devotion, my total resources, and my total power of my mortal life.”

New Concept and the Betty Shabazz International Charter School aim to teach black children a narrative populated by African and African American heroes and African rituals, fables, and values. On the walls of both schools are works of art that express the aesthetics of African and African American people and inspirational quotes from black luminaries. On the landings between floors, the space is artfully decorated with African prints, tables and chairs, and educational passages printed large enough for display. On one landing are the words of Zora Neale Hurston, on another landing is an African mathematical system. This use of space invites visitors and perhaps teachers to rest and relax with inspirations from the African and African American experience. For drapes, the classrooms have a variety of colorful kente prints at each window. Rows of lockers are against the walls, and children’s projects, such as those on the solar system and planets, proudly hang along the hallways. At recess the children sometimes play a game called “The Underground Railroad” where girls clamor to be Harriet Tubman. The children learn Spanish and Kiswahili.

The teachers are referred to as *Mama* and *Baba*, which mean “mother” and “father” in Kiswahili. Addressing their teachers in this way gives the children a profound sense of family as it reinforces the instructors’ commitment to familial values. New Concept now has 4 teachers, and the Betty Shabazz International school has 19 teachers and 11 classes. At both schools, the children learn art, music, music theory, science, reading, writing, math, social studies, and history. The teachers and the principal at the schools are committed to the success of each student.

Safisha Madhubuti survived the advice of a guidance counselor who told her that graduate school and teaching at the college level were beyond her, although she was an honor student, because they were beyond the abilities of the black child. This was one of the events that inspired Safisha Madhubuti to start New Concept School. When she met Haki Madhubuti

at a poetry reading in 1968, she was teaching African American literature at the school that would later come to be called Kennedy-King College. From her teaching she knew that black students needed to be reached much earlier than college. Thus Safisha convinced Haki Madhubuti of the importance of starting a school for African American children.

EDUCATION FOR A BETTER FUTURE

Haki Madhubuti, whose book of poetry *Don’t Cry Scream* had sold about 500,000 copies in 1969 and 1970, was obsessed with the question “What happened to us? Why is it that most peoples are in charge of their own destiny but not us?” He had been profiled in *Ebony* and was drawing the attention of scholars at Cornell and other universities, but instead of simply basking in his newfound fame, Haki Madhubuti joined Safisha Madhubuti in creating a school for African American children in an abandoned storefront they rented on Ellis Street. Teaching a Saturdays-only enrichment program, they instructed children ages 2 to 12. At the urging of parents, by 1974 the school was offering a full-time program for preschool through the third grade. Even though the school never advertised, from the beginning the Madhubutis had to turn people away. In 1991, New Concept moved to its present location, a spacious building bought along with the adjoining rectory from the Catholic diocese for roughly \$1.4 million. Since then the school has added the fourth through eighth grades. Haki Madhubuti has remained the school’s main benefactor. Profits from his publishing company, Third World Press, support the Institute of Positive Education.

The Institute of Positive Education was built not on grants or foundations but from the sweat of labor. Haki Madhubuti proudly admits that in all of his years operating the Institute of Positive Education and the Third World Press, he has never missed a payroll. Graduates from the school say that they are rooted in their identity, which allows them to get along with those who are not black. In the curriculum, Africa is the starting point, not the closing point. Students also learn about the Chinese, Mayans, Native Americans, and others. Safisha Madhubuti says, “We teach about African values and what is useful today—critical thinking. We are realistic about how the world operates.”

The Institute of Positive Education provides the space not only for the New Concept School and the Betty Shabazz International Charter School but also

for programs that are African centered. It houses functions for students before and after school, as well as the Mary McLeod Bethune Teachers Training Center headed by Safisha Madhubuti.

— Regina Jennings

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INSTITUTE OF THE BLACK WORLD

The Institute of the Black World (IBW) was an Atlanta-based, African American think tank founded and directed by African American intellectuals from 1969 to 1983. Its primary objective was to conduct research that would positively impact the lives of African people worldwide; its initial emphasis was on addressing concerns relevant to African Americans.

The IBW as an institution began its life as a part of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Center and also had ties with the Atlanta University Graduate Center. One of the IBW's cofounders, Vincent Harding, a historian at Spelman College and friend of the King family, was asked by Martin Luther King Jr.'s widow, Coretta Scott King, to direct the work of the Martin Luther King Library Documentation Project. Her offer, made shortly after her husband's assassination in 1968, was accepted by Harding, but he recommended an independent research project that would support the spirit of the slain civil rights leader. Coretta Scott King agreed to support the project and subsequently what was then known as the W.E.B. Du Bois Institute for Advanced Afro-American Studies was born.

Harding's idea was shaped by the times in which it was devised. Major events were taking place in the late 1960s, events that had a direct and powerful impact on the African American community: the black power movement, the Vietnam War, student demands for Black Studies curriculums in education, urban uprisings in response not only to the King

assassination but also to economic conditions within those urban areas, and a growing black middle class, among other phenomena. These events were changing the way African Americans viewed themselves, their communities, and America as a whole.

The W.E.B. Du Bois Institute for Advanced Afro-American Studies soon became known as the Institute of the Black World. The first governing board of the new endeavor, called the Advisory Council, consisted of prominent members of the African American community. These individuals represented diverse areas, such as academia, the arts, and various community groups. Members of the council included its chair, C.T. Vivian, Walter F. Anderson, Margaret Alexander, Lerone Bennett, Horace Mann Bond, Robert Browne, John Henrik Clarke, Dorothy Cotton, Ossie Davis, St. Claire Drake, Katherine Dunham, Vivian Henderson, Tobe Johnson, Julius Lester, Frances Lucas, Jesse Noel, Rene Piquion, Eleo Pomare, Pearl Primus, Benjamin Quarles, Bernice Reagon, William Strickland, Council Taylor, E.U. Essien-Udom, Charles White, and Hosea Williams.

As a research institution designed to create solutions to challenges faced by African people, the IBW staff was comprised of scholars who could interrogate the past, and the present, in an effort to shape the future through in-depth analysis of the people, places, and events that impacted African people globally. The research that they conducted was not done solely for the benefit of academia. All the research had to have practical implications both inside and outside of the academy. The cadre of scholars involved in the initial project represented various academic disciplines and interests. All, however, shared a sincere desire to better the overall condition and status of African people. The first full-time research staff members were Lerone Bennett, Christine Coleman, Chester Davis, Lonetta Gaines, Vincent Harding, Stephen Henderson, Joyce Ladner, Daulton Lewis, William Strickland, Sterling Stuckey, and Robert Browne. Associate scholars and lecturers closely associated with the work and mission of the IBW included C.L.R. James, Amiri Baraka, St. Clair Drake, Walter Rodney, Stokely Carmichael, Ella Baker, Alvin F. Poussaint, and Haywood Burns.

The work being done at the IBW headquarters in Atlanta was augmented by other institutions and groups, which helped to form a cooperative network of scholars who agreed with and fully supported the mission of the IBW. Among these were the African Heritage Studies Association (AHSAs), Congress of

African People (CAP), the Black Academy of Arts and Letters, Fisk University, Shaw University, Howard University, Dartmouth College, Wesleyan University, Brooklyn College, and Cornell University.

The goals listed below specify the actions through which the IBW planned to carry out its mission to provide research to support the struggle of African people worldwide. The IBW endeavored

1. to assist in the design and implementation of Black Studies curriculums
2. to create cooperative relationships with institutions of higher learning, including both historically black colleges and predominately white colleges supportive of the aims of the IBW
3. to conduct original research at the IBW headquarters and to teach courses that support the institute's mission
4. to support African American artists, particularly those with an artistic vision tied to liberation, and expose their work both inside and outside of the academy
5. to develop curriculums aimed at positively impacting the lives of African American children
6. to create a center for social analysis of African American communities nationwide
7. to create connections with African intellectuals and activists worldwide
8. to train scholars to commit themselves not only to academic excellence within Black Studies but also to improving the communities represented in their research, as well as to give these scholars the techniques necessary to properly teach students both inside and outside of the academy
9. to sponsor conferences where the results of directed research could be shared with the African American community, and to encourage individuals and groups with interests similar to the IBW's to participate in such events
10. to create an independent means of publishing the findings of its research

These goals were the driving force behind the research conducted at the IBW from 1969 through 1983. Soon after the creation of the IBW, however, a review panel and many of the members of the council questioned whether its mission fit within the aims of

the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Center where it was housed. The IBW's critics claimed that the organization, which had only hired black staff members, was too separatist; did not espouse nonviolence as King had; and did not uplift King's memory enough for it to be an appropriate part of a memorial center for the civil rights leader. Many in the Advisory Council put pressure on the IBW to change its direction, so in an effort to preserve its initial purpose, the IBW decided to separate from the King center in the fall of 1970. Thus the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Center and the IBW became two separate entities. The King center then became a place where the work of King was studied exclusively. The IBW, in accordance with its stated mission, became a center of new ideas—ideas as diverse as the staff that created them. The work of the institute was in the study of ideas, not people and personalities. The strand that connected all the research at the institute was that it had to be designed to liberate African people worldwide. The research took the form of papers, conferences, and lectures from scholars both inside and outside of the IBW research staff. Some examples are as follows:

- “Beyond Chaos: Black History and the Search for the New Land”
- “The Black Family and Social Policy”
- “Black Radicals in America”
- “Black Repression in the Cities: An Analysis of Institutional Racism in the 70's”
- “The Challenge of Blackness”
- “A Critical Anthology of Blues Poetry”
- “On the Need for a Black Revolutionary Theory”
- “The Search for a Religion of Blackness”
- “Toward a Theory of Black Political Economy”

The research conducted at the IBW was disseminated on site, through tape recordings of lectures made available to interested parties, through shared manuscript copies, and through the widely distributed “Black-World-View” column that tackled current events relevant to African Americans.

All the research conducted by the black scholars affiliated with the institute was to be used for the purpose of empowering the African community, and although it initially concentrated on the American experience, the research team eventually reflected the IBW's global perspective and reached out to people of color worldwide.

After separating from the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Center in 1970, the IBW struggled financially,

lacking the big money donors of its former partner. Although never financially prosperous, the IBW nevertheless created a research environment where scholars of African descent were able to focus on such areas as education, the economy, and government, among others, in an effort to address pressing challenges faced by the African American communities that it served. In 1983 the IBW faced a financial shortfall that it could not overcome, resulting in the closing of its doors.

— Christopher K. Johnson

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- Marable, Manning (Ed.). (2000). *Dispatches from the Ebony Tower: Intellectuals Confront the African American Experience*. New York: Columbia University Press. This collection of essays provides a look into the field of Black Studies, touching on many of the ideals that drove the research of the IBW.

INTRODUCTION TO BLACK STUDIES

Introduction to Black Studies, which was first published in 1982 and subsequently revised, is a textbook written by noteworthy black scholar Maulana Karenga. The book is an Afrocentric investigation and validation of the social, intellectual, and sociological claims of historical relevance to Western civilization by people of African descent. The question in academic settings was always, "Can you prove that Black Studies is relevant for curriculum inclusion?" *Introduction to Black Studies* answers this question not only by proving the relevance of Black Studies but also by addressing many related questions with intellectual authority. This textbook is thought provoking and presented in a way that enables teachers at high school and college levels to begin an extended dialogue with their students that

promotes racial pride. It helps teachers and students to understand that Black Studies as a discipline is important because it focuses on the black contribution to the social fabric of society.

Karenga understood that to close the historical gap created by years of denial and neglect of Africans' contribution to society, there had to be a model that identified and introduced the basic social, intellectual, and philosophical elements in the Black Studies curriculum. To rescue blacks' place in history and set the record straight on black thought and practice, and in answer to the demands of college students during the black social movement of the 1960s and 1970s, there had to be a fundamental process of information gathering and reporting. The voices of protest and challenge heard across the country from blacks of all ages were clamoring for affirmation of their African identity, and it was imperative that Afrocentric intellectuals respond. Karenga's *Introduction to Black Studies* answered that call with legitimate evidence that both delineated the territory of Black Studies and introduced a plan of action for extended research and inquiry.

The book is organized in order of historical relevance, with the events of black civilization accompanied by evidence of their historical, social, political, and intellectual credibility. It begins with a summary of black history that covers the basic definition of black studies, followed by its origins, relevance, and scope. Karenga describes seven basic areas of the black experience—history, religion, social organization, politics, economics, creative production, and psychology—and includes study questions and references for further exploration of each area. He also explores the challenges and possibilities inherent in the black experience.

Introduction to Black Studies is a fundamental textbook and a prerequisite for intercultural, interdisciplinary, and multidisciplinary curriculum design in many academic areas. Scholars may resist Black Studies as a separate discipline, but they can no longer deny the importance of black contributions not only to Western civilization but to civilization as a whole. Historically, blacks either were excluded from textbooks or represented in a way that was rooted in misinformation and prejudice. This book challenges such practices by providing evidence of significant black thought and practice. It is thus understandable that the chapter outlining black history is the largest chapter in Karenga's book. After an introduction that includes historical background and definitions, the book covers

the vast sweep of Africans' history from 800 B.C.E. to the present, including sections such as "African Background," "European Slave Trade," "Africans in America," and "Civil Rights of the 70s and 80s." Areas of both Black Studies and Africana Studies are interwoven in the contents of this book. Maulana Karenga is to be applauded for his profound intellect, courage, and forethought, as his *Introduction to Black Studies* dispels all speculations about Black Studies as a relevant discipline of study.

— Gloria Grant Roberson

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INVISIBLE MAN

Ralph Ellison's 1952 novel *Invisible Man* deals with the inability of the people around the protagonist to see him as a black man, thus failing to respect himself and his humanity. The protagonist takes readers on a journey of truths as he tells his tale, starting with his home in the South and moving on to his current living quarters in a hole in the North—in Harlem. Ellison uses symbolism to give life to every detail from the lyrics of a song to the name of a preacher. Ellison's narrator persuades readers that America's failure to notice him has led him to a life of invisibility. The key motifs in the book are blindness, invisibility, and masks. The major conflict is the character's search for a place of his own and his own identity—throughout

his many tribulations, he is never complete or able to live up to the social standards that people place on him. The invisible man, which is the only name by which the narrator allows readers to know him, is throughout the novel searching for a place in society, and every search leads to disappointment.

In the prologue, a young black man from the South begins telling his story. In one of the most important sections of the book, Chapter 1: Battle Royal, the narrator explains his quest to find something. He speaks to his grandfather, an ex-slave who tells him not to be the traitor to blacks that he has been. His grandfather implies that he has lived a quiet life but also a life of submissiveness, thus representing an aspect of the narrator. The narrator recalls his high school graduation speech, in which he promoted submissiveness as the way for blacks to succeed, mentioning Booker T. Washington, who shares this belief. He is asked to read his high school speech at a banquet for the white male elite in the town. His initial excitement quickly vanishes, however, as he realizes that he and his friends are to brawl with the other black boys of the community for the entertainment of the town's big shots. The young men are humiliated; they are bullied into looking at a stripper, to fight with one another with blindfolds on, and to scramble over fake money on an electric mat. The narrator has a dream that night that his diploma and life mean nothing; this is just one example of Ellison's irony. Just as the white men have these young black men fighting in an environment that will never allow them to win, the narrator soon finds that his environment in contemporary America will not allow him to win as a black man because it fails to notice him. This first chapter sets the tone of the novel, the tone that then follows the narrator to college and his life in a hole in Harlem.

When the narrator goes to Harlem, he is able to see the unworthiness that accompanies being black, and how many people behave unethically in order to gain power. One character in the novel, Tod Clifton, is a member of the Brotherhood, a political organization in Harlem that works for blacks in the community and that the Invisible Man is a part of. Clifton leaves the organization and begins selling Sambo dolls, which represent lazy black men. The narrator is unhappy about his friend's new career and frustrated that Clifton thinks nothing of it. It is irony like this that Ellison fills the novel with, people who in the midst of confusion do not see their confusion and are blind to the situation that they are in.

It is truly a voyage of self, this book that was written as a memoir of a fictional character—an invisible black man—and that, when it appeared in 1952, had a strong effect on the world of literature. *Invisible Man* was very well written and expressed the frustration of black men in America as no author had. Highly criticized at the height of its publication, the novel still broke barriers, winning the National Book Award in 1953 and becoming one of the greatest books in African American literature.

— *Thysha M. Shabazz*

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ISLAM

Islam is the religion of Muslims, who believe in Allah as the supreme deity and Muhammad as his prophet. Among African Americans, Islam has become a vibrant religious expression that has its origins in the Moorish Science Temple, the Nation of Islam, Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, Jabul Arabiyya, the First Cleveland Mosque, Darul Islam, the Muslim American Society, and the Islamic Mission of America. The Islamic Mission, later named the State Street Mosque, was founded in 1924 and included immigrant people from Somalia, Yemen, and Madagascar. Many of these people had come to New York City as sailors. They soon found local African American converts.

Muhammad Ezaldeen was a school principal in the 1920s in Newark, New Jersey, who went to Egypt to study Arabic and the Koran. When he returned to the United States he became one of the biggest promoters of the religion of Islam. As a member of the Moorish Science Temple, Ezaldeen sought to bring about an

understanding between the Arabic and African communities in New York. He established and served as director of the Jabul Arabiyya, a Muslim community ruled by Islamic law in West Valley, New York. His followers started groups in Jacksonville, Florida; Rochester, New York; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Detroit, Michigan.

The Sunni First Cleveland Movement in Islam was established when the immigrant leaders of the Ahmadiyya Movement could not control the African Americans who wanted a more activist agenda for Islam. Imam Wali Akram founded the First Cleveland Movement in 1936, at about the time Nasir Ahmad and Said Akmal founded the First Muslim Mosque of Pittsburgh. Wali Akram and his wife Kareema learned Arabic and became the major teachers of the religion in Cleveland.

After World War II, many African American artists and musicians found Islam sympathetic. Dizzy Gillespie, who became a Bahai, influenced many musicians who became Muslims. He visited Turkey, Egypt, and Syria in 1956, and his band was influenced by the cultures of those lands. By the 1950s, there was a growing awareness of Islam brought about by such people as Talib Dawud, Mahmoud Alwan, and J.A. Rogers, who taught at the Islamic and African Institute in Philadelphia that was established by Dawud in 1957. In the late 1960s, many of the students influenced by this school supported the establishment at Temple University of the Afro-Asian Institute, which later became the Department of Pan African Studies and then the Department of African American Studies.

Soon many African American Muslims sought closer relations with Islamic leaders from the Arab world. Akbar Muhammad, the son of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad of the Nation of Islam, was among those who attended Al-Azhar University in Cairo. He left the Nation of Islam to become a traditional Sunni Muslim. In 1972, Yusef Muzaffarudin Hamid founded the Islamic Party in North America, which is run by Egyptian Muslims. By 1980, the Islamic Party in North America had left the mainland to carry on its work in St. Croix. Soon thereafter the organization opened branches in many of the islands of the Caribbean, including Grenada and Dominica. In addition, a few of Hamid's followers founded a community in Tate, Georgia, in the 1980s.

Perhaps the evolution of the Islamic movement is best illustrated by the fact that Warith Deen

Muhammad, a son of Elijah Muhammad, tried to re-Islamicize and re-African Americanize the movement that his father founded. This was not very successful because many of the followers of Elijah Muhammad were black nationalists first and Muslims second. By 2003, Warith Deen Muhammad had relinquished his drive to bring about a more authentic Islam among his followers. The leaders of the movement ended their long-term feud and decided to work together to make Islam more important among African Americans. The path to mainstream Islam seems to be the current direction of the various African American Muslim communities.

— *Adisa A. Alkebulan*

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J

JAZZ

Jazz is the classical musical tradition created by Africans in America beginning in the late 19th century. The term *jazz* came into common usage by 1918 with numerous theories posed as to its etymology, all of which were associated in some way with African or African American men. Despite the obscurity around the term, jazz epitomizes the highest developed art form produced in the United States and, as a musical tradition, encompasses many diverse and continually changing styles.

Throughout the development of jazz, African musical sensibilities are central. The technique of *call-and-response* found in much of African music has remained prominent in jazz. The concept of participatory music-making that is at the core of African music, whereby all members of the group take part in the creation of the music, is evidenced in the prevalence of polyphonic ensemble playing in jazz. *Improvisation*—composing and performing simultaneously, the most important feature of jazz—can be traced to African antecedents. It was, however, the encounter of the African with his new environment in America that allowed for the development of jazz, which has become one of the world's most vibrant art forms.

Jazz developed primarily as an outgrowth of two African American musical genres—*ragtime* and the *blues*. *Ragtime*, made popular by pianist Scott Joplin, was intended to accompany dance with its highly syncopated rhythmic patterns. Syncopation is a rhythmic technique derived from African music in which a part of the beat that is usually unaccented is instead

accented, while the usually accented parts of the beat are left unstressed. Bent pitches, vocal embellishments, and other special vocal effects associated with emotional expressions typify the *blues*. It is the fusion of the rhythms, phrasing, and sound productions of ragtime and the blues with the instrumentations, melodies, and harmonies of brass bands and dance orchestras, that jazz first began to evolve.

The vast array of styles that comprised the jazz tradition is most often identified in terms of geographical locations, chronological periods, and key musicians of the style. One of the prime locations for the incubation of the earliest styles of jazz was New Orleans, Louisiana. During the late 1800s up through the first two decades of the 1900s, the popularity of military bands, the influences of the music and dances performed by Africans in Congo Square, along with the appearance of individual performers such as pianist Jelly Roll Morton, led to the formation of musical ensembles that performed at parades, funerals, and for other various occasions. These performers developed what came to be known as *New Orleans jazz*, a distinctively instrumental style performed on three or four wind instruments, drums, piano, guitar or banjo, and tuba.

Chicago is considered to have been the center of jazz activities in the 1920s. Many musicians from New Orleans migrated to Chicago with the first recordings produced by groups such as the New Orleans Rhythm Kings, Louis Armstrong's Hot Five and Hot Seven, and King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band. During the 1930s and 1940s, New York came into the spotlight with the emergence of the jazz style known as *swing*. With the emphasis on music for dancing, the *swing bands* or *big*

bands—ten or more musicians consisting of a brass section, a reed section and a rhythm section—were led by bandleaders such as Fletcher Henderson and Duke Ellington. *Kansas City Jazz* also became popular with bandleader Count Basie at this time.

During the 1940s, a group of jazz musicians in New York City began experimenting with new musical ideas which developed into a style that came to be known as *bop*, *bebop*, or *rebop*. This new style of jazz emphasized intense and elaborate improvisations, and was developed by musicians such as saxophonist Charlie Parker, trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie, and pianist Thelonious Monk. *Hard bop* became associated with saxophonists such as Cannonball Adderly and John Coltrane.

Jazz vocalists have also been instrumental in the development of jazz styles. Most often, the jazz vocalist uses the voice as a musical instrument blending in with the rest of the ensemble. Some prominent jazz vocalists in the history of jazz have included Billie Holiday, Ella Fitzgerald, and Jimmy Rushing.

Although many jazz styles continued to coexist, the 1950s brought in the development of *cool jazz* epitomized, by trumpeter Miles Davis, and the genesis of *free jazz*, first associated with saxophonist Ornette Coleman. In the 1960s and 1970s, many jazz musicians returned to the roots of jazz and began performing styles known as *jazz funk* and *gospel jazz*. During the 1980s and 1990s, *electric jazz* and *jazz/rock fusion* became popular with musicians such as bassist Stanley Clarke, saxophonist Grover Washington Jr., and pianist Herbie Hancock. The catch-all term *contemporary jazz* includes many new styles that are being developed currently. *Latin jazz/Cuban jazz* has also developed as a distinct style with such artists as drummer Poncho Sanchez and pianist Chucho Valdez.

While the many styles of jazz reflect the lifestyles and culture of African Americans during the various historical periods, jazz can categorically be described as music having a) a vitality, originality and spontaneity in which improvisation is an essential element; b) a distinctive relationship to time in which the music is played a little ahead of, or a little behind, the main beats, referred to as “swing” and enhanced with syncopation; and c) pitch and tonal inflections along with phrasing that reflect the creativity and musicianship of the performer. These characteristics are present in varying degrees in the wide range of jazz styles and various stages of jazz development.

Jazz is still the most recognizable and most highly influential music in the world today. As an artistic and cultural tradition, jazz reveals the “soul” of African Americans and in all of its manifestations captures the “spirit” of life in America.

— Mawusi Renee Simmons

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JIM CROW

Jim Crow was a set of ideas, social norms, life ways, mythofoms, role-play symbols, sanctions, and devastations created after the Civil War by white politicians intent on maintaining a system of oppressive control over African American life and economics. With the support of the U.S. Supreme Court, whose decision of 1883 declared the Civil Rights Act of 1875 unconstitutional, Jim Crow laws aimed their invasive enterprise at the level of social reality and psychological manifestation in order to reestablish a stratified social hierarchy based on white subjugation of African American people.

HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL ANTECEDENTS

There were many precursors to the enthronement of Jim Crow as a living institution, such as the exploitative and bondage-centered sharecropping farming system; the “benign” neglect of President Andrew Johnson to enforce Reconstruction laws; the rise of the ability of white rebel soldiers to gain political positions in state and national government; the intimidation, terrorizing, and murder of African Americans by former Confederate general Nathan B. Forrest and his Ku Klux Klan; and the deaths of radical Republicans,

like Thaddeus Stevens of Georgia and Charles Sumner of Massachusetts, who were committed to full rights for African Americans. Then, in 1877, Rutherford B. Hayes became president and removed all federal troops from the South. This act ensured and permanently established the national attack on African Americans in the South and the North. The anti-African rhetoric of white supremacist congressmen like James Vardaman of Mississippi and Carter Glass of Virginia helped other white supremacists to write and enforce anti-African social conduct rules and discriminatory practices. These dehumanizing codes of behavior and rules for discriminatory treatment against African Americans were called “Jim Crow” laws.

The tacit agreement between the Republican Party and the Southern Dixicrats (Southern Democrats), which returned full control over the Southern states to the rebel white supremacists who had become politicians, encouraged local, state, and national movements to create and enact Jim Crow laws and customs to rob, steal, and deny African Americans their civil rights and money, as well as to prevent African Americans from owning land, resigning from jobs, voting, renting land—in short, doing anything without the control of a white supremacist male. This peonage process set the stage for a national challenge to the Civil Rights Act of 1875 that had ensured African Americans civil rights in every aspect of American society. The 1883 Supreme Court decision against the Civil Rights Act then justified Americans’ overt displays of white supremacist thinking, values, ideas, practices, and iconic symbols in every educational, legal, scientific, religious, economic, and social institution.

The Civil Rights Act of 1875 had safeguarded African Americans from being denied use of and access to parks, public restaurants, post offices, churches, beaches, playgrounds, hotels, movies, banks, swimming pools, hospitals, colleges, public schools, and other open public accommodations. The hostile, pro-white supremacy decision by the U.S. Supreme Court eliminated this ban on segregation. Thus, Southern legislators at local, state, and national levels rushed to set up Jim Crow rules of conduct that created a system of legal separated accommodations for blacks and whites.

THE PLESSY CHALLENGE

In 1896, in a Supreme Court case, Homer Plessy challenged his conviction for violating the Jim Crow

laws of Louisiana. Plessy argued that he had a mixture of African American and European blood and that due to his white-skinned appearance, he had a right to use the same accommodations used by whites. The court decided in favor of the state and wrote a decision that stated that if Plessy had one drop of African blood, then he was African and therefore had to comply with the Jim Crow laws of Louisiana. The ultimate impact of this decision was that the “separate but equal” doctrine was applied to all aspects of American life. Since African people were considered different and inferior, when African people attempted to retain their dignity and assert their equality with others, they were often attacked. Thus, due to the *Plessy* decision, African Americans were subjected to an onslaught and nightmare of verbal and physical attacks, police brutality, lynching, murders, several decades of situational and institutional discriminatory mistreatment, inhumane living and working conditions, and a total erosion of all of their economic, educational, civil, and human rights.

THE FINAL OVERTHROW OF JIM CROW

In the face of this systemic oppression, it took numerous African American leaders and their supporters many decades to successfully navigate and fight against this institutionalized subordination of their race. Their efforts in protest against racism were ultimately manifested in the Supreme Court decision in the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education*, the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1967, the 1960s civil rights activism, the 1960s and 1970s militant activism, and the Black Studies movements, which were able to progressively break down and decimate many vestiges of the Jim Crow laws. In the final analysis, the lingering retentions of Jim Crow and their potential negative impacts will need to be anticipated, identified, analyzed, and eradicated such that the horrors of this system of discrimination used against African Americans and other cultural groups will not continue or reappear.

— *Leophus Taharka King*

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JOHNSON PUBLISHING COMPANY

The Johnson Publishing Company was founded in 1942 by John Harold Johnson in Chicago, Illinois. To date, the company is the most successful African American-owned magazine publisher in the United States. The Johnson Publishing Company is probably best known for the magazines *Ebony* and *Jet* (and its Fashion Fair cosmetics line), but the publication that launched the company was *Negro Digest*, which Johnson began in 1942 with a loan taken against his mother's furniture. *Negro Digest* was modeled on *Reader's Digest* and contained reprinted as well as commissioned articles from some of the most celebrated minds in the black and white communities. Langston Hughes, Eleanor Roosevelt, Walter White, and Zora Neale Hurston, among others, wrote for *Negro Digest* in the 1940s. Johnson stopped publication of the magazine in 1951, but brought it back in 1961. Under the leadership of editor Hoyt Fuller, *Negro Digest* became an outstanding record of the explosion of black political and artistic thought in the 1960s. The magazine was renamed *Black World* in 1970, but it never achieved the consistently high circulation numbers of what became the company's flagship publication, *Ebony*.

Ebony was first published in 1947 and was modeled on *Life* magazine. At first, Johnson had a hard time convincing major advertisers that such a magazine would sell, but with an initial advertising contract with Zenith, the magazine was launched. Featuring glossy pictures, advertising for consumer goods, and features on famous African Americans, *Ebony* and *Jet* have drawn criticism for being focused on celebrity, material gain, and the dream of middle-class status. Following the lead of E. Franklin Frazier in critiquing black newspapers, some scholars and activists believe that magazines like *Ebony* present unrealistic ideals of a wealthy, leisurely lifestyle at the expense of

reporting that would inform and energize blacks politically. Johnson maintains, however, that his goal was to get into and win in the game of magazine publishing, not to challenge the status quo of capitalism.

In Johnson's view, *Ebony* presents blacks in a positive light, which is rarely seen in white-dominated media. Many in the world of black business agree with his standpoint, maintaining that black success is in and of itself a contribution to black communities. In addition, many people have lauded *Ebony* for consistently tracking important black political issues in the United States, particularly since the 1960s, and Johnson counts himself as one of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s early supporters. In terms of the magazine industry, the success of the Johnson Publishing Company proved to the publishing world that glossy, high production value magazines targeted at black consumers can make money. The success of *Ebony* gave rise to a host of new titles, some black-owned and many not, catering to African Americans. *Essence*, *Black Enterprise*, *Honey*, *Savoy* (formerly *Emerge*), and *Heart and Soul* may not have gained space on the newsstands had it not been for Johnson Publishing Company's pioneering efforts.

— Catherine Squires

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Wolsely, Roland. (1990). *The Black Press, U.S.A.* (2nd ed.). Ames: Iowa State University Press. Wolsely's book contains two chapters on black-owned magazines and features an introduction by John H. Johnson.

Frazier, E. Franklin. (1965). *The Black Bourgeoisie*. Glencoe, IL: Free Press. This book contains a harsh critique of middle-class-oriented black publications in Part VII, "The Negro Press and Wish Fulfillment."

JOINT CENTER FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC STUDIES

The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies (JCPES) is a national public policy institute that conducts research on the political and socioeconomic

plight of African Americans and their communities. Founded in 1970, their mission is “to improve the socio-economic status of African Americans, increase their political participation and build constructive relationships across racial and ethnic lines.” JCPES is widely recognized as one of the nation’s leading think tanks, especially with regard to policy issues concerning African Americans, and it also has an international focus on the political, socioeconomic, public health, and educational conditions in the southern region of Africa.

In the context of Black Studies, JCPES demonstrates the role that research plays in the public policy-making process. Since its inception, the think tank has provided policy-relevant data and analyses to policy makers, black public officials, community leaders, journalists, and scholars. Though its audience is wide, JCPES’s primary constituency has always been black elected officials. The research and data that is generated from the Joint Center has ultimately enabled black policy makers with sound arguments and justifications to either support or oppose public policies that impact African Americans.

FIVE RESEARCH AREAS OF JCPES

JCPES has five main areas of research focus on African Americans: Economic Policy, Social Policy, Political Studies, Health Policy, and International Affairs. Within the area of Economic Policy, the Joint Center has conducted research and analyzed trends in job and labor markets, income differences between racial groups, the (in)effectiveness of affirmative action, and data on the development of black-owned businesses. JCPES has also disseminated valuable information on labor market education and training. In Social Policy, JCPES has produced research on poverty; welfare reform and its effects on African Americans; and the perceptions, trends, and problems of black youth; as well as a wealth of information on the black family. The Political Studies area has focused on data concerning black elected officials; issues centered around race, ethnicity, and governance; shifting partisanship and new coalitions; attitudes of black voters; black congressional districts; and planning for urban revitalization and development. In the field of Health Policy, JCPES has made research contributions on the following: the connections between health care and the economic well-being of African Americans, barriers to health-care access, the future

of public hospitals, black trends in Medicaid and managed care use, and HIV/AIDS data on African people (both in America and in Africa).

Finally, JCPES has an International Affairs component. Since the late 1980s, the organization has conducted research and analysis in southern Africa (primarily South Africa, Swaziland, and Zambia). The mission of the International Affairs division is to strengthen African democracy and governance, enhance African economic growth and productivity, and include the voices of African Americans in the formation and implementation of U.S. foreign policy. The Joint Center has researched the HIV/AIDS epidemic in South Africa and its socioeconomic impact, as well as the southern African political economy and economic and educational advancement. In addition to research, JCPES has also engaged in capacity building in the region, provided election support, and conducted gender-empowerment trainings.

While conducting the research is the primary feature of the institute, dissemination of the research is a key element in fulfilling the organization’s mission. The Joint Center issued its first publication, *Black Elected Officials: A National Roster*, in 1970. Since then, JCPES publications have grown in number and in scope. Recent publications include: *The Future of Urban Public Hospitals* (1998); *The Big Picture: Public Policy and Long-term Economic Outlook for African Americans* (2000); *Economic Impact of HIV/AIDS on South Africa and Implications for Governance* (2000); *Welfare Reform, Devolution, and the Expansion of Charitable Choice* (2000); *The Transformation of African American Policy Views* (2001); *From Talk to Action: An Online Community Response to Racial Profiling* (2002); and *Building Cultural Competence: A Tool Kit for Workforce Development* (2003). The official public policy magazine of JCPES is *Focus*. In print since 1972, *Focus* provides monthly coverage on a broad range of public policy issues concerning African Americans.

PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES OF JCPES

JCPES also has several programs and initiatives geared toward empowering various areas of the African American community. In economics, the organization sponsors the Minority Business Roundtable (MBRT). MBRT is a membership organization for CEOs of large businesses owned by persons of color. It is a vehicle for its members to collaborate, analyze

public policy issues, and help formulate effective public policies that affect businesspeople of color. The Black Leadership Information Exchange (BLIE) is another initiative of the Joint Center. BLIE is specifically geared toward black leaders (from both elected offices and community organizations) concerned with how public policy impacts the black community. This network is designed to provide members with information on numerous policy sectors. Finally, JCPES has a program called NABRE (or Network of Alliances Bridging Race and Ethnicity). NABRE is a national network of community-based organizations working to bridge racial and ethnic divisions.

— Rico X

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Dawson, Michael. (2002). *Black Visions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Dawson has done an exceptional job of identifying the political contours of the African American community.

www.jointcenter.org This is the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies (JCPES) Web site.

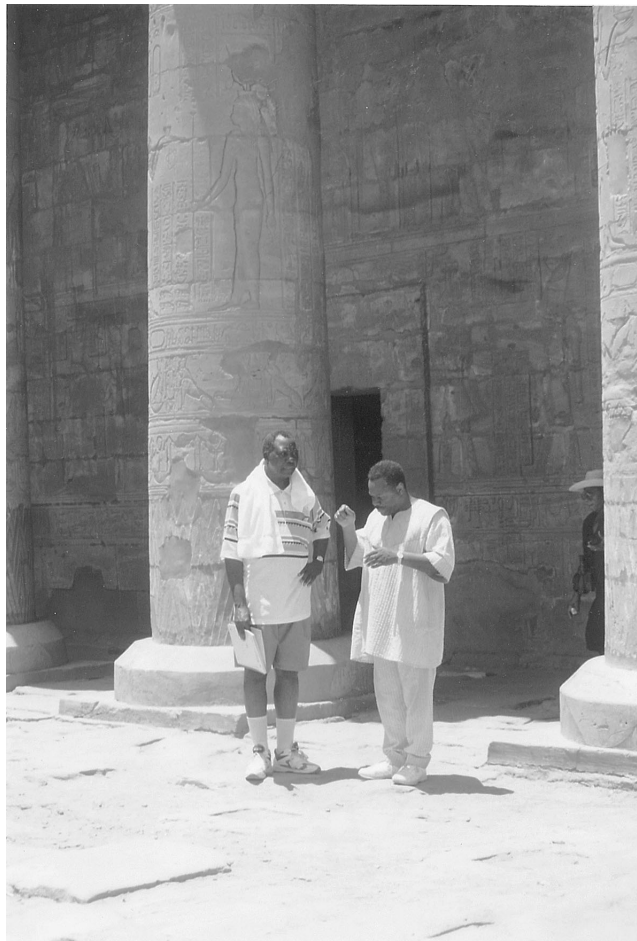
www.nul.org This is the National Urban League Web site.

www.transafricaforum.org This is the TransAfrica Web site.

JOURNAL OF AFRICAN CIVILIZATIONS

The *Journal of African Civilizations* was founded in 1979 by historian, archeologist, linguist, and literary critic Ivan Van Sertima (b. 1935 in Guyana) and was immediately hailed by St. Claire Drake as “one of the most important events in the development of research and publication from the perspective of Pan-African scholarship.” The journal has been a forum for positive, proactive images of African genius and contribution to world civilization. Using the monograph format, the *Journal of African Civilizations* has published the following volumes: *Black Women in Antiquity* (Vol. VI, No. 1), *Nile Valley Civilizations* (Vol. VI, No. 2), *Great Black Thinkers* (Vol. VIII), *Golden Age of the Moors* (Vol. XI), *Egypt: Child of Africa* (Vol. XX), and *Great Black Leaders: Ancient and Modern* (Vol. XIV).

Ivan Van Sertima’s book *They Came Before Columbus* exemplifies the sort of scholarship the journal has encouraged and inspired. In fact, the journal



Professors Theophile Obenga and Molefi Kete Asante at the Sacred Temple of Heru in Edfu, Egypt, 1996.

was an early venue for pioneering black psychologists such as Na’im Akbar and Asa Hilliard, as well as such varied voices as Charles Finch, Leonard Jefferies, Rosalind Jefferies, Mamadou Chinyelu, and Cheikh Anta Diop. The *Journal of African Civilizations* was designed to correct the damage done by the myth-makers in the racist tradition. The journal therefore affirmed Africa’s significance in the history of world civilizations. In this regard, the journal is in the company of *Journal of Black Studies*, *Western Journal of Black Studies*, *Journal of Black Psychology*, and *Imhotep*.

— Geoffrey “Jahwara” Giddings

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Afro-American Studies. This is a comprehensive study of the African world by one of the major African American scholars of the 20th century.

www.cwo.com/~lucumi/vansertima.html This Web site includes a very informative tribute to Dr. Ivan Van Sertima by Runoko Rashidi.

JOURNAL OF BLACK STUDIES

The *Journal of Black Studies* was founded in 1968, at the beginning of the Black Studies revolution, by two former UCLA graduate students, Robert Singleton and Molefi Kete Asante (who changed his name in 1973 from Arthur L. Smith, Jr.). Singleton and Asante took their idea to the budding social science publisher Sara Miller, who was developing social science journals at Sage Publications. Sage agreed to publish the journal and give editorial control to a board selected by the founding editor, Molefi Kete Asante.

Some of the leading scholars in the African world have served as referees and authors for the *Journal of Black Studies*. In the first issue, published in 1969, the monumental African scholar, Kofi Asare Opoku, wrote an article on the mind of Africa that was to set the tone for the succeeding volumes of the journal. Among the international group of scholars who have been involved with the journal are Boniface Obichere, Harold Cruse, Gary Nash, Maulana Karenga, Marimba Ani, St. Clair Drake, Martin Kilson, Cornel West, Kariamu Welsh, Jan Carew, Gilbert Gwassa, Abdias do Nascimento, Hanes Walton, E. U. Essien-Udom, Robert Addo-Fenig, Ewart Guinier, Ronald Takaki, Price Cobbs, Irving Bernstein, Lee Rainwater, Charles Hamilton, Lerone Bennett, Clyde Taylor, Vincent Harding, Katherine Bankole, Mekada Graham, Clarence Munford, Ji Yuan, Tony Martin, Ama Mazama, Thomas Kochman, FeFe Dunham, Ronald Walters, Keith Baird, Atukwei Okai, and Dorthy Pennington.

The *Journal of Black Studies* set the standard for Black Studies research from its beginning by developing a strong system of peer review, insuring that articles are well edited, and securing editors who encourage the best minds to publish in the journal. Indeed, it remains the most prestigious journal in its field. In 2003, the journal had a readership of more than 3,500 in North America, Africa, South America, Europe, Asia, and Australia, and it has maintained a loyal subscription base over time.

The *Journal of Black Studies* is published six times per year. It is open to a wide discourse on the nature of Black Studies as a discipline, publishing articles from various perspectives and interests, while maintaining a strong disciplinary focus on Africans everywhere as agents and subjects as opposed to victims, problems, and objects.

— Cynthia Lehman

FURTHER READING

- Asante, Molefi Kete, and Karenga, Maulana. (Eds.). (2003). *Handbook of Black Studies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. This is the first comprehensive collection of works by key Black Studies scholars, many of whom were chosen because of their work in the *Journal of Black Studies*, the *Black Scholar*, or the *Western Journal of Black Studies*.
- Mazama, Ama. (Ed.). (2002). *The Afrocentric Paradigm*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press. The editor of this volume has collected the most important essays in the field of Black Studies in a single volume. Several of the works included here were originally published in the *Journal of Black Studies*.

JOURNAL OF NEGRO HISTORY

Prior to the First World War, Africology, despite the impressive works of George Washington Williams, W.E.B. Du Bois, and others, largely languished in the disrespect that racist scholars in the United States had placed upon it. A major breakthrough in combating this racially imposed exile occurred when the Harvard-trained black scholar Carter G. Woodson met with a group of his associates in Chicago in 1915 to found the Association for the Study of Negro (later African-American) Life and History (ASNLH). Woodson and his cohorts sought to counter prevailing notions that Africans and people of African descent elsewhere had no past that was worthy of serious scholarly study. They believed that a scientific presentation of the true versions of the African and the African diasporan past would not only win respect for the race in academia but also serve as an inducement to better race relations generally. They thought that such a presentation of the historical record of people of African descent in the United States would raise the self-esteem of African Americans as well. They knew that the achievement of this latter goal could have important cultural as well as political and economic consequences.

Within a few months after the founding of the ASNLH, Woodson moved ahead with the idea of disseminating studies of the black past as widely as possible. Thus, on January 1, 1916, the first issue of the ASNLH's scholarly organ, *the Journal of Negro History* (JNH), appeared. This revolutionary development was made possible by Woodson's borrowing \$400 against his \$2,000 New England Mutual Life Insurance policy to pay for the original printing costs. Woodson had wanted the inaugural issues of the JNH to be published by a black printer, but when black printers' bids proved too high, he turned to the New Era Printers of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, who, interestingly and ironically, were also the publishers of the leading historical journal by whites, the *American Historical Review*.

From this beginning, the journal was published quarterly, without missing an issue, until the 1980s. But the struggle to finance publication of the journal plagued the ASNLH throughout Woodson's tenure and continued to plague the ASNLH, and its successor, the ASALH (Association for the Study of African-American Life and History) thereafter. These financial difficulties led to a brief suspension of publication in the early 1980s.

While Woodson knew that the JNH might never be a financial success, he also knew that in order to achieve its larger objective of presenting a scholarly chronicle of the African and African diasporan experiences, particularly to skeptics in the "white world," he would have to establish and maintain the scholarly integrity of the publication. Thus, he sought out some of the most prominent African American and Euro-American scholars and named them to his editorial staff and editorial board. As impressive, research-based

essays began to appear in the early issues of the journal, many by Euro-American scholars, the organ's favorable reputation was quickly established.

After Woodson's death in 1950, several African American scholars who served as editors continued the traditions that the founder had established and solidified the JNH's international reputation as the leading scholarly organ in Africology. Notable among these were Lorraine Williams, the first female editor, and Alton Hornsby, Jr., the first editor based at a historically black undergraduate college.

The contributions of the JNH have been celebrated nationally—in 1991 in Washington, D.C., where the journal was cited as both a chronicler of history and a maker of history, and in 2001 in Atlanta, Georgia, where scholars, including Molefi Asante, lauded the journal as a foundation for Africana Studies. But ultimately the contributions of the JNH are not only in the pathbreaking studies it has published but also in the doors it has opened to black and white scholars, particularly junior professors and those on the Left; scholars at historically black colleges and universities; and women. Even in recent times, the JNH's major contributors remain those who were exiled and dispossessed by the academic mainstream.

— Alton Hornsby, Jr.

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THE KARAMU HOUSE

The oldest existing African cultural institution in America, the Karamu House, is located in the heart of the African American community in Cleveland, Ohio. It was founded in 1915 by Russell and Rowena Jelliffe and known as the Neighborhood Association Settlement House until 1939, when it was renamed the Karamu House. *Karamu* is a Kiswahili word that means, among other things, “a place of joyful meeting.” Since its inception, the Karamu House has been committed to offering children the opportunity to engage with one another and participate in cultural performances enhancing experiences of their own culture. One of the Karamu House’s most successful activities has been its Children’s Theatre.

The success of its Children’s Theatre inspired the Karamu House to create the Dumas Dramatic Club for adults in 1920. Then, in 1922, a major dramatic actor of the time, Charles Gilpin, met with the group and suggested that they take themselves seriously and make the Karamu House the best “Negro” theatre in the world. Gilpin began his career as a singer and dancer in minstrel and vaudeville shows and then moved on to work in the legitimate theater. He is best known for his performance from 1920 to 1924 in the title role in *Emperor Jones*, for which he won the Drama League Award and the Springarn Medal (NAACP). He also was honored with being named *Crisis* magazine’s Man of the Year in 1921.

The drama club accepted the challenge of this accomplished thespian and renamed themselves the Gilpin Players. The Gilpin Players then sought real-life African American dramas written by African American

playwrights. In the late 1920s, the Karamu House was the only theatre producing plays written and performed by African Americans. The theatre group did not have far to look for serious African American playwrights, as it was around the corner from the childhood home of the future poet laureate Langston Hughes, who took part in the early activities of the Karamu House. Hughes was among the first children to participate in the arts program at the Karamu House, and he and the Jelliffes came to know each other well. When Hughes returned to Cleveland as an adult, their association enhanced his career as well as the reputation of the Karamu House. The years between 1936 and 1939 came to be called the “Hughes era,” as the Gilpin Players performed six Hughes plays at the Karamu House: *Mulatto* (1935), *Troubled Island* (1936), *Little Ham* (1937), *Soul Gone Home* (1937), *Don’t You Want to Be Free?* (1938), and *Front Porch* (1938).

Over the decades, the Karamu House has expanded, and it now offers the community such programs as children’s storytelling; family activities; theatrical productions on the main stage; improvisation sessions; costume and set design workshops; writing classes, including scriptwriting; speech and diction lessons; an after school cultural arts and education program; classes in African drumming, African dance, tap, and modeling; and other cultural activities.

— Adisa Alkebulan

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- Mitchell, Lofton. (1975). *Voices of the Black Theatre*. Clifton, NJ: James T. White. This text identifies some of the leading figures and major players in the creation and development of the Karamu House.
- Selby, John. (1966). *Beyond Civil Rights*. Cleveland, OH: World. This is one of the most comprehensive texts on the early history of the Karamu House.
- Williams, Mance. (1985). *Black Theatre in the 1960s and 1970s: A Historical-Critical Analysis of the Movement*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press. Williams provides invaluable insights on the black theatre movement of the 1960s and 1970s.

KAWAIDA

Kawaida is a communitarian African philosophy developed by Maulana Karenga, an activist-scholar and chair of the organization Us, one of the major black power organizations in the 1960s. The philosophy evolved in the context of the black freedom movement, especially the black power period, thus it engages the movement's central themes of freedom, justice, struggle, self-determination, unity, community, black power and presence in the world, and especially the role and relevance of culture in the life and struggle of African people. *Kawaida* is a Swahili word that means "tradition," but the term has come to mean a synthesis of tradition and reason informed by and developed in practice. Indeed, the focus on tradition is a recognition and reaffirmation of the essentiality of culture, the central idea in Kawaida philosophy, while the attention to reason is a necessary mode of measuring the desirability and acceptability of an element in tradition and in Kawaida itself.

Practice, then, is the necessary test of both tradition and reason. Thus, Karenga—currently a professor of Black Studies at California State University, Long Beach, and still the chair of Us and the chair of the National Association of Kawaida Organizations (NAKO)—understands Kawaida as an open-textured and continually developing project. In Karenga's words, Kawaida is an "ongoing synthesis of the best of African thought and practice in constant exchange with the world." Moreover, Kawaida is a cultural and social change philosophy that has as its central aims developing a logic and language of liberation, constantly linking theory and practice, empowering people to change the quality and conditions of their lives, and making a contribution to the creation of

a just and good society and a good and sustainable world.

INTELLECTUAL HERITAGE

To construct his system, Karenga borrowed from and builds on a wide range of continental and diasporic African thinkers. Among the most significant thinkers whose concepts Karenga evolved, redeveloped, and reshaped as essential elements in Kawaida philosophy are Sekou Toure, Julius Nyerere, Kwame Nkrumah, W.E.B. Du Bois, Léopold Senghor, Malcolm X, Robert Williams, Frantz Fanon, Marcus Garvey, and later Amilcar Cabral. Kawaida incorporates all these thinkers' emphasis on the centrality of culture and cultural revolution in the liberation struggle and the overall life of the people. Later, Kawaida incorporates the womanist writings of Anna Julia Cooper; Mary McLeod Bethune's concept of the educated and socially conscious vanguard; Ida B. Wells's idea of the right and responsibility of self-defense; as well as texts in the *Husia* and *Odu Ifa* that reflect its concern with an egalitarian complementarity and partnership of men and women in the ongoing project for human freedom and human flourishing.

FOCUS ON CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

As a self-consciously cultural and communitarian philosophy and practice, Kawaida focuses on culture and community as the twin pillars of its intellectual and practical foundation, framework, and focus. Here Kawaida draws heavily on Toure's concept of full re-Africanization, the self-conscious thrust to "recreate, create, and circulate" African culture—on the continent and in the diaspora, ancient and modern—and use it to constantly bring forth the best of what it means to be African. This re-Africanization supports and advances the liberation struggle and improves and enriches the present and future. As Karenga put it, "Culture provides the basis for revolution and recovery." In fact, people's recovery of their Africanness in the fullest and most progressive sense aids and insures revolutionary practice. Thus, at the heart of the Kawaida project is the thrust to inspire, inform, and sustain cultural revolution and national or communal liberation, as well as new paradigms of being African and human in the world.

Kawaida argues that African Americans are above all a cultural community, a cultural nation. And Africans'

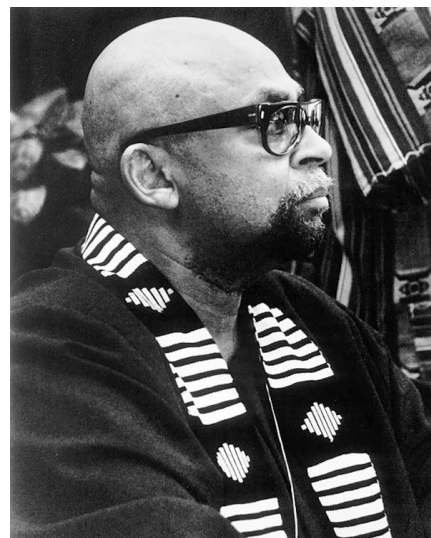
struggle for liberation is first and at its foundation a struggle to free themselves culturally in the fullest sense. Toure and Fanon had argued a similar conception, and Amilcar Cabral in *Return to the Source* provides a reaffirmation and expansion of this concept, which is so central to Kawaida. Kawaida defines *culture* as the totality of thought and practice by which a people creates itself; celebrates, sustains, and develops itself; and introduces itself to history and humanity. This occurs in at least the following seven basic areas: ethics and spirituality or religion; history; social organization; economic organization; political organization; creative production (e.g., art, music, literature, dance); and ethos—the collective psychology shaped by activities in the other six areas. It is in the context of culture that people engage in the search for models of excellence and paradigms of possibilities in every aspect of their lives and over time. Moreover, Kawaida philosophy involves creating a language and logic of liberation, one of both opposition and affirmation and a corresponding liberational practice directed toward creating a just and good society and a good and sustainable world. At the same time, the philosophy poses a paradigm of mutually beneficial human relations and cooperation for the common good.

In Kawaida, the problem of unfreedom is first a problem of cultural hegemony by the dominant society. For the dominant society rules not simply by force of arms but also by force of ideas, that is, by an established definition of reality that even the oppressed often accept. For the oppressed, a key challenge is to wage cultural revolution to break this hold and to pose, pursue, and flourish with a new paradigm of society and what it means to be African and human and to struggle for freedom. Thus, cultural struggle or revolution is essential to the preparation and process of any other struggle or revolution. Karenga defines *cultural revolution* as “the ideological and practical struggle to rescue and reconstruct African culture, break the cultural hegemony of the oppressor over the people, transform persons so that they become self-conscious agents of their own liberation, and aid in the preparation and support of the larger struggle for liberation and a higher level of human life.” Thus, the cultural revolution is tied to and part of all forms of struggle for liberation, especially the political and economic ones.

The problem of liberation of the national community or nation, then, is understood in Kawaida as a problem of culture and the problem of culture is a

problem of liberation. Kawaida maintains that without a cultural revolution, there can be no real liberation of the people. But following Frantz Fanon, it argues that without the struggle for total liberation, a dynamic, self-affirming, self-developing, past-and-future-facing culture cannot be created. Moreover, following Amilcar Cabral, Kawaida contends that, in fact, the struggle for national existence as a people is a cultural struggle and the struggle to defend, maintain, and develop African culture is in the final analysis a struggle for national existence (i.e., the right and responsibility of Africans to exist as a people, to speak their own special truth to the world and make their own unique contribution to the forward flow of human history).

This concern for and understanding of the relationship between culture, community, and liberational struggle is at the heart of Kawaida’s cultural nationalism. And Kawaida rejects what it calls the “theoretical clumsiness” of those who make a distinction between cultural nationalism and so-called revolutionary nationalism. For in Kawaida philosophy, there are four kinds of nationalism based on area of social focus—political, religious, economic, and cultural. Terms like *progressive*, *reactionary*, *reformist*, and *revolutionary* speak to an assumed quality of social practice and may apply to political, religious, economic, or cultural thought and practice. So-called revolutionary nationalists are thus confusing areas of social focus with qualities of social practice. And, furthermore, they have given themselves and their allies self-congratulatory titles without defining *revolutionary*



Dr. Maulana Karenga, philosopher and scholar

or even *nationalism*, which is thought and practice dedicated to the defense and development of a people with a common history, culture, life conditions, and self-understanding—a nation.

In Kawaida philosophy, culture is understood as a uniquely human way of being in the world, and each culture is considered equal in value to every other culture. Thus, each people has the right and responsibility to speak its own special cultural truth and make its own unique contribution to the forward flow of human history. Thus African people are called to express and share their culture as both a requirement of their struggle and an indispensable method of enriching and expanding their lives. Within this overarching framework, culture is the fundamental context within which people understand and assert themselves, as well as the fundamental source of their identity, purpose, and direction. Therefore, African self-understanding shapes African self-assertion in the world, and it is essential that this self-understanding and self-assertion be founded on the best of African thought and practice in constant exchange with the world.

DIALOGUE WITH CULTURE

Here Kawaida calls for and poses its own project as a continuous dialogue with African culture. To dialogue with African culture is to ask it questions and seek from it answers to the fundamental and enduring concerns of the African and human community. These include questions of identity, purpose and direction, meaning and mission in human life, the grounds for a just and good society, our obligations to others, a framework for a rightful relationship with the environment, and the basis of human freedom and human flourishing and its role in the liberation struggle itself. Again, at the heart of this conversation with African culture is the continuing quest to define and become the best of what it means to be African and human in the fullest sense.

This involves an ongoing search for models of excellence and paradigms of possibilities in every area of human life, but especially in the fundamental seven areas of culture: history, ethics and spirituality or religion, social organization, economic organization, political organization, creative production (e.g., art, music, literature, dance), and ethos. Moreover, following Malcolm X, it involves creating a language and logic of liberation, one of both opposition and affirmation and a corresponding liberational practice

directed toward creating a just and good society and posing an effective paradigm of mutually beneficial human relations and human possibility.

RECONSTRUCTION

In the area of history, Kawaida begins with a self-conscious emphasis on the principle of recovery and reconstruction of African culture. This return to African history, Kawaida stipulates, is necessary first because colonialism and enslavement lifted Africans out of their own history and made them a footnote and forgotten casualty in European history; and second, as a matter of agency, as Africans must return to their history and culture so they may ground themselves, and thus pursue projects in their own image and interests. In this *sankofa* initiative, Kawaida emphasizes the recovery of models of excellence and possibility from ancient and recent African history and culture and their use to improve the present and enhance the future.

In the areas of ethics and spirituality, Kawaida builds especially on the legacy of the Maatian (ancient Egyptian) and Ifa (Yoruba) ethical and spiritual traditions. It stresses five fundamental ancient and ongoing African concerns and commitments: profound appreciation for the transcendent and sacred; the dignity and rights of the human person; the well-being and flourishing of family and community; the integrity and value of the environment; and the reciprocal solidarity and cooperation of humanity for mutual benefit. Inherent in this ethical project is the central Maatian idea of *serudj ta*, the moral obligation to constantly repair, heal, and restore the world making it more beautiful and beneficial than before. This central idea is interrelated with and reinforces the Ifa concept that humans are divinely chosen to bring good into the world and that this is the fundamental mission and meaning of human life.

In the area of social organization, Kawaida concerns itself with the central question of quality relations, as well as the principles and practices that cultivate these and reflect the best of African culture. Key to this concern is the embrace and practice of the *Nguzo Saba* (Seven Principles), which are standards of personal and social excellence directed toward building and sustaining moral community and reinforcing the community's capacity to define, defend, and develop its interest in the most positive and productive sense. These principles are *Umoja* (Unity); *Kujichagulia* (Self-Determination); *Ujima* (Collective

Work and Responsibility); *Ujamaa* (Cooperative Economics); *Nia* (Purpose); *Kuumba* (Creativity); and *Imani* (Faith).

In addition, Kawaida has expanded to include a self-conscious concern with the issues of the quality of male-female relations and the development of a womanist thrust within the Kawaida project, incorporating the thoughts of Maria Stewart and Ana Julia Cooper, as well as the stress of the ancient African sacred texts, the *Husia* and *Odu Ifa*, on the indispensability and equal status, presence, and power of women in all things good and of value. Under the initiative of Tiamoyo Karenga and Chimbuko Tembo, and through the internal discussions of the women and men in the organization Us, Kawaida womanism has emerged as a constitutive element of Kawaida philosophy. *Kawaida womanism* defines itself as thought and practice directed toward enabling African women to achieve equality with African men in personal and public relations and in the context of a free and equal black community. Kawaida has several defining commitments and practices with respect to this project: cultural grounding, ethical grounding, self-definition, the partnership of women and men, rootedness in family, rootedness in community, service, and social action and struggle.

PAN-AFRICAN TRADITION

Although the Kawaida approach to politics recognizes the practice, as it is commonly understood, to be a process of gaining, maintaining, and using power, it also expands its meaning. In this expanded definition, *politics* is, in the ancient Egyptian tradition of governance, an ongoing quest to create the Maatian society and world—or in modern terms, a just and good society and a good and sustainable world. In the pan-Africanist tradition of Marcus Garvey, Kawaida stresses its central concern for Africans everywhere and the unity and common struggle for freedom, self-determination, power over individual and collective destiny and daily life, and meaningful and effective participation in all decisions that affect African people in significant ways. Here Kawaida focuses on the interrelatedness of freedom, justice, power of people over their destinies and daily lives, and peace in the world. It argues that the struggles for these and other essential goods are the motive force of history. And in the tradition of Malcolm X and his model of Bandung, Kawaida argues also for the unity and common struggle for people of color and other progressive people to

free themselves, start a new history of humankind, and pose a new paradigm of how humans ought to relate and live. Following Kwame Nkrumah, Frantz Fanon, and others, Kawaida also places emphasis on the political education and organization of the masses in order to make them self-conscious agents of their own life and liberation. Kawaida also borrows from and builds on Sekou Toure's and Frederick Douglass's understanding of the indispensability and enduring character of struggle to expand the realm of human freedom and human flourishing.

ECONOMIC DISCOURSE

The central category in Kawaida economic discourse is *Ujamaa* (cooperative economics), an African concept of shared work and wealth introduced by Julius Nyerere, and which also means African socialism. The root of the word *ujamaa* is *jamaa*, meaning “family,” which suggests kinship as the basis of the production, distribution, and consumption of goods. In the Kawaida African framework, this kinship extends to nature and everything and everyone in it, and thus supports an economic ethic that demonstrates a profound respect for the integrity and value of the environment and approaches the world as a shared heritage not to be monopolized or privatized by a few. Thus, it also resists economic and other practices that promote the plunder, pollution, and depletion of the earth. Moreover, *Ujamaa* as the principle and practice of shared work and wealth seeks to encourage a just and equitable distribution of resources of the world to enable everyone to live a life of dignity and decency. It also supports the rights and interests of workers, care for the vulnerable, and the historical and ongoing effort to aid the poor in their struggle to end poverty and live full and meaningful lives.

INFLUENCE ON THE BLACK ARTS MOVEMENT

One of Kawaida's most significant areas of influence in the 1960s was the black arts movement and its contribution to the discourse on a black aesthetic. In his influential article, “Black Art: Mute Matter Given Force and Feeling,” which appears in *The Norton Anthology of African American Literature*, Karenga outlines aspects of the Kawaida aesthetic. He argues that art in the African tradition supported by Kawaida is never art for art's sake but always art for humans' sake. Building on Léopold Senghor's writings, he contends that art must have three basic

characteristics—it must be functional, collective, and committing. It must be *functional*—of use and value of the people; *collective*—rooted in and reflective of the beauty and good of the people; and *committing*—directed toward an emancipating and enhanced sense of humanity and human possibility, especially in the context of the struggle for human freedom and flourishing.

In addition, Kawaida argues that the ethos of a people is its self-understanding derived from its self-assertion in the world in the other six areas of culture. Furthermore, it contends that there are three modal periods in African history that have shaped the lives of Africans and thus informed their self-conception: The classical period in the Nile Valley civilizations, especially Egypt; the holocaust of enslavement; and the reaffirmation that occurred in the 1960s (i.e., the reaffirmation of their Africanness and social justice tradition). Thus, Africans are the Fathers and Mothers of humanity and human civilization, the sons and daughters of the Holocaust of enslavement and the authors and heirs of the reaffirmation of the 60s. Each context reveals not only an identity but an obligation of continued practice, so that the people may know and introduce themselves to history and humanity in ways that represent the best of what it means to be African and human in the fullest sense. Thus, the classical period presents a paradigm of spiritual and ethical grounding and intellectual achievement; the holocaust of enslavement presents a model of human durability and adaptive vitality, as well as an unquenchable commitment to human freedom and human dignity; and the reaffirmation that occurred in the 1960s presents a model of and profound commitment to African cultural integrity, the ancient and ongoing African social justice tradition, and the parallel struggle for human freedom and human flourishing. To this is added the ancient conception of humans in the Ifa tradition as chosen ones, divinely chosen to bring good into the world and not let any good be lost. In Kawaida philosophy, this therefore becomes the fundamental mission and meaning of human life and the transcendent way Africans understand themselves within their cultural context.

BROAD INFLUENCE OF KAWAIDA

Through Karenga's lectures and writings; his activist-intellectual works with his organization Us, NAKO (National Association of Kawaida Organizations) and

the Kawaida Institute of Pan-African Studies (KIPAS); and the international impact of his ideas—especially through the pan-African holiday of Kwanzaa and its Seven Principles, the *Nguzo Saba*, which are grounded in and grow out of Kawaida philosophy—Kawaida has become an influential foundation and framework for black intellectual discourse and social practice. Its influence is evident in the black arts movement and the discourse on the black aesthetic; in Black Studies, where Karenga's book, *Introduction to Black Studies*, is the most widely used introductory text in the discipline; and in the black power movement and its major conferences, where Karenga was the major theorist. It was in the context of the black power movement that he developed the concept of operational unity and a definition of black power and the collective struggle for self-determination (cultural, political, and economic), self-respect (reaffirmation of dignity), and self-defense (protection of black life and achievement of freedom by any means necessary, including armed defense).

In addition, Kawaida also is evident in the discourse and documents in the Black Student Union movement, the rites of passage movement, African life-cycle ceremonies, and naming practices in the spread of the model of Us organization's youth movement, the Simba Wachanga (Young Lions). A significant voice in the 1960s discourse on the relevance and role of religion and the need for an African-rooted sacred literature and theology, Kawaida continues to offer new insights into African ethical and spiritual tradition with Karenga's translation of and commentaries on the *Husia*, the sacred text of ancient Egypt, and the *Odu Ifa*, the sacred text of ancient Yorubaland. Moreover, Kawaida and the *Nguzo Saba* have had an impact on the international black community and are being used by groups as diverse as the black consciousness movement, the student union in South Africa in their mission statements, and churches in Trinidad, in addition to being used widely as a cultural and philosophical framework.

Recently Kawaida was evident in the Million Man March in Karenga's "Day of Absence Mission Statement" and "Ethics of Sharing" policy, which defined the meaning and goals of the march. Kawaida is also present in the reparations movement—especially in its discourse around the ethics of reparations and the use of the ancient Egyptian concept of *serudj ta*, meaning to repair and restore the world, as a central way to understand the project. Kawaida and Us also have

made a well-known contribution to the founding of the classical African studies movement, with its special focus on the study of ancient Egypt (Maat) and ancient Yoruba (Ifa) and the framing of its discourse. Us initiated and hosted the first annual Ancient Egyptian Studies Conference in 1984, which was the occasion of the founding of the Association for the Study of Classical African Civilizations (ASCAC) and the release of Karenga's *Selections From the Husia: Sacred Wisdom of Ancient Egypt*, which offered a framework for both discourse and research on the Maatian moral and spiritual imagination. Likewise, in 1999, Us held the International Conference of Yoruba Culture and Ethics, where Karenga's newly released translation of the *Odu Ifa: The Ethical Teachings* also became a model and framework for discourse and research in this area of inquiry and practice. In addition, the Nguzo Saba and concepts of Kawaïda are used as an African-centered value orientation and vision grounding in various cultural, educational, political, economic, and religious projects, including student retention in schools, psychological counseling, and political caucuses.

The essential texts by Karenga, which offer critical treatment and expression of Kawaïda philosophy, are *The Quotable Karenga* (1967); *Essays on Struggle: Position and Analysis* (1978), a collection of essays that originally appeared in the *Black Scholar*; *Kawaïda Theory: An Introductory Outline* (1980); and *Kawaïda: A Communitarian African Philosophy* (2000); as well as *Selections From the Husia: Sacred Wisdom of Ancient Egypt* (1984); *Odu Ifa: The Ethical Teachings* (1999); and his magnum opus, *Maat, the Moral Ideal in Ancient Egypt: A Study in Classical African Ethics* (2004), which originated in his second doctoral dissertation. As the texts demonstrate, the Kawaïda philosophy initially focused on race, community, and culture, and later expanded to include concerns for other critical issues—such as class, gender, environmental justice, multiculturalism, and ethics—without abandoning its original and central concerns.

— Maulana Karenga

See also Us

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earliest African responses to the moral and cultural questions confronting humans, provides a thorough discussion of the philosophical and ethical bases for the reconstructive functions of Kawaïda.

KEMET, AFROCENTRICITY AND KNOWLEDGE

Kemet, Afrocentricity and Knowledge is the third of Molefi Kete Asante's three books explicating his theoretical ideas on Afrocentricity. Asante's first groundbreaking text, *Afrocentricity: A Theory of Social Knowledge* (1980), points toward a new paradigm of knowledge and social theory. His next book, *The Afrocentric Idea* (1987), outlines the dimensions of the Afrocentric project. In *Kemet, Afrocentricity and Knowledge* (1990), Asante not only reasserts the perspective that Africans ought to be viewed as subjects and agents acting in their own image and interest, but he continues his critique of the Eurocentric constructions of history, race, and culture, especially where they intersect. What is missing in this book, however, is the strong gender analysis that Asante undertakes elsewhere in various articles and book chapters.

Asante strategically divides *Kemet, Afrocentricity and Knowledge* into three sections—interiors, anteriors, and exteriors—each with a different set of themes and problematics. Informed by a Diopian perspective, Asante scrutinizes the problematic assumptions, foundation, core, and contours of disciplines other than Black Studies that claim to study African people and those who have taken up the question of Africa. Moreover, he asserts the significance of an African understanding of human relationship as fundamental to revising the text for human interaction, while at the same time always challenging Europe to forgo hegemony for a view of sharing the world on equal footing with a plurality of perspectives. Most important, in this text Asante builds on his work in *The Afrocentric Idea*, introducing a new element—the Afrocentric paradigm.

AFRICAN INTERIORS

The concept of interior is linked to that of place, which refers to a person's location in time and space, no matter where that person is. The idea of place, as Asante sees it, is fundamental to any intellectual

pursuit, as a person always begins speaking from some psychological, cultural, economic, social, or moral place. This person is not without a location, and therefore any discourse on intellectual issues is a statement of the speaker's place. A corollary idea Asante sets forth is the idea of centeredness. The centrality of African ideals takes a presumptive position over the form or constitution of African ideals. In this context, Asante explores the idea of place as location, challenging Afrocentric researchers to locate and root themselves in African ideas and values while daring to establish the perspective as a legitimate response to the human condition. Asante's definition of location involves the purposive placement of a person's self or position rather than the mere factor of place as a neutral idea. Thus, a person has to have a place, but that person can definitely choose a location, that is, choose to be located in some place. For Asante, the advantage of the Afrocentric perspective is that it gives scholars an intellectual tradition other than that of the Greeks to root themselves in, which may lead to new kinds of valid knowledge.

Asante also undertakes an analysis of what may be called the European study of Africa. He concludes that African Studies demonstrates that where neither race nor biology is problematic, perspective on data may be. African Studies rarely employs an African methodology or philosophical outlook. In fact, historically, it tends to atomize African people. In contrast, Asante posits Africology to counter the Eurocentric perspective represented in that discipline. Africology, he explains, is not merely a collection of courses on African subjects but a methodological discipline with a definite African location. It unifies the concerns of social science with those of the humanities using a methodology rooted in Afrocentricity. Also important is the fact that it presupposes that science is an attitude toward imagination and creation, not simply a series of methodical steps.

The Afrocentric Paradigm

The Afrocentric paradigm is concerned with cosmological, epistemological, axiological, and aesthetic problematics and issues. It gives researchers functional, categorical, and etymological approaches to knowledge construction, offering a resource of questions and concepts that distinguishes Africology from disciplines such as history, psychology, and sociology. This framework compels the Africologist to remain

self-conscious, placing events in relation to African history and culture while constantly asking the question, What else do I need to do to center this on African terms? There are three areas within Africology that Asante identifies for the examination of phenomena: cultural/aesthetic, social/behavioral, and policy issues. In addition, Asante delineates the following three important functions of Africologists' research in the context of the Afrocentric paradigm:

1. to logically explain African experiences
2. to develop holistic approaches to analyzing the role of Africans in world culture
3. to explain, interpret, and analyze African behavior from an Afrocentric perspective

AFRICAN ANTERIORS

Kemet, or ancient Egypt, is a fitting starting point for addressing African culture in its classical form. Asante underscores the legitimacy of Kemet high culture as the proper source of many African knowledge systems in the section of the book called Anteriors. His study of classical African societies involves a process he characterizes as reconfirming and delinking. Asante uses historical data in reconfirming Kemet not only as an anterior African society and as interior within Africa but also as undeniable, based on the abundant documentation of its history. He also dispels much unscientific misinformation on Kemet by delinking Eurocentric dating schemes and chronology from it and offering an alternative chronology.

For Asante, Kemet is the beginning point for any real discussion about Africa, as well as a rich resource of ideals and concepts that can provide the basis for new Afrocentric theories on phenomena. Thus he restores Kemet to its rightful place by exposing the misconstruction of Kemet as an oriental culture by early Egyptologists. By scrutinizing most of the essential texts written on classical Africa by Europeans and Eurocentric scholars, Asante reveals that Europeans had no real interest in linking Africa to Kemet, nor did they see African societies as interconnected and interrelated. On this account, he proffers a Diopian orientation to replace the European perspective in order to draw different interpretations and conclusions than the traditional European ones that always cast Africa and Africans in the most negative light.

Perhaps because of his training in languages and communication, Asante offers a more comprehensive

discussion than Diop did of the importance of language in reorienting the images, ideas, and interpretations of the African world. Therefore, language in its oral script and its polysemic symbolic form becomes another topic of his section on interiors. Asante addresses the interrelatedness of the rhetoric and the power of Maat to the creation of the good society, resolving that the rightness of speech depends on a person's ability to maintain a correspondence of heart and tongue. Maat, for Asante, not only is the foundation for African society but also becomes a method of textual analysis that incorporates unity, elimination of chaos, elevation of peace, and the creation of harmony and balance.

AFRICAN EXTERIORS

The final section of *Kemet, Afrocentricity and Knowledge* addresses six topics relating to being exterior or viewing one's self as exterior to Africa: Carter G. Woodson's notion of miseducation; Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*; Marxism; psychology; sociobiology; and the last but not most important and reoccurring topic, knowledge.

Asante recognizes the timelessness and relevance of Woodson's assertion that Western education does more damage to the psyche of African people than good. Asante notes that this indictment of education also applies to historically black colleges, whose educational framework reflects the orientation of the dominant culture. Next, Asante demonstrates how the theme of miseducation became the theme of Ellison's *Invisible Man*. He ultimately concludes that Ellison is himself a victim of dislocation and that his book was written not for African descendants but for Europeans, so that they can see the so-called invisibility of the African.

Asante then revisits Marxism and argues that Karl Marx was unable to understand the interrelatedness of culture and economics, and that this misunderstanding of the context of African economic systems caused Marx to assign them the lowest step in his hierarchy. He also notes the inadequacy of Western psychology to deal with problems of race and racism in the minds and imaginations of white and black people. With sociobiology, Asante expresses concern not with the data generated, as he recognizes some legitimacy in the nexus of social construction and biology, but with the misconstruction and appropriation of theory for social or political engineering purposes. Finally, he

addresses a reoccurring theme throughout the text: knowledge. Asante sums up this topic with the resolution that the approach to human knowledge in the Afrocentric project cannot end in critique but must end in concrete action that leads to harmony, understanding, justice, and, in a word, Maat.

— Khonsura J. Wilson

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KISWAHILI MOVEMENT

In Africa, Kiswahili is widely spoken in Tanzania, Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda, and the islands of Zanzibar, Madagascar, and the Comoros. Prior to the colonial era, before European nations carved up Africa among themselves at the Berlin Conference near the end of the 19th century, European missionaries learned African languages for the purpose of converting Africans to Christianity or for "spreading the gospel." In East Africa, Kiswahili was widely used for maritime trade dating back hundreds of years. As a result of this trade along the coast of East Africa, the total number of Kiswahili speakers far exceeded the number of native speakers of Kiswahili. Therefore, Kiswahili was a logical choice for the European missionaries. After learning Kiswahili, the missionaries

transcribed Kiswahili according to the Latin script and translated their bible into Kiswahili, as well as creating grammar books, dictionaries, and other books in the language. The missionaries also helped spread Kiswahili to other African ethnic groups that they were attempting to convert.

The missionaries' work assisted the colonial administrators, who followed the missionaries in forming policies with regard to language: During the colonial era, German and British colonial language policies specified the use of Kiswahili in the lower levels of administration and education. The introduction of Kiswahili in colonial and missionary schools contributed to the spread of Kiswahili. Some believe that the German language policy, which strongly supported the use of Kiswahili, led to the expansion and eventual adoption of Kiswahili as a national language in former colonies.

THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE OF TANZANIA

In 1962, Julius Nyerere, president of the newly independent Republic of Tanganyika (later named the United Republic of Tanzania), delivered his Republic Day speech in Kiswahili. He then declared Kiswahili the national language. Kiswahili would be used in all spheres of educational, economic, and political activities. In 1967, Kiswahili was declared the official language and the policy of Ujamaa was adopted, which, in part, maintained that the resurgence of Africa and her people must be rooted in the values and traditions of African people. Kiswahili was to be used as the sole language of instruction in primary schools, and most government documents, forms, labels, and so on were to be translated into Kiswahili. There were several governmental agencies created to implement Tanzania's new language policy. Tanzania became the lone model for instituting African language policy in newly independent African nations, while the rest of the former colonies were maintaining European colonial language policies. In fact, a significant debate rages in Tanzania today, which is echoed throughout Africa, between advocates of colonial languages and advocates of African languages. As a result, many of the policies implemented by Nyerere have since been modified and English has been accommodated.

THE INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE OF AFRICA

In the mid-1960s, some African scholars, notably Kenyans Ayi Kwei Armah and Ngugi Wa Thiong'o,

began advocating the use of Kiswahili as a pan-African language. In 1966, activist Maulana Karenga created the African holiday Kwanzaa and its accompanying principles, the Nguzo Saba, using Kiswahili words. Every year, Kwanzaa is celebrated by millions of Africans all over the world. In 1977, the Kiswahili movement continued at the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC) held in Lagos, Nigeria. Heading the African American delegation, the Us organization, led by Karenga, promoted the adoption of Kiswahili by Africans everywhere. Karenga and others believe that Kiswahili is a logical choice for a pan-African language because it is not attached to a large ethnic group and is similar in structure to many other African languages, and not a tonal language, making it easier to learn. By the beginning of the 21st century, Kiswahili was the first choice of language instructors in Afrocentric schools, suggesting that a new generation of youth will be exposed to the popular language.

— Adisa A. Alkebulan

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KU KLUX KLAN

The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) is a white supremacist organization created to harass, intimidate, and murder black men and women in order to maintain white power. The Klan has historically targeted blacks who were willing to stand up for their rights, such as those who expressed their desire to vote and to achieve legal equality. After 244 years of slavery, the Civil War, backed by the Thirteenth Amendment to

the Constitution, ended the nightmare for millions of enslaved African descendants. After the war, Reconstruction, which lasted from 1865 to 1877, was a move to create a more inclusive democracy in the country by bringing within the protection of the laws millions of newly liberated Africans. This protection was guaranteed through two constitutional amendments—the Fourteenth Amendment, which made Africans citizens, and the Fifteenth Amendment, which gave African males the right to vote. These social changes were not without some negative ramifications, however.

MURDER AND BRUTALIZATION OF AFRICANS IN THE SOUTH

There were whites in the South who sought a return to the status quo that existed before the Civil War, in which whites ruled over blacks. In 1865 and 1866, in Pulaski, Tennessee, a core of these Southern whites, veterans of the Confederate Army, formed what was initially thought to be a social club. They called it the Ku Klux Klan, a name partially derived from the Greek word *kuklos* meaning “circle.” Their ultimate goal was the overthrow of the liberal republican state governments. Between 1866 and 1875, under the leadership of the Grand Wizard, Nathan Bedford Forrest, the Ku Klux Klan killed an estimated 3,500 African Americans and brutalized many more in the areas where they were most active—the upland and piedmont areas of the deep South and border states.

By 1873, as a result of the federal Ku Klux Klan Act, which allowed the president to suspend habeas corpus in order to protect the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution, the Klan retreated to watch the effects of its societal violence against what they called “black republicanism.” The effects were so systemic that by 1877, the conservative democrats had gained control of all Southern state governments and were using legal means to reconstitute society as it existed prior to the war. This agenda was helped along by the collapse of Reconstruction and the Klan-backed conservative Rutherford B. Hayes’s “selection” by the House of Representatives. In fact, it can be argued that Hayes’s subsequent ascent to the presidency set the stage for the 1896 Supreme Court decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson* that blacks and whites were “separate but equal,” which gave legal support to the color line.

The Klan’s retreat was a regrouping and recruitment of new members who, through ignorance and

disinformation, believed themselves superior to and more godlike than blacks. From 1890 to 1900, the white Southern leaders of the Klan looked away as these misinformed, mostly poor and working-class Klan members used lynching as a means of racial control. Lynching was so prevalent across the South that it was a “happening” to which people traveled from far and wide. In the decade from 1889 to 1899 alone, the yearly average lynching rate (i.e., the number of lynchings counted) was 188. There was then a lull in Klan activity, but although the political pressure from the African American community was vehement, the organization did not disappear altogether.

GEOGRAPHICAL EXPANSION

During the period of World War I and into the 1920s, the Klan appeared, not just in the South and border states but with *klaverns*, or chapters, that stretched from Maine to Oregon. The Klan became urban and very active in politics in key states, helping to elect one of its own, Earl Mayfield, to the U.S. Senate. In 1915, the Klan was given a boost nationwide with the release of the D. W. Griffith film *Birth of a Nation*, in which the organization is depicted as saving the South and white womanhood. The film is believed to have contributed to the lynching of 76 African American uniformed soldiers who fought in World War I as well as to the riots of the period in Atlanta, Georgia. The aura of white supremacy was the driving force behind both the cross burning by the Invisible Empire of the Ku Klux Klan on Stone Mountain, Georgia, in 1915, and the blatant parade of robed Klansmen down Pennsylvania Avenue in the nation’s capital in 1925. In the 1920s, the Klan’s membership was estimated to be between 3 and 5 million paid subscribers. Between 1930 and 1954, the Klan remained in a protracted state of dormancy, but it made its anticommunist, anti-union organizing, and anti-Roosevelt positions felt across the nation.

From 1954 to about the late 1960s, the resurfacing of the Klan coincided with the rise of what some have characterized as the second Reconstruction—the civil rights movement. Calling itself the “United Klan of America,” and with Robert M. Shelton as the Grand Wizard, the Klan used intimidation, coercion, and violence in the hope of halting the legislative process aimed at creating an even more inclusive American democracy. In addition to lynching, the Klan used bombings (of 30 black churches) and assassinations

to stem the tide of change sweeping the country. While the United States was in the throes of the civil rights movement, the Klan perpetrated a number of heinous crimes against not just individuals but humanity itself.

One such crime was the 1962 assassination of Medgar W. Evers, the field secretary of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) in Mississippi. Another was the 1963 bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, in which four young churchgoers were killed. Then there were the 1964 Philadelphia, Mississippi, murders of three civil rights workers, James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner. The former was black and the latter two white. When the bodies were recovered from a gravel pit, Chaney had been beaten so badly that every bone in his body was broken.

In 1968, Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee, where he appeared in support of striking sanitation workers. Although the Klan was not charged with the murder of Martin Luther King, the spirit of racial hatred and outright violent attacks on blacks inspired by the examples of the Ku Klux Klan increased the possibility of such an attack. Once again, a period of protracted dormancy set in for the Klan. It was not until 1979 that a new faction of the organization appeared. Under the leadership of the clean-shaven Louisiana college graduate, David Duke, the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan initially touted itself as antigay, anti-welfare, and antiestablishment. But eventually its true, old Klan white supremacist cause became evident. In 1975, a splinter group of the Knights, the Invisible Empire, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, established itself under the leadership of Bill Wilkinson. Both factions had limited memberships but wide support from many whites across the nation. In fact, what was most disturbing about the new Klan was its ability to enter the mainstream, as evidenced by David Duke's successful run for the Louisiana State Legislature and his shockingly close run for the U.S. Senate, as well as by the moral support he received from many whites.

THE 21ST-CENTURY KLAN

From the 1980s into the 21st century, there were no cyclical resurgences or protracted periods of dormancy for the Klan. The Klan has continued to exist

and has found itself being mimicked by white supremacist groups like the Skinheads, White Aryan Resistance, Church of the Creator, and others. But the existence of the Klan has been threatened by an innovative legal challenge issued by the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery, Alabama, headed by the lawyer Morris Dees. In a series of litigations, Dees and his colleagues have successfully sued the Klan and won in court. One of the first such cases was the murder trial of Mobile teenager Michael Donald in 1981. Members of the United Klans of America who were involved in the murder were convicted, and the Alabama court ordered the Klan and each defendant to pay the \$17 million in damages the court awarded to the victim's mother. In Georgia, the center sued the Klan because of its mob action against civil rights protesters in Forsyth County in 1987. The case ended in a multimillion dollar judgment against the Klan ring-leaders.

As a result of court actions by the Southern Poverty Law Center against both the Klan and other white supremacist groups (e.g., the White Aryan Resistance in Portland, Oregon), by the mid-1990s Klan membership had begun to drop off. In both Mississippi and Alabama, the continuing efforts of government officials at the state and national levels to imprison Klan members have since resulted in the indictments and convictions of the perpetrators of the murders of Medgar W. Evers and the four churchgoers killed at Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham. But the subtle and overt violence that hatred produces continues, as evidenced by the brutal murder of James Byrd by white men in Jasper, Texas; by the fires set in black churches; and by other acts of violence against African Americans.

— A. J. Williams-Myers

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KUSH

Kush is the name given to a period of Nubian history during which there were two successive capitals, Napata and Meroe. It is generally agreed that Kush extended from about 656 B.C.E. to about 642 C.E. Kush was located south of Egypt from Aswan to below Khartoum. Many Eurocentric scholars erroneously locate Kush culturally and racially outside of Africa, when it was in fact an African civilization with commonalities with other African cultures, such as divine kingship, matriarchy, and cosmology.

THE NAPATAN AND MEROITIC PERIODS

The Napatan period lasted from 1000 to 250 B.C.E. The exact location of the administrative center of Napata is unknown, but it is known that Napata was associated with the area surrounding the Gebel Barkal Mountain. The Kushite people referred to it as the *Dw w'b*, meaning “holy mountain,” and it was there that they dedicated a temple to their primary deity, Amun. The location of the city near the sacred mountain must have been very significant because royal personages were still being buried there even after the capital was moved.

The Meroitic period is dated from 250 to 350 C.E. Incorrectly called an island, Meroe was a center of trade and one of several settlements located between the second and first cataracts of the Butanna Steepe, a triangular area formed by the confluence of the Atbara and Nile rivers. The first historical record of Meroe was when it was at the height of its power. It is surmised that some event of political significance precipitated the transfer of the capital of Kush from Napata to Meroe. This transfer marked the beginning of a cultural, economic, and artistic “Imhotepean” period in the history of Kush, that is, a rebirth of artistic and political excellence.

KUSHITE RULERS

The Kushite Pharaohs were regarded as divine. Pharaohs were viewed as divine because they were indispensable to the sacred order of the universe. The coronation of a Kushite Pharaoh was not considered to be an apotheosis; it was an epiphany. The divine creator was maintaining Maatian balance and order.

The 25th dynasty, which was known as the Kushite Rejuvenation Dynasty, lasted from 747 to 656 B.C.E. and was one of the most beloved dynasties in Kemetic history. It was a period in which the Pharaohs of Kush also ruled Kemet and restored many of the monuments, reintroduced cultural rituals, and expanded agriculture.

Piankhi (or Piye) came to the throne in about 747 B.C.E. He was the first Pharaoh from Kush to conquer Kemet, and he established the foundation for the 25th Dynasty of Kemet of 747 to 656 B.C.E. Piankhi also left a thorough, well-known historical document, known as *The Victory Stele*. Initially, Piankhi ruled southern Kemet from Kush. He was asked to come to Kemet in about 734 B.C.E. to help the Kemetians subdue a local ruler of Delta, Tefnakht, who wanted to conquer Kemet. Piankhi’s narrative describes in detail how he came to rule the entire Nile Valley. Throughout *The Victory Stele*, Piankhi demonstrated impeccable piety, courage, and an unwavering belief that he was restoring Maat, order and balance, to Kemet. After each of his military conquests, he made contributions to the treasury and granary of the god Amun. This was to demonstrate his gratitude for divine assistance and to restore Amun’s temples throughout Kemet. After helping to liberate Kemet from Tefnakhte, Piankhi returned to rule from Kush. He had a fondness for horses, and when he died, Piankhi was buried with his beloved horses.

Taharqa was the biological son of Piankhi. He began his reign at the age of 20, in about 690 B.C.E., when he was beckoned by the Pharaoh Shebitku to come to Egypt. Taharqa is one of the most well-known kings of antiquity. He is mentioned in the Bible as an ally of the people of Israel in a war against the Assyrians (Isaiah 37:9). His mother, Abar, played a significant role during his reign. The relationship between King Taharqa and his mother demonstrated the honored and revered position of motherhood in Kush and other African cultures. In an African context, matriarchy denotes that kingship was determined within a matrilineal system, and while matriarchy does not imply rule of women over men (even though this is not precluded), women such as queens and queen mothers had political and economic power in matriarchies.

In the sixth year of Taharqa’s stele, he explained how for 20 years his mother nurtured and prepared him for kingship. In this text, he associates himself with divinity. In Kemetic cosmology, for example,

the goddess Auset (or Isis), through immaculate conception, conceived a son, Heru (or Horus), and then raised him to defeat the enemies of Kemet and rule as the pharaoh. Similarly, in Taharqa's stele, Abar raised him to defeat the enemies and to become king. In the stele, the respect and adoration that Taharqa has for his mother is unquestionable.

One of Taharqa's projects as pharaoh was to continue Piankhi's restoration projects. He further elevated the status of Amun-Ra's temples. Taharqa referred to himself as the divine son of Amun-Ra. Like other kings, Taharqa was portrayed as the slayer of enemies, maintainer of Maat and the epiphany of divine order.

Kandakes, Ruling Queens of Ancient Meroe

One of the unique features of Kush was that it had a series of ruling queens, known as Kandakes or Candaces. The name Kandake was a title and not a specific name. The appearance of Kandakes was a natural component of the elevated position of women in the Kushite culture, especially that of the queen mother. The first, second, and fifth rulers of the Meroe were Kandakes.

The Kandake queens were well known in the European classical world. During the tenure of Gaius Pertonius, the Roman prefect of Kemet, from 25 to 21 B.C.E., the Romans conquered Meroe, which was ruled by a Kandake queen. The evidence is not conclusive as to which Kandake it was, because Strabo (a Greek historian who left an otherwise detailed account of the battle) described the Kandake as blind in one eye but did not name her. She was probably Kandake Amanirenas or Amanishakheto. Strabo detailed how the Kandake and her generals led an inadequately prepared and scantily equipped army to counterattack the Romans. During the attack, her army pulled down statues of Roman rulers. A bronze head of the Roman Emperor Augustus, who ruled from 27 B.C.E. to 14 C.E., was probably taken during this attack, as it was found in the area that was formerly Meroe. The Kandake and her people lost the battle. However, in negotiations afterwards, she won back much of their land and possessions.

On the temple walls, the Kandakes are usually pictured as large women with long, pointed fingernails and beautiful sacred jewelry. Eurocentric scholars have described Kandake Amanishakheto and other Kandakes as obese women. However *obese* is

a value-laden, socially constructed cultural term. Traditional African culture must be viewed through the lens of spirituality. Based on the value system of many African cultures, the large size of the Kandakes probably represented productivity, motherhood, material wealth, and a powerful nation. The text and iconography suggest that the Kandakes were also considered divine rulers, as they are positioned at the same height as and next to the primary deity of Meroe, the lion god Apedemak. The fame of the Kandakes is also evident in the Kings James Version of the Bible. In the story of the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch to Christianity, his importance is affirmed by his authority under the Queen Kandake (Acts 8:26–39).

Kandake Amanishakheto ruled Meroe from about 40 to 20 B.C.E. She was buried in Pyramid N6 in Meroe, which contains one of the most remarkable finds from antiquity. The treasure of her magnificent golden jewelry is now in museums in Berlin and Munich. Kandake Amanishakheto's lofty pyramid is gilded in gold, well preserved, and about 70 feet at the base. On one of the temple walls, she is shown as a commanding woman, holding prisoners by a cord and piercing the neck of one with a javelin.

Another female ruler, Amanitere, differs from other Kandakes in that she was always associated with her husband, Natak-Amani. Their spiritual connection and right to rule were evident in their names, which are both amalgamations of Amun. The political and cultural connection of Meroe with Kemet can also be ascertained in Kandake Amanitere's names. In addition to her Meroitic name, which means "Daughter of the Sun, Lady of Diadems, Amanitere," she had an Egyptian name "The Queen of Upper Egypt, Lady of the Two Lands, Mer-Ke-Re." Amanitere was a large woman who was equated with celestial beings and associated with divine order, or Maat.

There is not much historical data about the Kandake known as Nawidemak. However, because African culture has a spiritual foundation, her position can be determined by interpreting the symbols that surround her. She was portrayed on the pyramid near the holy mountain of Gebel Barkal as being protected by Auset, who stood with her wings outstretched around the queen, who was holding a lotus flower. The lotus was a symbol of rebirth and resurrection. Wings have been a symbol of protection from at least the time of the Old Kingdom in Kemet. In her picture there was also a male figure, probably her eldest son

or another heir, who held a palm branch in his hand. The palm branch, like most symbols in African culture, has a multiplicity of meanings. It has been shown to represent time, Auset worship, and eternity. Thus, in many ways, she was shown through the symbolic meaning to be a ruling Kandake who was divinely connected to the sacred universal order.

MEROITIC WRITING

The Meroitic language of Kush had a written script. The inscriptions were in a cursivelike script and in hieroglyphic writing. Most of the signs can be interpreted phonetically, but their meaning has not been interpreted. Unless a Rosetta stone can be found that contains script in Meroitic and the same words in a deciphered language such as Greek, it will probably be a long time until the language is fully understood. Due to the synthesis of Kemetic and Kushite culture, its notable pharaohs, and the unique position of ruling women, Kush is a civilization that is vitally important to the reconstruction of African history.

— *Miriam Maat Ka Re Monges*

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KWANZAA

Kwanzaa is a 7-day African American and pan-African holiday that celebrates family, community, and culture. The holiday begins on December 26 and continues through January 1, and its name comes from the Swahili words *matunda ya kwanza*, which mean "first fruits" and indicates the holiday's roots in the first harvest celebrations recorded in African history. These harvest festivals bear various names, which reflect the language of the society in which each is celebrated. Some of these are: *Pert-en-Min* in ancient Egypt, *Umkhosi* in Zululand, *Incwala* in Swaziland, *Odwira* in Asanteland, and *Odu Ijesu* in Yorubaland. As a harvest festival, then, Kwanzaa's central message expresses the ancient African model and practice of producing, harvesting, and sharing good in the world. Key to this commitment to bringing and sustaining good in the world is practicing the *Nguzo Saba* (Seven Principles).

Indeed, at the heart of the meaning and activities of this 7-day holiday are the *Nguzo Saba*, which are aimed at reaffirming and strengthening family, community, and culture. Thus, each day of Kwanzaa is dedicated to one of the principles and is organized around activities and discussion to emphasize each principle. These principles are *Umoja* (Unity)—to strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation, and race; *Kujichagulia* (Self-Determination)—to define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves, and speak for ourselves; *Ujima* (Collective Work and Responsibility)—to build and maintain our community together and to make our brother's and sister's problems our problems and solve them together; *Ujamaa* (Cooperative Economics)—to build and maintain our own stores, shops, and other businesses and to profit from them together; *Nia* (Purpose)—to make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness; *Kuumba* (Creativity)—to do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it; *Imani* (Faith)—to believe with all our heart in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders, and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.

Although it is rooted in an ancient African history and culture, Kwanzaa was developed in 1966 in the modern context of African American life and struggle

as a reconstructed and expanded African tradition by Maulana Karenga, an activist scholar, who is currently professor of Black Studies at California State University, Long Beach. Having emerged during the black freedom movement of the 1960s, Kwanzaa reflects the movement's stress on self-determination, "return to the source," and the recovery and reaffirmation of African identity and culture. Moreover, Kwanzaa is founded and framed in Kawaida philosophy, which stresses cultural grounding, a values orientation, and an ongoing dialogue with continental and diasporic African culture in pursuit of paradigms of human excellence and human possibility. First celebrated by members and friends of the organization Us (meaning us African people), which Karenga chairs and in which the holiday developed, Kwanzaa is currently celebrated by an estimated 26 million persons throughout the world African community and on every continent in the world.

Kwanzaa, as explained by Karenga in his 1997 book *Kwanzaa: A Celebration of Family, Community and Culture*, is organized around five fundamental kinds of activities that originated in ancient African harvest or first fruit celebrations. These activities are (1) the ingathering of the people to reinforce the bonds between them, especially those of family, community, and culture; (2) special reverence for the Creator and creation in gratitude for the bountifulness and goodness of the earth and in commitment to preserving and protecting it; (3) commemoration of the past, to fulfill the obligation to remember and honor the ancestors, and to teach and reaffirm the mission and meaning of African history; (4) commitment to the highest African cultural values—the ethical and spiritual values that bring forth the best of what it means to be African and human in the fullest sense; and (5) celebration of the good—the good of life and the world, of family, community, and culture, of relationships, and of cultivating, harvesting, and sharing good in the world.

Kwanzaa has seven basic symbols that represent its origins and cultural views and values. These are the *mazao* (crops), symbolic of African harvest celebrations and of the rewards of productive and collective labor; *mkeka* (mat), symbolic of tradition and history and therefore the foundation on which to build; *kinara* (candleholder), symbolic of ancestral roots, the parent people, continental Africans; *mishumaa* (candles), symbolic of the Nguzo Saba, the Seven Principles, which form a central value system that African people

are urged to live by to enrich and expand their lives; *muhindi* (corn), symbolic of children and the future of African people that they embody; *kikombe cha umoja* (unity cup), symbolic of the foundational principle and practice of unity that makes all else possible; and *zawadi* (gifts), symbolic of the labor and love of parents and the commitments made and kept by children. There are also two supplemental symbols: a representation of the Nguzo Saba and the *bendera* (flag), containing the three colors black, red, and green, symbolic respectively of African people, the struggle, and the promise and future that come from the struggle.

Within the framework of the five overarching and general activities of Kwanzaa mentioned above, several specific practices are central to its celebration. These include the Umoja night (or daytime) gatherings at home or in the community to mark the beginning of the holiday, to pay homage to the ancestors by pouring libations and sharing the lessons of their lives and teachings, and to commit to the practice and promotion of the Nguzo Saba. This commitment to the Nguzo Saba (and other fundamental African values) is done on Umoja night, as well as on each of the 7 nights of Kwanzaa, especially at home. At the evening meal, family members light one of the seven candles each night to focus on the principles in a ritual called "lifting up the light that lasts," that is to say, upholding the *Nguzo Saba* and all the other life-affirming and enduring principles that affirm the good of life, enrich human relations, and support human flourishing.

Also, a central and culminating event is the gathering of the community on December 31 for an African *karamu* (feast) featuring libations and ceremonies honoring the ancestors, as well as narratives, poetry, music, dance, and other performances to celebrate the goodness of life, relationships, and cultural grounding.

Finally, central to the celebration of Kwanzaa is the practice of pausing and turning inward as persons and a people and thinking deeply about the wonder and obligation of being African in the world. This is done on January 1, *Siku ya Taamuli* (The Day of Meditation), which is the last day of Kwanzaa and the first day of the new year. At the heart of this process is the obligation of Africans everywhere to sit down in sober assessment, measure themselves in the mirror of the best of African culture and history, and ask themselves where they stand in relationship to the highest of African and human standards. To do this, each person must ask himself or herself three basic

questions: Who am I? Am I really who I am? and Am I all I ought to be? The person then commits or recommits to the Nguzo Saba and other fundamental African values and practices that represent and bring forth the best of what it means to be African and human in the world.

— *Maulana Karenga*

See also Kawaida; Nguzo Saba

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www.us-organization.org This is the Web site for the organization Us.

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LAST POETS

The Last Poets were poet-musicians whose music mirrored the social climate of the turbulent late 1960s and early 1970s. Best known for their provocative and politically charged messages that sometimes reflected the rhetoric of the Black Panthers, the Last Poets exhorted their listeners to become social and political activists by heeding the words in their music. Although members of the group continued to record through the late 1990s, the importance of the Last Poets lies primarily with their first recording, the landmark *Last Poets* (1970).

The group was born in May of 1968 at a fete held in Marcus Garvey Park in honor of the birthday of the late Malcolm X. Their name, the Last Poets, was taken from a poem by a South African poet. Abiodun Oyewole, David Nelson, Gylan Kain, and Felipe Luciano were among the founders; other original Last Poets were Umar Bin Hassan, Sulieman El Hadi, and Jalal Nurridin. Of the seven, Oyewole and Bin Hassan have sustained careers in the spirit of their first recordings.

From *Last Poets* (1970) to *Time Has Come* (1997), the Last Poets embodied the spirit of the griot, or African storyteller. In fact, their early music is modeled after West African practices, with its minimalist drumming and half-spoken, half-sung vocal delivery intended to accentuate the importance of the words. The group's harsh texts were meant to inform, anger, and incite and are themselves a triptych of black issues in the late 1960s: the class distinctions that divided all Americans but ostracized black Americans

in particular, the racism that continued to enslave black Americans, and a burgeoning black nationalism.

The music of the Last Poets was a clarion call to those mired in complacency. It echoed the ethos of 1960s and 1970s social activists—particularly those, like the Black Panthers and the radical faction of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee, who advocated self-sufficiency—and challenged black people to shun resignation and to think seriously about social revolution as an ideological construct.

The use of language to provoke is a hallmark of the Last Poets. The word *nigger*, which is ubiquitous in the group's music, appears as neither an egregious nor an empty gesture; rather, it is calculated to address black people's self-perceptions. In "Run Nigger," written at the height of the civil rights movement, the Last Poets ridiculed the passive tactics of the movement's leaders—"time is running out of talks, marches, tunes, chants, and prayers," as they berated black people for the meaninglessness of their lives—"run, Nigger; run like you run when the liquor store is closing and it's Saturday night." "Niggers Are Scared of Revolution" is a message to those whose words are grander than their actions, as well as a poem about self-love and social responsibility: "Niggers are lovers. Niggers love to hear Malcolm but they didn't love Malcolm. Niggers love everything but themselves. . . . I love niggers because niggers are me. And I should only love that which is part of me."

"When the Revolution Comes" parodies the lifestyle in which blacks would rather eat chicken and watch TV than acknowledge a social revolution in full swing. It applauds the actions of those committed to aggressive resistance as it denounces the acquiescence

of those who prefer peaceful dialogue—“guns and rifles will be taking the place of poems and essays.” “Two Little Boys” is a poignant tale in two parts: lost youth and black love. In this poem, we witness a day in the life of two young drug addicts who steal, get high, and eat ravenously at Sylvia’s Restaurant in Harlem. The concluding lines “oh beautiful black minds create a world where children can play with life, not death” and “oh beautiful black brothers and sisters come together to create life, to create love, to create, and to create” underscore the urgency of their desire for something better.

Given their uncompromising style, it is not surprising that the Last Poets inspired younger musicians. The messages espoused and the traditions embraced by this maverick prerap group were adopted by a host of rappers and adapted to the issues of the 1980s, 1990s, and 21st century. Many rappers—from KRS-One and Dead Prez to Ice-T and Tupac—are drawn especially to the teaching aspect of the Last Poets and have infused their music with similarly bold social and political statements meant to be heard and heeded.

— *Gail Hilson Woldu*

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LETTER FROM THE BIRMINGHAM JAIL

Letter From the Birmingham Jail by Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., was provoked by a major demonstration in Birmingham. In the summer of 1962, Fred Shuttlesworth attempted to desegregate local businesses in Birmingham, Alabama. When he was not successful, he contacted Martin Luther King, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in Atlanta, Georgia, for support. In April of 1963, a large group of activists was assembled to march in Birmingham. The aim of this march, one of their most ambitious campaigns, was to end segregation by fighting a bastion of Southern racism.

THE REASON FOR THE LETTER

On April 16, 1963, Martin Luther King, a vital and determined African American civil rights leader, and a fellow activist, Ralph Abernathy, were arrested and detained in the Jefferson County jail in Birmingham for violating a state court order to stop participating in civil rights protests. City Commissioner T. E. “Bull” Connor ordered that King and Abernathy be placed in isolation, supposedly “for their own safety.” In reality, this was a failed attempt to break their spirits; the challenge of isolation, in fact, strengthened King’s determination.

In that same year, in response to the demand for civil rights, eight clergymen—Bishop N. B. Harmon, Jr.; Bishop C.C.J. Carpenter; Bishop G. Murray; Bishop J. A. Durick; and P. Hardin, Jr.; Rabbi M. Grafman; Edward V. Ramage; and E. Stallings—issued two statements in Birmingham newspapers, one in January and one in April on the very day of King’s arrest, in which they accused “outsiders” of “unwise and untimely” protests that “incite violence.” These clergymen believed the fight against injustice should be waged exclusively in the courts.

From an isolated, cold cell King wrote an eloquent letter in response to the clergymen’s criticism. This letter, though worthy of a pharaoh’s papyrus, was written on toilet paper and the edges of newspaper and “smuggled” out of the jailhouse a few sheets at a time to Wyatt Tee Walker, SCLC’s executive director, and his secretary, Willie Pearl Mackey, who edited and publicized its content. Excerpts of the text were published on May 19 (when King was no longer in jail) in the *New York Post Sunday Magazine*. In May, the *Crisis* and many other newspapers published the whole text. The publication improved national support for the Birmingham campaign against segregation.

In the letter, King responded to the SCLC’s being called “outsiders” who promoted “unwise and untimely” protests that led to violence, expressed his disappointment in white moderates and the white church, and made clear his own position in the African American scene. King refuted the charge that he was a meddling outsider, since he was invited to Birmingham because of the injustices in the city; he saw himself as an apostle carrying the news of freedom to Birmingham. This intervention was not an overly hasty decision, as the four basic steps of all nonviolent campaigns were followed in Birmingham. First, the group determined by the facts that local bombings and racist acts meant that the march was necessary. Second, the

black community had tried to negotiate with the white community to support putting a stop to the attacks, but the promises the white community made were not kept. Third, “self-purification,” as a mental and psychological preparation for direct action, had been an ongoing process in the previous months and had finally led to the decision to take direct action. And fourth, the protest was planned and staged.

THE EFFECT OF THE LETTER

Martin Luther King was not looking to bring tension into the situation; the tension already existed because of the racist nature of the South. Moreover, direct action is always premature in the minds of those who do not accept its relevance. King’s letter was meant to free both the segregationist and the African American. He recognized, however, that freedom is never given up voluntarily by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed. King had no illusions about the new political administration, as he had experienced white moderates as a weak, unreliable ally.

In fact, throughout King’s 10-year experience in the nonviolent civil rights movement, white moderates did not provide the level of support that he expected. King said that white allies used time as an excuse for inaction, while the church was a supporter of the status quo. Instead, the Birmingham protests took on the immediacy of the movement of the sixties.

King’s letter revealed his understanding that the violation of segregation statutes was not morally wrong, that the violation of unjust laws was a measure in which good people must take pride. He compared his extremism to that of Jesus, and he harshly criticized the white church. He thought that Birmingham’s religious leaders would join him in a righteous cause. Instead, King asserted, the days when Christians were ready to suffer for justice were no more, and a weak, ineffectual voice had taken its place; too few had broken away from the conformity of the majority. This criticism was all the more harsh coming from King, himself a minister. In this letter he showed his disappointment with other ministers and white moderates.

King was well aware of his position as a moderate in the African American community. He saw himself as being in the middle—between the extremists and the forces of complacency. King dealt with the objections raised by the white ministers in Birmingham, and when he had addressed them, he closed the letter with

an appeal and a request for a blessing for the future of America. This was his eloquence and his dignity.

The effects of the letter were multifaceted. Though some of King’s fellow clergymen were left untouched, others dedicated the rest of their lives to the nonviolent struggle for the rights of African Americans. There is a general consensus, however, that the letter was meant for a much larger public—the African American community and American society; in fact, the letter was never directly sent to the clergymen. In this view, the impact of King’s irresolute action and philosophy of dignity have not ended.

— Rita S. Fierro

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“LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING”

In the United States, millions of schoolchildren begin their mornings with a ritual of reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, and singing the national anthem, “The Star Spangled Banner.” However, millions of African American schoolchildren who grew up during the era of Jim Crow practiced an alternative morning ritual. Instead of singing the traditional national anthem, they sang “Lift Every Voice and Sing.” This song became known as the “Negro National Anthem.”

THE JOHNSON BROTHERS AND THEIR SONG

Written in 1900 by the brothers James Weldon Johnson (1871–1938) and J. Rosamond Johnson

(1873–1954), the Negro National Anthem has endured the test of time and has continued to be one of the most influential African American cultural icons. The history of the Negro National Anthem begins in Jacksonville, Florida, at the turn of the 20th century. At the time that “Lift Every Voice and Sing” was composed, James Weldon Johnson was principal of Stanton Public School in Jacksonville, Florida, and J. Rosamond Johnson was a public school teacher. Both men possessed artistic flair, great poise, and an appreciation for culture, history, and politics. James received a bachelor’s degree in 1894 and a master’s degree in 1904 from Atlanta University. It was there that he began to explore his love for poetry and was exposed to the impact of organized political activism. His brother John was a gifted musician, who honed his craft at Atlanta University and at the New England Conservatory of Music. He dreamed of writing and producing musical scores on Broadway. In the close-knit Jacksonville community, the Johnson brothers’ talent did not go without recognition. Accordingly, when Jacksonville city leaders decided to plan a celebration commemorating the birthday of former president Abraham Lincoln, James Weldon Johnson was asked to make a special contribution to the program, which was held on February 12, 1900.

In his autobiography, James Weldon Johnson recounts the circumstances surrounding the composition of “Lift Every Voice and Sing.” He was asked to give an address at Jacksonville’s planned celebration of Lincoln. He intended to also write a poem as an additional honor to Lincoln. However, as the time for the program drew nearer, James found he could not gather the inspiration to write the poem. In a final attempt to produce a fitting tribute to the former president, James recruited his brother Rosamond to collaborate with him in writing an original song for the assembly. They wrote “Lift Every Voice and Sing” in one night. As James called out and wrote down prose, his brother set the words to music. The brothers immediately sent the manuscript to their New York publishers, where it was copied. The Johnsons then taught the song to a choir of 500 African American children who had been gathered especially for the celebration of Lincoln’s birthday.

THE SONG GOES NATIONAL

Although they were moved by the passionate experience of writing this song, the Johnsons did not realize the composition’s potential for endurance. They moved

to New York shortly after the Lincoln celebration and set out to become Broadway playwrights. Much to James and Rosamond’s surprise, their lyrical tribute to African American determination developed a life of its own after they departed Jacksonville. Schoolchildren continued singing and teaching “Lift Every Voice and Sing” to others in Southern black churches, schools, and civic clubs. Soon, the song became quite popular in this region. It was so highly favored that the words and score were often hand copied and pasted into the backs of existing church hymnals and choir books. The Johnsons had the composition published and copyrighted, but it is likely that the song was most widely disseminated by these communally driven methods.

The Negro National Anthem is, in fact, complex—especially when one considers that it was initially written as a children’s choir song. It has resonant and haunting lyrics that speak frankly of the harsh realities of African American life. James Weldon Johnson’s prose does not avoid delicate subject matter, and the lyrics often allude to physical and psychological violence. He mentions the “chastening rod” and the “blood of the slaughtered” to honor the sacrificial death of African American ancestors who toiled and prayed for their children to have a bright future. Rosamond Johnson added an intricate melody to the difficult subject matter of “Lift Every Voice and Sing.” The composition has a varied tempo and wide-ranging pitch, and it lacks the chorus that makes hymns easier to recall. Yet, it was originally written for and performed by a group of children, and children’s choirs are credited with spreading the song throughout the South and eventually the North by the 1920s.

THE JOHNSON BROTHERS CONTINUE TO CONTRIBUTE

In 1920, James Weldon Johnson was appointed as the first black Executive Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). He served in this capacity until 1930. Johnson’s influence led “Lift Every Voice and Sing” to be adopted as the official song of the NAACP sometime in the 1920s. By then, “Lift Every Voice and Sing” had become a popularized tune that was familiar to millions of African Americans. It proved to be a fitting clarion call for the civil rights organization, thus solidifying its role as a freedom and protest song sung during marches, demonstrations, and protests for civil rights.

James Weldon Johnson went on to become a consummate teacher, lawyer, writer, and activist. He was the first African American to pass the bar in the state of Florida, and the first African American professor at New York University. He also served as a diplomat, becoming the American consul in Puerto Cabello, Venezuela, in 1906. In 1909, he secured another post in foreign affairs and was appointed as consul in Corinto, Nicaragua. He was a major influence during the Harlem Renaissance, and in all his endeavors, he championed the African American struggle for freedom. Some of his most famous works include *The Books of American Negro Spirituals* (1925, 1926), *God’s Trombones: Seven Negro Sermons in Verse* (1927), and *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* (1912).

His brother Rosamond fulfilled his dream of becoming a successful songwriter. In New York, he and James formed a dynamic songwriting team with the African American composer Bob Cole. Together Cole and the Johnson brothers wrote over 200 songs. Rosamond Johnson went on to write the music and conduct the orchestra for the 1911 revue *Hello Paris*. This marked the first time an African American had ever conducted a white orchestra for a performance with a white cast in a New York theater. Rosamond Johnson edited numerous collections of African American music. His goal was to elevate the standards of black music, an aspiration which “Lift Every Voice and Sing” certainly fulfills.

THE SONG BECOMES CULTURE

The practice of singing the Negro National Anthem continues today. It is part of the official repertoire of any gospel choir, and it can now be found as a standard selection in many church hymnals. This anthem has endured because it honestly reflects a bleak past, yet remains hopeful for a triumphant future. Thus, whether it is being sung by a choir of a thousand or recited as a poem by one person, “Lift Every Voice and Sing” is a tradition that has had a lasting historical and cultural influence on the state of race relations in this nation.

LYRICS TO THE NEGRO NATIONAL ANTHEM, “LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING”

Lift every voice and sing, till earth and heaven ring,
 Ring with the harmonies of liberty;
 Let our rejoicing rise, high as the listening skies,
 Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.

Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,

Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;

Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,

Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod, bitter the chastening rod,
 Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;

Yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet,

Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?

We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,

We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered;

Out from the gloomy past, till now we stand at last

Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,

Thou Who hast brought us thus far on the way;

Thou Who hast by Thy might, led us into the light,

Keep us forever in the path, we pray.

Lest our feet stray from the places, our God,
 where we met Thee.

Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world,
 we forget Thee.

Shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand,

True to our God, true to our native land.

— Aisha Francis

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LUCUMI TRADITION

The word *Lucumi* refers to the Afro-Cuban manifestation of Yoruba in Cuba and on the North American continent, as well as to the practitioners of Yoruba in those regions. During the latter half of the 18th century, a large number of enslaved Africans were taken to Cuba from the home of the Yoruba in southwestern Nigeria. These Africans were indigenous to the Yoruba kingdoms of Oyo, Egbado, and Ijesha and brought the beliefs, traditions, and philosophies of Yoruba to Cuba.

There was diversity to the traditions of Yoruba. In Africa this diversity was seen in the regional variations among the Oyo, Egbado, and Ijesha. However, due to the European slave trade, and many years of interaction between the diverse groups, the groups merged in the Americas to form one common tradition. The result of this unity was the religious practice of *La Regla de Osha Lucumi* (which translates as “The Rule of the Lucumi Orishas,” or the rule of the Lucumi deities). This unification of various Yoruba traditions in Cuba did not in any way affect the theology and metaphysics of Yoruba-speaking people in southwestern Nigeria or the regional variations in their traditions.

Although the elders of this community were enslaved, they still managed to organize and standardize the ceremony and ritual of the present Lucumi tradition. This organized effort addressed the new geographical and social realities that practitioners of the religion faced in the Western hemisphere. Because of the favorable climate for African social and political integration in Cuba, the Yoruba in Cuba were able to maintain much of the ritual and ceremonial integrity of the religion. However, on the continent of Africa, British colonialism fostered Christianity, Islam sent jihadists into West Africa, and internal conflicts decimated the Old Oyo Empire of ancient Yorubaland. Thus, while the fundamental principles of the Yoruba tradition are adhered to by all practitioners throughout the African world, including continental Africa and the diaspora in South America and elsewhere, there are some rituals and ceremonies that have disappeared over time.

Yet Lucumi remains a strong tradition in Cuba. Analysis and comparison of the Yoruba chants, initiations, rites, and aesthetics show that Lucumi manifestations are the preserved form of the traditions of Old Yoruba. Because the social and political changes that have taken place on the continent of Africa have

affected the modern day expression of the Yoruba tradition, researchers now claim that Cuba holds an older expression of the religion in the Lucumi tradition. There also are many similarities to Yoruba found in the Xango tradition of Trinidad, the Candomble of Brazil, and the Santeria of Puerto Rico. In addition, the Lucumi tradition itself has spread outside Cuba to Venezuela, Panama Colombia, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Spain, Virgin Islands, Curaçao, Canada, Costa Rica, France, Germany, Sweden, and Great Britain. Today the Lucumi tradition is the most widely practiced form of Yoruba. In fact, in the United States, 90% of the orisha worship originated with the Lucumi tradition in Cuba.

— Tyrene Wright

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LYNCHING

White mobs are known to have lynched 3,386 African Americans during the period between Reconstruction and the passage of the civil rights acts. *Lynching* is defined as execution without due process of law, usually by hanging. In fact, the practice of lynching is more accurately described as a manifestation of the depravity and inhumanity of those Southern whites who participated in or condoned the vile practice and of the Northern whites who responded to the travesty of justice with apathy. Lynch mobs typically comprised members of all classes of a given Southern white community, including women, children, and prominent business and government and religious leaders, as well as the working class men with whom the savagery is traditionally associated. These mobs took part in the castration, burning alive, gouging of eyes, and hanging of anyone who was charged with a crime against whites, whether or not the accused was

guilty of what was charged. The majority of the lynching victims were male; however, some African American women were lynched as well. The reported figure of 3,386 people lynched excludes the countless cases that went unreported.

Antilynching activism was, by necessity, an effort of persuasion. Popular belief, influenced by the white press, held that lynching was a justified response to the rape of white women by black men. But the cry of rape was meant to stifle the cry for liberation and freedom among blacks. Black activists worked diligently to redress this misconception and mobilize opposition to the injustice of lynching. Their empirical studies revealed that rape was not the most common charge against those who were lynched and that the justification for lynching—to protect the virtue of Southern white women—veiled its actual motivation, which was to crush black economic success, halt black activism, and perpetuate white dominance. Rape was charged in about a third of the cases, and those accusations were specious. In an appeal, Frederick Douglass asked how it was possible that men who had traditionally been left alone with white women and children might suddenly be prone to rape. And he asserted that black men convicted of crimes were sure to receive swift justice through due process of law, making the supposed need for “mob justice” unnecessary. For nearly 100 years, the tireless efforts of African Americans to persuade white Americans to help pass antilynching legislation were met primarily with opposition and apathy.

While activists continued in their efforts to eradicate lynching, the emerging discipline of American social science cast its light on lynching and turned tragedy into a popular topic of research. The intent of sociological, economic, and psychological theories to

explain lynching resulted in what appears justification for the brutality. The compartmentalized views of the various disciplines further dislocated scholarship from concern with injustice, immorality, and murder. Lynching may be understood as a scapegoating ritual in which white communities projected their fears, repression, and evil onto innocent black men to purge themselves of sin and guilt. This insight directs attention to the essential question: How were Southern whites capable of such depravity in their action and Northern whites capable of such inaction? The obvious answer is that the enslavement of African Americans dehumanized white Americans.

— *Kismet Beckman*

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African life, many have embraced Maat as principle and practice for achieving this. In his major work on the subject, *Maat, the Moral Ideal in Ancient Egypt: A Study in Classical African Ethics* (2004), Maulana Karenga discusses the evolution and essential tenets of this ancient and renewed tradition. Furthermore, he has translated and edited ancient Egyptian sacred texts and compiled them in a sacred text called *The Husia: Sacred Wisdom of Ancient Egypt*. The text takes its name from the ancient Egyptian for the two divine powers by which the creator conceived and called the world into being. They are *Hu*—“authoritative utterance” and *Sia*—“exceptional insight.” Thus, the name *Husia* means “authoritative utterance of exceptional insight.” For in the creation process, Ra conceives the world in his heart-mind and calls it into being with the word. In the renewed Maatian tradition, the name reaffirms the authoritative, deeply insightful, and sacred character of the text.

Some of the basic concepts in the Maatian tradition are addressed in the *Husia*, such as the human as the image of God; the dignity of the human; the requirement of standing worthy before God, nature, and others; the necessity of moral and social excellence, especially as expressed in the Seven Cardinal Virtues, the Declarations of Virtue, and the Declarations of Innocence; the essentiality of service; the cultivation of the *sedjem*ic person; and the concepts of judgment, justification, and immortality.

The renewed Maatian tradition takes as its fundamental point of departure the concept that humans are bearers of *divinity* and *dignity*. These two terms are interlocked as they evolve from the oldest recorded evidence of moral and spiritual teachings that humans are in the image of God. This concept was first advanced in 2140 B.C.E. in the Book of Kheti in the *Husia*, which says “humans are the images of God” (*snn ntr*, *senen netcher*) and came from his very person. From this evolved the concept of the inherent worthiness or dignity (*špsw*, *shepesu*) of human beings. It is a transcendental and equal worthiness that cannot be denied or diminished by social status or any other external condition or attribute. This concept of human dignity is clearly stressed in the *Husitic* text, in the Narrative of Djedi, in which the sage Djedi tells the king he can neither experiment on nor kill a nameless prisoner. For the prisoner, in spite of his dishonored status, is still a noble (*shepes*) image of God.

Worthiness (*im3h*, *imakh*) before God, nature, and others is essential to the Maatian moral project. It

represents a concept of the interrelatedness of moral worthiness in every area of life. Thus, to stand worthy before God means and requires a worthiness in relation to and before nature and other humans. This is based again on the concept of Maat as an interrelated order of rightness. In King Unas’s text in the *Husia*, Unas says that he comes before God, standing worthy, bearing Maat, free of accusation by any divine being, bird, beast, or human—living or dead. Thus, he seeks to justify his quest for immortality by worthiness before God, nature, and humans.

Worthiness before humans and nature is achieved by practice of the Seven Cardinal Virtues and other virtues in the Declaration of Virtues and the Declarations of Innocence in the *Husia*, which leads to the development of character. In addition, worthiness before nature requires practice based on the concept of *srwd t3*, *serudj ta*—the moral obligation to constantly repair, heal, and restore the world—making it more beautiful and beneficial than it was when it was inherited. More expansively, it means to raise up that which is in ruins, to repair that which is damaged, to rejoin that which is severed, to replenish that which is lacking, to set right that which is wrong, to strengthen that which is weakened, and to make flourish that which is fragile and undeveloped. Thus, Rediu Khnum in the *Husia* says, “I restored what I found ruined. I rejoined what I found severed and I replenished what I found depleted (or lacking).” Likewise, Petosiris says, “I made magnificent what I found ruined in its place. I restored what was damaged.” And Ramses III asserts, “I restored the whole land.”

Service, especially to the most vulnerable in the community and society, is a central tenet of Maatian ethics. Here, other directedness is seen as central to our moral and spiritual grounding as humans and to creating and sustaining the good society and world. It is this ancient tradition which argued that one can measure the moral quality of a society by how it treats its most vulnerable members. Therefore, the *Husia* says we should give “bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, clothes to the naked and a boat to crossover for the boatless; be a father to the orphan, a mother to the timid, a help to the widow, a shelter for the battered, a staff of support for those of old age, a refuge for the wretched, a raft for the drowning and a ladder for those in the pit [of despair].” Moreover, in the *Husia*, Seba Ankhsheshonqi says: “Serve God that he may protect you. Serve your brothers and sisters that you may enjoy a good reputation. Serve a wise person that s/he may serve you. Serve

anyone who serves you. Serve any person that you may benefit from it and serve your mother and father that you may go forward and prosper.”

A CULTIVATION OF THE SEDJEMIC PERSONALITY

The Maatian moral tradition also seeks to cultivate the *sedjemic* or hearing person, as opposed to the *sekhetic* or nonhearing person. The expansive meaning of the word *sdm, sedjem*—“to hear, listen”—is to be responsive and responsible. Thus, a *sedjemic* person is responsive to and responsible toward the divine, nature, and others, in contrast to the *sekhetic* person, who is unresponsive and irresponsible. Seba Ptahhotep teaches that “hearing is better than everything,” for “it creates good will.” Moreover, in the Declarations of Innocence, one asserts as part of her or his justification, “I have not been deaf to truth [Maat],” which is a parallel claim to the declaration “I have not been blind to injustice.” This deafness to truth is another way of saying being unresponsive to the demands and requirements of Maat. And the responsiveness called for are deeds that respond to human need, sensitivity to the needs of the environment, and deference to the will of the divine.

Both deafness to Maat and what the Book of Khunanpu calls “blind[ness] to what one should see” (i.e., *isfet*, meaning “wrongness, injustice”) are metaphors for moral insensitivity and ethical unresponsiveness and irresponsibility to others. Thus Maatian ethics argues that persons with such blindness are disabled in their humanity and vitiate moral community. This ethics of responsiveness is rooted in a deep appreciation for the virtue of reciprocity. A locus classicus of this stress on the reciprocal nature of good is found in the text of Lady Ta-Aset, who says, “doing good is not difficult. In fact, just speaking good is a monument for those who do it. [Indeed] those who do good for others are actually doing it for themselves.” They are in fact building the moral community and good world they and all others want and deserve to live in.

Finally, the renewed Maatian ethical tradition embraces the ancient concept of judgment that carries with it two other interrelated concepts, justification and immortality. These three concepts, along with the idea of humans as bearers of divinity and dignity, represent some of ancient Egypt’s and thus Africa’s most significant and enduring ethical and spiritual legacies

to humanity. The concept of judgment after death, as moral theorists have argued, represented a major development in the moral thought of humanity and acted as a counterweight and check on the excesses of holders of absolute power on earth. As early as the Book of Unas in the *Husia*, the pharaoh recognizes that he is subject to the demands of Maat and says he comes before the creator after death, wishing to be judged by what he has done and given eternal life in reward for his righteousness.

A PROCESS OF JUDGMENT

The definitive text for the judgment, justification, and granting of eternal life is The Book of Coming Forth By Day, especially Chapter 125. In it, the day of judgment is called the “Day of Assessing Characters” and the “Day of Great Reckoning.” This again reveals a stress on virtue and character as expressed in the Declarations of Virtue and the Declarations of Innocence. In the process of judgment, the resurrected person must declare himself or herself innocent of offenses against God, nature, and others. These declarations are known as the Declarations of Innocence and are mainly declarations of innocence of offenses against other humans. In fact, the first declaration is “I have not done evil to humans.” But, as noted above, these offenses, like the realms of existence and obligation—the divine, nature, and society, are inter-related and thus offenses in any realm have implications in the others.

In conclusion, the quest for immortality is a desire not only to live in the afterlife of the spirit world but also to continue as a powerful presence on earth through a legacy of work and service, and thus to endure in the minds of the people. This is succinctly stated in the *Husia* in the text of Satephu, which says, “A glorious spirit in heaven, a continuing power on earth, justification in God’s domain, resurrection after death. These are the rewards of the righteous person and a righteous person is one who receives them. He will be counted among the ancestors. His name will endure as a monument. And what he has done on earth shall never perish or pass away.” It is within this framework that practitioners who follow the Way of Maat cultivate character, serve the people, and leave a legacy worthy of an enduring presence and praise both in heaven and on earth.

—Maulana Karenga

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MALI EMPIRE

The Mali Empire, located around the upper boundaries of the Senegal and the Niger rivers, was the second and vastest of the three great empires in West Africa. The empire lasted from 1235 until about 1468 and was responsible for uniting the vast interior of West Africa—a mostly inhospitable region of forests, mountains, savanna, and desert—and home to a rich diversity of peoples, including nomads, traders, farmers, fishermen, and cattle herders. Mali surpassed the earlier Empire of Ghana in both wealth and influence. Whereas Ghana had flourished by trading West African gold with the Arabs across the Sahara, Mali controlled both the trade and the mining of that gold. The region had never known such unity and prosperity. To understand the history of Africa, an understanding of Mali is essential. Though the topic of state formation has been a subject of debate in African Studies, it is undeniable that Mali became one of the huge states of premodern Africa, with a complex governmental structure headed by the king and other bureaucrats.

At the peak of its existence, the Mali Empire extended across West Africa to the Atlantic Ocean and included over 50 million people. Administering such a vast territory was a formidable task that its founders managed by establishing a government sensitive to the diversity of the land, population, and cultures and accepting the indigenous rulers and their customs. In essence, Mali was distinguished by its ability to centralize political and military power while allowing the local rulers to maintain their identities alongside Islam.

SUNDIATA KEITA'S REIGN

The historical founder of the Mali Empire was the magician Sundiata Keita (also known as Sundjata or Mari Diata), one of the most legendary figures in African history. He is also referred to as the cultural hero and ancestor of the Mande (also known as the Mandinka, Malinke, or Manding) people. Born in approximately 1210, Sundiata was the son of Nare Maghan, the ruler of Kangaba, a small state situated on the upper Niger River. He may have left Kangaba as a measure of voluntary exile to avoid a jealous half brother, or he may have been exiled by Sumanguru Kante, king of the Soso, who killed Sundiata's father and took over the kingdom.

Sundiata responded to the yearnings of his people to return to Kangaba to help them regain their independence. He assembled a coalition of Mande chiefs and, in 1235, he led them to victory in the Battle of Kirina. According to legend, Sundiata triumphed because he was a stronger magician than his opponent Sumanguru was. This victory marked the beginning of the Mali Empire. After overpowering the Soso, Sundiata merged his authority with the Mande people and established a strong centralized monarchy. Sundiata was both a real historical personage and a cultural hero, and his rise to power is still celebrated in the Mande-speaking world by *jalis* (often translated as “griots”). *Jalis* are individuals who inherited and acquired special knowledge about history, genealogies, and music and have historically performed a variety of social and political roles that they continue to perform today.

Sundiata expanded the state by adding to it the former Ghana Empire, with its West African gold fields. He built his capital at Niani, which was his home region. Under Sundiata, Mali gained fame and economic strength by controlling the region's trade routes and gold fields. Although he was a Muslim, Sundiata allowed the people to practice their traditional religions. Thus, the territory controlled by Mali comprised three distinct regions: the Senegal region with people speaking Niger-Kongo languages, the central Mande states occupied by Soninke and Mande, and the region of Gao that was occupied by people who spoke Songhay.

Gold was not Mali's only mainstay, though it was one of the most lucrative. Mali also profited from the salt trade over which it had established control. Its capital, Niani, was situated on the agriculturally rich

floodplain of the upper Niger River, with good grazing land farther north. Thus a class of traders emerged in Mali, some of whom were of Mande origin, while others were Bambara, Soninke, and Dyula. In the 14th century, cowrie shells were established in Mali as a form of currency for trading and taxation purposes as Mali continued to prosper. The Mali Empire was built from its monopolization of the trade routes from western and southern Africa to eastern and northern Africa. Though located farther south than Ghana, the Malians lived in an agriculturally fertile land. However, the bulk of the gold trade proceeded up the Niger River, and this gave Mali a firm grip on this lucrative monopoly.

MANSA KANKAN MUSA'S REIGN

Although Mali flourished in economic wealth and influence under Sundiata, it was under Mansa Kankan Musa that the empire attained the peak of its prosperity. His reign from 1307 to 1337 has often been viewed as the “golden age” of Mali, in both literal and figurative terms. Mansa Musa, the most significant of the Mali kings, expanded Mali's influence over the large Niger city-states of Timbuktu, Gao, and Djenne. Under him, Timbuktu became one of the major cultural centers not only of Africa but also of the entire world. Also, under his patronage, vast libraries were built and Islamic universities were endowed. Thus, Timbuktu became a meeting place of the finest poets, scholars, and artists of Africa and the Middle East.

Mansa Musa's wealth became legendary, supported by a gold trade with exports that placed Mali at the center of world history. He was a devout Muslim who built magnificent mosques all throughout the Mali sphere of influence, and his gold-laden pilgrimage to Mecca made him a historical figure as West Africa came to be regarded in the whole wide world as a fabled land of riches. Mansa Musa extended the Mali Empire over an area larger than Western Europe during his reign.

THE DECLINE OF THE EMPIRE

After the death of Mansa Musa, the Mali Empire began to decline. A combination of weak and inefficient rulers and increasingly aggressive raids from its neighbors greatly reduced its powers. In 1430, the Tuareg Berbers in the north seized some of Mali's cities, including Timbuktu. Barely a decade later, the

Mossi kingdom to the south took over a sizable part of southern Mali. Also, the kingdom of Gao, which had been under the authority of Mali under the rule of Mansa Musa, gave rise to a Songhay kingdom that eventually eclipsed the renowned power of Mali.

The memory of the ancient Mali Empire still echoes today in the activities of the griots—the professional historians, praise singers, and musical entertainers among the Mande people. Today, the Mande are spread over the modern West African states of Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Senegal, Burkina Faso, and the Gambia. They do not enjoy the level of political unity they experienced under the historical Mali Empire, but they have maintained a remarkably unified culture. This is perhaps due to the Mali people's great admiration of their past, and the griots on whom they rely to remind them about their glorious place in history. Of all the griot histories, the most revered is that which tells the story of Sundiata Keita, the founder and first king of the Mali Empire.

— David Shachia Agum

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MARCH ON WASHINGTON

In Washington, D.C., on August 28, 1963, more than 250,000 people gathered for a march that to this day is said to be the largest gathering on the Lincoln Memorial and the largest demonstration for human rights in U.S. history. People gathered for the March on Washington in the name of freedom. The march, which included all people from all walks of life, was organized for jobs and civil rights for African Americans. This nonviolent event included prayer,

song, and one of the most influential speeches of this nation's history—Reverend Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech. Organized by what the press called "the big six," A. Phillip Randolph, President of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; Whitney Young, President of the National Urban League (NUL); Roy Wilkins, President of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); James Farmer, Founder and President of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE); John Lewis, President of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC); and Martin Luther King, Jr., Founder and President of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).

THE MOVING SPIRIT OF A. PHILLIP RANDOLPH

March originator A. Phillip Randolph, whose interest was jobs for African Americans, had attempted to plan a mass march on Washington in 1941. In response, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who was fearful of such a massive march, intervened by quickly signing an executive order banning discrimination in the defense industries and creating the Fair Employee Practice Committee. Randolph's vision would not be signed away that easily, however. In 1962, Randolph met with Bayard Rustin, who would become the deputy director of the march, and they decided that the focus of the march should be economic equality. At the time, the country was still feeling the ripple effects of the recession of 1959, and over a million African Americans were looking for work. In fact, the black unemployment rate was twice as high as the white unemployment rate.

However, with the mass violence in Birmingham, Alabama, and President John F. Kennedy's civil rights bill still stuck in limbo in Congress, the scope of the march changed to equality in regard to civil rights as well as jobs. On June 11, 1963, the same day that Kennedy made his civil rights speech, and a day before the murder of civil rights leader Medgar Evers, King announced plans for the march to the press.

Some NAACP and NUL members were leery of getting involved in the march, fearing it would be a violent and controversial event, while groups like SNCC and CORE, who were a little more radical, insisted on controversy. But by June all six organizations had agreed to participate. With just 2 months to plan the event, Rustin and his team of CORE

volunteers managed to pull together a well-organized march. The official budget for the march was only \$120,000. Buttons were sold for 25 cents each and contributions came in from around the country to fund the march. A portfolio-style memento was also sold, with *Life* magazine photographs of dog attacks, homes destroyed by fire, and other civil rights movement pictures; the book was sold for \$1 and 40,000 were printed. Celebrities also participated in the cause to raise money. The Friday prior to the march a fundraiser concert was put on at the Apollo Theatre in Harlem and well-known artists participated—Josephine Baker, Thelonious Monk, Herbie Mann, Quincy Jones, and Tony Bennet. James Baldwin and Burt Lancaster led a march in Paris in support of the March in Washington. President Kennedy tried to persuade the leaders of the event to cancel the march, saying, "We want success in Congress, not just a big show at the Capitol. . . . Yes, I'm for the bill, but I am damned if I will vote for it at the point of a gun." When he was unable to stop the march, he publicly supported it.

SECURITY CONCERNS

Police officers were put on high alert, as officials in Washington, D.C., were concerned about violence erupting during the march. Local police and suburban officers were all given riot control training in preparation for the event and then called to duty on the day of the march. Due to the recent events in Birmingham, where blacks had been attacked by police with water hoses, batons, and violent dogs, police dogs were prohibited, as was the sale of alcohol for the entire day—for the first time since Prohibition. Officials studied 70 different emergency patterns and placed nearly 15,000 paratroopers on standby. The police secretly rigged the sound system to enable them to pull the plug on it—in case of any violence, they said. In addition, FBI director J. Edgar Hoover and other officials tried to sabotage the march numerous times by tapping the phones of both King and march organizer Rustin in the months before the event and, on the morning of the march, by tapping the phones of celebrities in a last minute attempt to force them to withdraw from participating in the march.

But no matter how many wished defeat on the March on Washington, through determination and by their sheer number, the people triumphed. They arrived on August 28 in cars, freedom buses, and freedom trains. A man from Chicago rollerskated the

entire trip to Washington, D.C. Media attention to the march was larger than it had ever been for a demonstration. All the major networks were present at the march, and the media spent over \$300,000 to broadcast the event. It was also the first of its kind to be televised all over the world. New York's Penn Station reported the largest early morning crowd since the end of World War II. CORE members from Brooklyn walked 230 miles over a span of 13 days. By 11:00 that morning, more than 200,000 people were at the Washington Monument. There a stage was set up for the performances of artists such as Bob Dylan, Odetta, and Peter, Paul, and Mary. By noon, restless demonstrators had begun to march toward the Lincoln Memorial. March organizers rushed to the front of the thrilled demonstrators to lead. The marchers were walking and swaying side-to-side singing "We Shall Overcome." At the Lincoln Memorial Mall, people wore signs that read "We march for first class citizens rights now" and "We march for jobs for all now!"

Archbishop Patrick O'Boyle presented the invocation and then the speeches began. The irony in what was said that day was that even though the march was partially endorsed by President John F. Kennedy's Civil Rights Bill, some speakers spoke out against the bill, criticizing it as incomplete. NAACP president Roy Wilkins cried out to President Kennedy to be more active in working for the civil rights of African Americans; he also spoke about past NAACP president W.E.B Du Bois who had died that morning in Ghana. Whitney Young spoke about underdeveloped black schools and the role that the students must take to fight for their education. One of the most controversial speeches of that day was made by 23-year-old John Lewis. He said that if blacks did not receive "meaningful legislation," they would march through the South (Randolph replaced "the heart of the Dixie" in the original speech with "through the South"). Lewis's speech was interrupted 4 times by the energetic crowd—people stood on their feet in support of what Lewis was saying. Speakers spoke all day about the inequalities of the South and the North and the injustice that African Americans experience in America.

MORAL LEADERSHIP OF THE MARCH

After Mahalia Jackson sang "I've Been Buked and I've Been Scorned," Randolph introduced King as the moral leader of a nation. Martin Luther King stepped to the podium to deliver a speech he had prepared just

for the occasion, but halfway into the speech King raised his head up from his notes and began to improvise a new speech, what is said to be one of the greatest speeches in American history. He told the crowd of his dream that his children could one day live in a nation where they would be judged not on the color of their skin but on the content of their character. He said, "When we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual: Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"

It is an understatement to say that demonstrators just protested on that day; they made history. No other speech made during the civil rights movement is as famous as King's, and no other demonstration for peace in U.S. history has been larger than the March on Washington. In his speech and advocacy for equality and peace, King delivered a message that was felt from the demonstrators who sat on Lincoln's Mall all the way to Capitol Hill. It is said that after King spoke, the crowd dispersed and A. Phillip Randolph stood on the platform alone. As Rustin looked on, he told his friend that it looked like *his* dream came true and Randolph replied that it was the most beautiful and glorious day of his life.

— Thysha M. Shabazz

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MARIE LAVEAU

Marie Laveau was a 19th-century spiritual figure of immense power and prestige in New Orleans,

Louisiana. She appeared to transcend restrictions based on class, gender, race, and status under enslavement conditions via an African spiritual system called Vodou (which is also spelled Vodou and Voodoo).

Marie Laveau was born in 1801 in New Orleans. Her mother, Marguerite Darcantel, was a healer of African and Native American heritage. Her father, Charles Laveau, was a plantation owner who served in the state legislature. Her grandmother, Marguerite Semard, was from the Congo. In 1819, she married Jacques Paris, a freedman, who disappeared shortly after their marriage. She later enjoyed a common law marriage to Louis Christophe Duminy de Glapion, also a freedman. In 1826, she became a hairdresser whose clients included the wives and mistresses of New Orleans's wealthiest men. In 1830, Laveau had become an established Vodou spiritual leader. Using knowledge passed down to her within Vodou, she was a healer, herbalist, diviner, and doctor until her death on June 15, 1881.

Vodou is a powerful form of ancient African spirituality that a significant population of enslaved Africans brought with them when they came to New Orleans. Legislative attempts to suppress Vodou appear in the historical records from before the Louisiana Purchase until after Reconstruction. Vodou was feared and thus vilified by officials in New Orleans, and people of African descent suspected of practicing it were closely monitored. Vodou adherents were imprisoned, tortured, whipped, and murdered. Laws such as the black codes were passed to regulate the behavior of Africans and prevent them from building altars, congregating for spiritual purposes, making ritual drums, and speaking any African languages. Enslaved Africans were encouraged to report one another to authorities. Many Africans feigned a superficial Christian conversion and continued to practice Vodou in secret.

The spiritual system takes its name from the African word *vodu*, which translates as “god,” “spirit,” “serving or following the spirits,” or “the snake under whose auspices gather all who share the faith.” The snake represents balance, clairvoyance, life force, and wisdom. According to Vodou, events are causal, linked to one another through an intricate network of cosmological interdependence. An omnipresent creator is manifested through myriad intermediary ancestral and nature spirits. These spirits can bring good or harm, and they must be honored in rituals that recognize these sacred interrelationships in order for the Vodou

practitioner to maintain her or his spiritual balance. Power in Vodou is marked by spirituality and knowledge, and not by controlling people or the elements. Vodou operates in all aspects of people's lives, such as economics, ethics, health, interpersonal relationships, and safety.

Africans who were brought to New Orleans originally came from a number of African ethnic groups, and so Vodou developed in a unique way as it mixed practices from many African ethnic groups from all parts of Africa. Ironically, enslavers who were threatened by Vodou actually encouraged its globalization. African spirituality was transplanted with Africans in America, and the cruel treatment they received under chattel enslavement encouraged even stronger spiritual faith. In New Orleans, Vodou was spiritual resistance to enslavement in its promotion of African identity.

Vodou rituals were held secretly at Bayou St. John, at Lake Pontchartrain, and in private homes rather than publicly. Congo Square was the only place in New Orleans where enslaved Africans could legally gather, and this was permissible only intermittently throughout the history of the city. As consistent surveillance was not conducive to the esoteric nature of Vodou, Africans practiced Vodou clandestinely and came to Congo Square to socialize and celebrate African heritage through dances such as the Bamboula and the Calinda.

MARIE LAVEAU'S VODU PRACTICE

Marie Laveau conducted rituals in the backyard of her house on St. Ann Street, as well as at Maison Blanche, her home on the shore of Lake Pontchartrain. In addition to presiding over Vodou rituals, Laveau offered relief to those who came to her privately. Clients consulted her about all sorts of problems relating to fertility, finances, health, legal matters, love, luck, and protection. She supplied guidance and spiritual amulets—called gris-gris, ju-ju, or mojo—which were used to ask for the intervention of certain spirits to cause certain events to occur or as protection. She also enlisted the use of altars, anointing oils, baths, brick dust, candles, colognes, dolls, floor washes, incense, powders, seals, soaps, statues, and talismans in her practice. Through her practice of Vodou, and her prescriptions requiring patients' willing participation, Laveau taught people that they were agents in their own well-being.

Vodu recognizes the interconnectedness of nature and spirit, so in Vodou herbs play a significant role in sustaining good health. Laveau used her medicinal skill and herbal knowledge to tend to those wounded in the Battle of New Orleans. She was asked by the city of New Orleans to help with those stricken by the epidemics rampant during the 1850s, which infected people with yellow fever, cholera, malaria, and smallpox. Marie Laveau was an intelligent businesswoman. She was given gifts and paid money for her successful assistance with the problems people brought to her. Her home on St. Anne Street was reputedly one of those payments. Laveau altruistically shared this wealth; she supported her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. She also took people in need of assistance into her home. She visited prisoners, those who were sick as well as those who were awaiting execution, and brought them food and helped them build altars in their cells.

People of African descent, whether enslaved or free, were considered insignificant in New Orleans and thus often were privy to the personal affairs of the city's most prominent citizens. Enslaved and free Africans informed Marie Laveau of what they learned, and, as a hairdresser, she herself learned much firsthand from her white clientele's gossip. Laveau used this knowledge of the power structure in New Orleans, as well as her talent as a Vodou practitioner, to protect and maintain Vodou. People of European descent were among Laveau's clients and ritual participants. Her expertise and knowledge earned her friendship and acceptance, and she used her social position to encourage continuation of African spirituality.

Neither Marie Laveau's predecessors—Sanite Dede, Carlos, John Montenet, and Dr. Yah Yah—nor her contemporaries—among them Malvina Latour, James Alexander, and even Laveau's own daughter, Marie Philomene Laveau Glapion—attained the unification of the Vodou community in New Orleans that Laveau had expertly accomplished. Marie Laveau was entombed in St. Louis Cemetery, and although it has been more than a century since her passing, gifts and offerings including alcohol (red anisette liqueur and rum), bags, beads, bones, candles, candy, cigarettes, cigars, coins, flowers, food, herbs, money, and various other items are still left for Marie Laveau by those paying reverence and seeking her intervention as an ancestor.

Marie Laveau was influential throughout the social strata of New Orleans. People of African heritage

living in New Orleans who were denied and distrustful of basic medical care depended on African healers like Laveau to treat their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual ailments. Marie Laveau centered Vodou as an intricate part of life at a time in history when many outsiders sought to annihilate African culture. Her autonomous actions maintained Vodou's centrality of ancient African spirituality in daily life.

— Wendy Carmen Trott

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MAROON SOCIETIES

During the 17th and 18th centuries, particularly in the West Indies and Guyana, enslaved Africans who managed to escape and become fugitives were known as Maroons and formed Maroon societies. The spirit in these fugitives that desired to be free was the basis of the system of these societies. In fact, the tension between the desire of enslaved Africans to be human and free and the obsession of Europeans to degrade and enslave them is reflected in the historical clash representing race relations in the Americas. Africans who were enslaved never lost their desire to be free. Maroon societies were established throughout the African diaspora. Across the Americas—North, Central, and South—whenever and wherever the opportunity to be free presented itself, Africans suffering the brutality of involuntary servitude would seek to get away from those they believed to be evil and obsessed with exploiting African people. Communities of freedom seekers were located in swamps, bayous, heavily wooded areas, mountainous terrains, and other isolated areas hidden away from mainstream populations.

Some of the well-known Maroon societies were located in Brazil, Jamaica, Ecuador, and Haiti.

Maroon societies were also founded in the United States in such places as Louisiana, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Kentucky, and Tennessee. These societies were also in place in Surinam, Panama, Mexico, Honduras, Venezuela, and Colombia. In these societies, men, women, and children from various African cultural groups were armed and prepared to defend themselves against intruders who threatened their liberty.

The constant driving force and irresistible goal of the Maroons was to be free and African. Wherever bondage existed, resistance emerged. Technically, Maroon societies (called Quilombo by Afro-Brazilians and called Palenques, Cimarroneras, and Cumbes in Spanish colonies) were communities established by liberated Africans who fled the unnatural condition of chattel slavery. The term *Maroon* originates from the Spanish *Cimarron*, meaning “a run away or wild animal.” During chattel slavery, the captured African was considered to be property and, therefore, the term *Maroon* or “run away animal” was misapplied to the African human being who resisted slavery and escaped in order to live in the natural human condition of freedom. Maroon societies represented African resistance to chattel slavery and dehumanization. They represented the acceptance and recognition of their inalienable right to be African and free.

The Maroons exhibited dauntless courage and determination, allowing nothing to impede their claim to liberty. The Maroon communities provided a place to establish, maintain, and defend their liberty on their own cultural grounds. Obviously, the survival of these communities depended on the Maroons’ raiding nearby plantations for food, livestock, and clothing. The purpose of these raids was also to liberate others from bondage. The Europeans created a punitive system as a deterrent to maroonage—if Africans were recaptured, they risked suffering severe, inhuman punishments such as amputations, floggings, or even death.

THE SOCIETIES’ PRESERVATION OF AFRICAN CULTURE

In spite of the bestiality and savagery of slavery, African culture was able to continue and expand in the liberated territory. In freedom and in bondage, Africans Africanized everything. African languages, for example, experienced the process of hybridization as the different groups commingled and sought linguistic and cultural unity. Africans transferred the

grammatical structures from their primary languages to the languages of the oppressive groups within the new lands, creating Creoles, Ebonics, Gullah, Brazilian Portuguese, and other Africanized forms of language. The African ancestors of diasporic Africans placed identifiable linguistic markings on the languages they were forced to adopt in the new lands. Contemporary archaeologists, in studying and examining African burial sites and plantations, are finding numerous artifacts that attest to the continuation of African culture within the new lands. In the name of being human and African, men and women from various African cultural groups armed themselves so that they were prepared to defend themselves against any act or agent that threatened their liberty.

The enslavers were equally determined and relentless in their efforts to prevent the loss of their property. Africans were met with an insidious assault on their psychological and physical value. In a shameful attempt to justify the institution of slavery, the best minds in the fields of psychiatry and psychology, for instance, described Africans as mentally ill by nature, making it necessary for white people to control them. Samuel Cartwright identified two mental diseases that he claimed were symptomatic of black people and justified their enslavement. One disease, *Drapetomania*, he described as an ailment that caused enslaved African people to have an uncontrollable urge to flee from their masters. The prescribed treatment for this illness was brutal beating. The other disease, *Dyaesthesia Aethiopsis*, was said to affect both the minds and bodies of Africans. The symptoms of this ailment included being disobedient, answering disrespectfully, and refusing to perform labor. The prescribed remedy was to force patients to carry out extremely difficult and rigorous chores that were believed to send vitalized blood to the brain to give liberty to the mind. These were considered to be legitimate psychological and therapeutic cures and interventions utilized to restrict running away.

THE EXTENT OF THE SOCIETIES

Knowledge of Maroon communities spread throughout the plantations. The sites of these communities were most likely seen as African lands or places where the culture, traditions, and beliefs of African people were free to be experienced. In the minds of the many Africans trapped in bondage and oppression, Maroon communities were more than safe havens—they were

icons of hope and freedom and a stimulus for resistance. To these free places escaped and liberated Africans brought cultural templates from throughout the African continent, including Nigeria, Dahomey, the Gold Coast (Ghana), Angola, the Congo, and Mozambique. These Africans were identified as Ewe-Fon, Efik, Yoruba, the Fante-Asante, as well as Sudanese Muslims and Mandinkas. They spoke Lingala, Manding, Yoruba, Twi, Ibo, and other languages. Groups and individuals finding their way to the communities brought their culture kits, which carried patterns for beliefs, religious practices, traditions, mores, and festivals and enabled them to recreate the familiar societies they had known in Africa.

The communities of Quilombos and Palenques are reputed to have become places where diverse populations were able to meld together with the common goal of being African and, by so doing, perpetuate African culture. The African sense of agency responded to enslavement in three distinct ways: resistance, revolt, and recreation. Resistance against slavery took many forms. The flight of African captives was one form of resistance that may have begun as early as the 1500s, during the formation of the Spanish colonies. Some of the captives escaped and found safe havens among Native American groups. However, it is the act of recreation that best describes maroonage. The establishment of Maroon communities indicated Africans' rebellion against the inhuman conditions suffered while they were in bondage and, more important, their yearning for and achievement of freedom.

In the antebellum South, involuntary servitude was the rule of the day. For the African captives forced into servitude, this meant demonstrating their discontent in a remarkable variety of ways. The numerous forms ranged from damaging equipment, feigning illness, and refusing to do certain work to outright violent confrontations. The institution of slavery was a serious form of exploitation, which was accompanied by the notion that the captive African was not a complete human being and thereby could be considered property. Thus special laws were put in place to protect the farmers and plantation owners, while the enslaved Africans did not have human rights but were obligated to those who had purchased them. Like chattel, they could be bought and sold and forced to reproduce to supply laborers for the benefit of the plantation owners and mining officials who had complete power over them.

THE SOCIETIES' DETERMINATION TO MAINTAIN INDEPENDENCE

The process of dehumanization and cultural destruction fueled Africans' determination to transform their condition from enslavement to freedom and was the impetus to their engaging in their own salvation, recreation, and reinvention. It was common for the plantation owners to separate families—children and their parents, husbands and wives, and family members and members of their extended families. These and other cruel acts on the part of enslavers inspired entire families to seek refuge elsewhere. Fortunately, networking systems existed between the Maroon communities and captives in outlying areas on farms and plantations; those who were part of such systems rescued enslaved Africans seeking freedom and provided them with shelter.

The indomitable African spirit in its quest to be free refuses to disappear or to rest until all Africans have been liberated and live within an equitable society. This spirit resides in men, women, and children. It continues to reincarnate throughout the generations. Some of the Maroon communities are still operating under the peace treaties that were established nearly 200 years ago. Many past and present Maroon leaders can be named and have become part of pan-African history: Queen Nanny in Jamaica; King Zumbi in Palmares in Brazil; Diego de Guzman in the Dominican Republic; Nyanga or Yanga, the Liberator in Mexico; Loangos in Venezuela; Lorenza Smallwood, a conjure man, and Grace Sherwood, both of the Dismal Swamp in the United States; and Toussaint L'Ouverture in Haiti.

The same indomitable spirit of the Maroon can be seen in African communities throughout the diaspora. The struggle to recreate, transform, and promote societies that respect the rights to liberty and equality of all people continues. Exemplary of this undying spirit are settlements and towns such as Allensworth, Rosewood, and Eatonville in the United States; Nanny Town and Accompong in Jamaica; the Republic of Palmares in Brazil; the community of Yanga in Mexico; and Haiti.

What must be clearly stated is that the act of establishing a Maroon community was more than resisting oppression or revolting against slavery. The establishment of Maroon societies was a conscious attempt on the part of African ancestors of diasporic Africans to

recreate Africa. The creation of Maroon societies should be understood as an intentional act of location and agency of free African human beings. It is the recreation of Africa. It is Africans' overwhelming desire and irresistible urge to be free and African, and not just their need to escape from enslavement, that must be understood as the basis for Maroon societies.

— Vera DeMoultrie Nobles

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MDW NTR

Kemet (KMT) means “black country” or “black inhabited region,” and it is the ancient name of the country in the northeastern region of Africa known since the Greek encounter with it in 800 B.C.E. as ancient Egypt. The word *Egypt* is derived from the Greek *aigyptios*. The word *aigyptios* is derived from the ancient Egyptian word *hwt-k3-pt*, meaning “the sanctuary of Ptah.” *Pth*, or Ptah, was the indigenous name of Memphis, the capital of Kemet in the Old Kingdom.

The ancient Egyptians called their writing system *Mdw Ntr* (pronounced Medu Neṭer), which means “god’s word” or “divine word.” Scholars in Black Studies often use the term *Mdw Ntr* to refer to the ancient Egyptian language in all periods, and they therefore may use the term interchangeably with *hieroglyphics*. However, many Western writers have come to use the term *hieroglyphics* to refer to the Egyptian language and script. The term *hieroglyph* comes from two Greek words meaning “sacred carvings.” The system as a whole is called *hieroglyphic* (not hieroglyphics). The hieroglyphic script gave birth to the Hieratic and Demotic scripts. In fact, the Hieratic and Demotic scripts are merely simplified cursive forms of the original hieroglyphic signs.

The ancient Egyptians were well aware of the various uses and connotations of their language. They made distinctions among the standard language they used for official documents and standard texts and the language they used in casual conversation, common everyday writing, and literature. Literature was called *mdw nfrt*, meaning “beautiful speech” or “beautiful words,” and the scribes or artists who could compose them were called *nfr mdw*, meaning “beautiful of speech.”

RECENT DISCOVERIES

Recent discoveries by Gunter Dreyer the director of the German Archaeological Institute suggest that Mdw Ntr is not only the oldest attested African language but very well may be the oldest attested written script in the world. Using writing samples from a cemetery area near Abydos, known as the “Mother of Pots” because of the numerous amounts of pottery discovered there, Dreyer has carbon dated with certainty these writings to between 3300 and 3200 B.C.E., which is some 5,300 years ago.

Mdw Ntr first appeared in writing shortly before 4000 B.C.E. and remained in active use until the 11th century, making it the longest continually used language in the world. Beginning with the Muslim conquest of Egypt in 641 C.E., Arabic gradually replaced Egyptian as the dominant language in Egypt. Like Latin, Egyptian is considered a dead language, and it can only be studied in writing, though it is still spoken in the rituals of the old Egyptian Christian community called the Coptic Church and among members of the Ausar Auset, a religious group begun by the Panamanian philosopher Shekem ur Shekhem.

THE HISTORY OF MDW NTR

Most scholars classify Mdw Ntr history into five major phases.

1. Old Egyptian is the name given to the oldest known phase of the language. While Egyptian writing existed before 3000 B.C.E., the early inscriptions are only of labels and names. Old Egyptian proper is dated from approximately 2600 B.C.E., when the first connected texts appeared. This phase of the language lasted until around 2100 B.C.E.

2. Middle Egyptian, sometimes called Classical Egyptian, is closely related to the Old Egyptian. It first appeared in writing around 2100 B.C.E. and survived as a spoken language for some 500 years, but it has remained the standard hieroglyphic language for the rest of Egyptian history. Middle Egyptian is the phase of the language that is most often taught at universities and in language programs.
3. Late Egyptian began to replace Middle Egyptian as the spoken language after 1600 B.C.E., and it remained in use until about 600 B.C.E. Though descended from Old and Middle Egyptian, Late Egyptian differed substantially from the earliest phase of the language, particular in grammar. Traces of Late Egyptian can be found in texts earlier than 1600 B.C.E., but it did not appear as a full written language until after 1300 B.C.E.
4. Demotic developed out of late Egyptian. The vernacular successor to Late Egyptian, it first appeared around 650 B.C.E. and survived until the 5th century C.E.
5. Coptic is the name given to the final phase of Egyptian, which is closely related to Demotic. It appeared at the end of the 1st century C.E., and it was spoken for nearly a thousand years. The last known texts written by native speakers of Coptic date to the 11th century. This is the only stage of the language in which the vocalic structure is known and distinct dialects are recognized.

When classifying ancient Kemetic language genetically, most scholars adhere to the linguistic classification set forth by Joseph Greenberg in his work *Studies in African Linguistic Classification*. It was Greenberg who suggested the name Afro-Asiatic to replace the entrenched and racially charged name Hamito-Semitic. While the name Hamito-Semitic was changed, the underlying racial theory that implied that the original speakers of these languages were Caucasian or black-skinned whites is still applied erroneously to Afro-Asiatic. Currently, this linguistic family consists of six branches: Ancient Egyptian, Akkadian-Hebrew-Arabic, Berber, Chadic, Cushitic, and Omotic. However, the science of historical linguistics has not yet been able to satisfactorily reconstruct this language family.

The placement of Mdw Ntr into the Afro-Asiatic family has been a surreptitious way of maintaining that the ancient Egyptians were at best Caucasians and at least Semitic. The Afro-Asiatic linguistic classification is an attempt to separate ancient Kemetic language from its African context. The Afro-Asiatic linguistic classification was rejected by the body of Egyptologists who attended the International Colloquium held in Cairo in 1974 on the Peopling of the Nile Valley. These scholars collectively agreed that Egyptian language could not be separated from its African context. In addition, most recent scholarship has demonstrated that five of the six of the languages grouped in the so-called Afro-Asiatic linguistic category have an African origin. Indeed, Ancient Egyptian is a branch of African languages spoken by black Africans in antiquity.

Middle Egyptian is the phase of Mdw Ntr most commonly studied in universities. Many of the sources needed to adequately study ancient Egyptian are in French and German. In fact, most universities require that students have a reading comprehension of both French and German before they will accept them into advanced studies of the ancient Middle Egyptian language Mdw Ntr.

— Troy D. Allen

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www.agorafira.com This Web site provides information on many aspects of African culture, both ancient and modern. It is a useful guide to the contemporary discourses in African Studies.

MELANIN THEORY

Melanin theory holds that melanin controls people's responses to various social stimuli. The melanin content of an individual is a hereditary trait that is passed on from parents to offspring. Melanin is found in all human beings, with the concentration being higher in people of African descent than it is in people of European descent. Melanin has many qualities, and contributes to many bodily functions and traits, such as skin complexion and hair texture.

Melanin theory is associated with the writings of Richard King, Frances Cress Welsing, and to some extent, Marimba Ani. There are several others who adhere to the idea that melanin influences an individual's spiritual sensitivity. Cress Welsing, a psychiatrist, in her book *The Isis Papers: The Keys to the Colors*, suggests that there is currently a color confrontation in the world resulting from the efforts of specific groups to perpetuate their own ethnicity. She writes that Europeans' struggle to perpetuate their ethnicity is a difficult one in that the genes that perpetuate African characteristics are dominant in relation to the recessive genes of Europeans. Therefore, if a European and an African have a child, the child will bear distinctly African characteristics. The color confrontation delineated in melanin theory occurs because of the Europeans' struggle to genetically survive as ethnicities intertwine.

According to melanists, the color confrontation is the result of insecurity in Europeans, particularly males. The argument asserts that Europeans will stop at nothing in order to survive with their genetically

distinct ethnic identity intact. What follows is the victimization of African people, particularly males, within society. The tools used in the victimization of African males are fashioned in many shapes and forms but are all for the singular purpose of European genetic survival. African women are not primarily targeted, as it is believed that females are more susceptible to assimilation into Eurocentric society and are less able to stage effective resistance to European genetic domination.

The various forms in which attacks against African males are carried out are institutionally ingrained into society. The systematic marginalization of African males is perpetuated in order to emasculate them. This emasculation process comes in the form of unemployment, imprisonment, political disenfranchisement, social marginalization, a depressed view of their African origins, and so on. The evidence that melanin theorists point to in making this case is the exponential increase in African male incarceration rates, along with the expansion of the prison industrial complex; the steadily rising African male unemployment levels; African homosexuality; African male unaccountability; the lack of presence of the African adult male in the home setting; increasing African male homicide rates; and so on.

MELANIN THEORY APPLIED TO SOCIAL ISSUES

The issue of homosexuality among Africans is given great consideration as an indicator of the emasculation of the African male. According to the melanists, the European worldview encourages homosexuality, in contrast to the traditional African worldview in which homosexuality is taboo. Thus applicability of the scientific model of cause and effect is demonstrable when the relationship of the independent variable, the setting, and the dependent variable, sexual orientation, are considered. This model is supportive of Cress Welsing's theory of color confrontation. In the setting of modern-day color confrontational America, African males are taking on the contextually definable role of being passively emasculated. According to the theory, this is indicated by homosexuality. The change in setting that also produces a change in sexual orientation is explained by the color confrontation being in an active state of existence. Cress Welsing insinuates that the emasculation of the African male characterized by

homosexuality is detrimental to the black community. She goes even further by offering tactics to be employed primarily by black women in order to avert the current situation. She urges black women to rear their sons from an early age toward masculinity and accountability.

Cress Welsing also mandates that for the sake of genetic survival, black people should defer acquiring material goods and instead focus on protecting and supporting their ethnic group, even at the cost of their lives. This would then halt the passive role African men assume in the color confrontation. This tactic is suggested in order to reverse the African American trend of assimilating into the status quo of African extinction. Cress Welsing asserts that the color conflict is the basis for the racism practiced in the world. According to progenitors of the melanin theory, genetic survival is the basis for the practice of oppression.

Cress Welsing sees the symbolism of this oppression based on color exemplified in sports. The balls used in various sports are each of a particular color specific to a given sport. Cress Welsing contends that the balls used are an incessant reminder of the color confrontation. For example, the basketball and the football are typically brown. Scoring, which is a direct method of winning, is characterized in basketball by the balls passing through the round white net, and in football by kicking the brown ball through white, upright posts. The correlations here are whites' repetitive demonstrations of fear and schizophrenic fascination with the African male apparatus of procreation and with European genetic domination. The African male phallus is denoted by the brown balls used in the respective sports, and the domination is emphasized by a white vaginal-like net and two upright posts, which depict white women's legs. Cress Welsing goes further to suggest that the greatest symbolism of white supremacy is of a European depiction of Jesus, as he hangs from a brown wooden cross. The European image of Jesus is synonymous with European men dying because of the gigantic phallus of the African man. The phallus of African men is connoted by the brown wooden cross. Cress Welsing views this removal of the cross from the body of Jesus, as in the Bible story, as symbolically insinuating the castration of the black man, which would serve the purpose of guaranteeing the survival of European genes. Melanin theory is not widely adhered to and has been criticized for its seemingly heavy reliance on essentialist

themes; however, it retains an enthusiastic following in the lay community.

— *Gwinyai Muzorewa*

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MESSIANISM

Messianism is, among other things, the belief in a savior. African American history has provided researchers and theorists with fertile ground for the discussion of messianism among the oppressed. The term *messianism* is borrowed from Christian theology, but it is often used in the context of the African American condition, where suffering, pain, and degradation have underscored the need for a deliverer. Thus, the history of African Americans may be written as the history of the many attempts to find someone who would answer all of the questions surrounding the existence of an oppressed people. It is possible to look at the great deliverer tradition as producing the panoply of David Walker, Nat Turner, Henry Highland Garnett, Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Booker T. Washington, Marcus Garvey, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X.

Accompanying this tradition, which is basically secular, has been a religious tradition rooted in the idea of spiritual deliverance. Thus, personalities such as Father Divine, Elijah Muhammad, Daddy Grace, and Louis Farrakhan often appear larger than life because they seem to have the answers to the issues confronting the community. Messianism is not simply the belief in a savior; it is sometimes also the acceptance of that mantle by an individual who assumes that he or she has special or unique powers of deliverance. The study of leadership in the African American

community has revealed their tendency to believe in messiahs who often are characterized by dogmatism, strict codes of conduct, and a sense of infallibility.

Racial redemption seems to be an esoteric component of messianism. In effect, it is the role of the messiah to defeat evil, to overcome racial exclusion, and to bring in a new day when equality and justice will be the calling cards of society. Messianism's appeal in the African American community is based on its logic of defiance and its magnetic character. The messiah is automatically a person of charisma, one who believes that change can come, particularly if human beings would only listen to what the messiah has to say.

— *Molefi Kete Asante*

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MIDDLE PASSAGE

The Middle Passage was the dreadful passage across the Atlantic Ocean made by Africans—who were forced into tight quarters with inadequate food and water and the ill and dying among them—for several weeks or even months en route to being sold into slavery. The Middle Passage and the transatlantic slave trade are inextricably linked, with an examination of the Middle Passage serving to illuminate one aspect of the incalculable tragedy of Africans' enslavement. Geographical and temporal factors contribute to our understanding of the Middle Passage, but considering only these factors is a disservice to the scope and impact of abominable human suffering of the Middle Passage.

The tendency of 21st-century U.S. scholars has been to focus on geography and consider the impact of the Middle Passage on the North American boundaries of the American state. In many ways, this has precluded examination and analysis of the Middle Passage and its repercussions in the Caribbean and Central and South America. Scholars' temporal assumptions revolve around the year 1807, when the U.S. Constitution called for the legal termination of the transatlantic slave trade, and the year 1830, when both the United States and Great Britain took naval action to proscribe it.

The Middle Passage and the transatlantic slave trade are conventionally regarded as one event, an event that was ended by the mid-19th-century activities of the British and American governments. However, this view fails to acknowledge that the Middle Passage continued to be used by the slave trade after legislation prohibited it in 1807 and 1830. Slave traders continued throughout the 19th century to refine their methods for ever greater profits by sacrificing the health and lives of the millions of Africans who were brought to the Americas. The fact that enslaved Africans had an enormous impact on constructing the societies of the Americas until the close of the 19th century is obscured by the unanalyzed assumption that legislation ended the slave trade. This assumption also misses the effect on Africans of the ships themselves, which defined a group of people as African in the space between one shore and the next. The ships served as a crucible whose literal and figurative heat gave birth to a new African person. Thus what follows here is a challenge to the conventional temporal assumptions that (1) the use of the Middle Passage for the transatlantic slave trade ended with the legislation that prohibited it—it was *not abolished*, and (2) by the beginning of the U.S. Civil War, there was no Atlantic slave trade and therefore no Middle Passage. Both continued to the cusp of the 20th century with serious ramifications and consequences.

The horrors and the magnitude of the Middle Passage are irrefutable and inescapable. While there might be debate over the number of Africans, debate that sometimes reflects historiography and the role of history as rationale, it is clear that tens of millions were dragged from their homes in the largest known expatriation in history and that millions—possibly tens of millions—lost their lives in the process. It is, in fact, those conditions, the conditions of death, and as important, survival that characterize the Middle Passage and its implications.

THE SLAVE TRADERS' CALCULUS

An important segment of the contemporary debate and discourse on the Middle Passage has been reduced to “science,” by which is meant the science of today’s cliometric historians. They attempt to measure the impact of the Middle Passage in its most quantifiable terms. Interpreting the statistical data, the historians have come to various conclusions about the Middle Passage. Some historians assert that the sheer numbers underscore incalculable horrors, whereas others, while never calling the slave trade humanitarian, argue that as it was refined, conditions improved for those forced to endure the Middle Passage.

The numbers are these: From 10 to 20 million Africans were shipped during a period of some 4 centuries, over a distance of approximately 3,000 miles, on a journey lasting anywhere from 3 weeks to 3 months. The loss of African lives during the Middle Passage ranged from 5% in the last quarter of the 18th century to staggering rates estimated as high as 70% for the entire process of the trade from capture through seasoning. In addition, this was over the course of the 19th century, during which mortality in general increased.

This “scientific,” almost clinical enumeration and the analytical discourse that accompanies it are consequences of the scientific age that also spawned the modern concept of inequalities between the races and thus enabled one race to enslave another. It was these “scientific” notions of race and racialized slavery that provided the rationales for the “slave traders’ calculus” and the official policies that regulated the Africans’ journey through the Middle Passage. Thus debates concerning the “tight packing” or “loose packing” of captive Africans bound for the Americas could be judged scientifically in regard to the number of humans who might be inhumanely crammed into vessels whose holds were filled with Africans nearly to the point of suffocating them. “Packing” was regulated by a “science” that matched ship tonnage with the possibilities of maximum profit. It was calculated that on average there should be “two and a half slaves per ton,” with ship tonnage calculated against the length of the voyage. There were instances, however, in which the number of captives on a single vessel exceeded this ratio by almost 50%.

The voyage was shorter and more bearable in direct trips from the African coast to the American port in question in either the Southern or Northern

Hemisphere; in smaller slave ships, which were sometimes built for greater speed and maneuverability; and as a result of technological innovations to the ships, such as copper sheathing. These innovations were tied to an economic calculus of demographics. The early trade and the consequent passage consisted predominately of young African males. The population patterns on both sides of the Atlantic prompted notions and debates that concerned the infinite supply of such a labor force and its expendability. This callous disregard for Africans characterized discussions associated with the Middle Passage. Such discussions centered on a population that could always be replenished, no matter what the losses. Therefore, when the edicts and actions of 1807 and 1830 dictated that the journey across the Middle Passage enter a new phase, one in keeping with the goal of maximization of profits through stealth, speed, and tonnage, new demographics and new models of labor efficiency helped traders to maintain their profit margins and rationalize risk.

The legal prohibition of and illicit trade in enslaved Africans actually may have helped to increase tonnage and profitability in three ways. First, from 1810 on, and decidedly after 1850, children made up to 40% of cargoes and women a further 15%. The presence of such a high percentage of children created a higher person per ton ratio, and their being young may have been thought to add to their potential productivity. Second, the additional concentration of women must have added significantly to the reproduction of labor in this second phase of the Middle Passage’s longevity. Third, the increase in both children and women in the vessels making the Middle Passage in this period meant that the ratio of crew to enslaved Africans might be drastically reduced during the voyage, a clear reduction in the economy of labor. However, while those in the slave trade continued to profit, captive Africans continued to experience trauma, suffering, illness, and death during all phases of the Middle Passage. In fact, as the illness and death of Africans increased during the 19th century—particularly among children—so too must the trauma of psychic and cultural dislocation have increased.

THE AFRICANS' EXPERIENCE

Some of the most potent history of diasporic Africans is in their resistance. The “Ibo Landing” of *Daughters of the Dust* is simply one metaphor of that resistance;

a metaphor that has been repeated time and time again as a paradigm of the ultimate act of resistance. Such resistance emphasized the distinct philosophical notions that undergirded the conceptualizations of liberty and freedom among Africans on the Middle Passage and the extremes to which they might go to secure it. In an age where property was deemed paramount, and where they themselves were defined as property, Africans who resisted denied those who sought to reduce them to mere things, to property, the power to do so. The first phase of the Middle Passage, as the slave vessel lay off coast partially filled, was suffused with the constant threat of a slave mutiny. Even within sight of Western shores, there was nothing to protect investors from an epidemic of African suicide at the last moment. As exceptional as accounts of mutiny and mass suicide may be, these and other accounts of resistance solidified a record of African rebellion in the Middle Passage. This record provided a preamble to the observation that the stretch of the transatlantic slave trade conscribed by the shores of Africa and the coasts of the Americas was the space where security was priority, a security that some thought might be inherent in the conception of modern, racialized slavery from its inception, because the process of restraining and constraining Africans started at the beginning of the capture.

There are conservative reports of 55 mutinies between 1699 and 1845 and of 250 documented cases of rebellion at sea. Clearly the insurance clauses that protected investors against such losses underscored their occurrence, as well as investors' need to be prescient in anticipation of African resistance even on the high seas. In many ways, insurance policies, policy debates, and laws like the 1799 Parliamentary Passenger Acts, told the resisters' tale, even if it did not fully convey the immediate rhythms of the events. It is clear that the resisters shaped history in ways we are only beginning to understand. Africans in shackles did this; Africans in the Middle Passage *forced* change.

THE AFRICANS' CHOICE TO SURVIVE

What could possibly be found in the history of the Middle Passage that is uplifting or inspirational? What could be the possible object lesson of its resisters and survivors to their descendants and to the modern world at large? In the holds of slave ships that made the Middle Passage are the legacies and resonances of those who remained enslaved, those who resisted, and

those who survived. There were many Africans who found misery, suffering, and death on the Middle Passage, but there were also many Africans who showed incalculable strength and resilience as well as philosophical conviction. The story of the Middle Passage, from slave ships to mutinies to mass suicides to insurance policies, is not just a story of the enslavement of Africans but also a centuries-long story of African survival and resistance at sea.

The holds of these ships, which contained the energy of resistance and survival in the Middle Passage, became the crucible in which captive Africans constructed a material, intellectual, and philosophical culture, as well as what was to become African American consciousness. This consciousness began in the Middle Passage with resistances to enslavement at sea, in an incalculably cramped space, in a void that was thought to preclude any thought of or movement toward freedom, resistances that included onboard insurrections and mass suicides.

In viewing the slave ships on the Middle Passage as a crucible of the consciousness of Africans in the Americas, scholars have had the tendency to focus on the negative, viewing the "slave mentality" as a one-sided, monolithic consciousness. The traumatic consciousness attributed to all captive Africans who traveled the Middle Passage provides a dubious construction of the consciousness of an entire race. Such a construction must be erroneous because it does not explore how the tenacity Africans showed in resistance and survival has shaped the consciousness of the diasporic African community.

That captive Africans resisted enslavement at sea and that so many Africans survived the Middle Passage is evidence of the resistance and survival incorporated into African bodies and minds and passed on through generations of Africans in the Americas. African sacrifice, resistance, and survival during the Middle Passage became part of African consciousness—a text of resistance *and* survival, and of freedom and liberty, that epitomizes the best modern philosophies of liberation.

— *Maghan Keita*

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THE MIS-EDUCATION OF THE NEGRO

Carter G. Woodson's *Mis-Education of the Negro* can be considered one of earliest rationales for the importance of Black Studies. Written in 1933, Woodson's book focuses on the Eurocentric education and indoctrination of African people, and how it was systematically detrimental and damaging. Woodson, who is known as the "father of black history," discussed several key issues, but his primary contention was that African people were being miseducated by being indoctrinated with Eurocentrism through all levels of the educational system. Throughout the book, Woodson gave examples of how, across all disciplines, the subject matter being taught to African students included little or no information about African or African American people. He also noted that the little information that was taught only worked to reinforce white supremacist notions of African inferiority.

Woodson asserted that this miseducation had a serious impact on African people, causing them to be sociopolitically apathetic and uninterested in advancing their race. Comparing African resistance and uplift efforts in the 19th century to those in the early 20th century, Woodson noted that the educated Negro had lost moral courage because of compromise with white culture. In addition to delineating the problem of the miseducation of African people, Woodson also recommended solutions. Being a strong proponent of the study of black history, Woodson naturally called for more "study of self" by African people. In the 1930s, when Woodson was writing his book, many African people placed little value in studying and understanding themselves. Woodson, however, believed that such study was the only way of dismantling the belief of

African inferiority. As a result, he concluded that the African community must study African people in the context of all disciplines. He also proposed that more emphasis be placed on education with a practical orientation; for instance, he called for political education so that more Africans could understand the political process. Woodson envisioned higher education as a tool that African people could use to help serve the masses of their people and especially to teach Africans how to thrive economically.

The Mis-Education of the Negro stands as one of the most important early works in the Black Studies canon. By bringing to light the Europeanization of education, Woodson's work laid the theoretical foundation for the study of African people. The book was clearly ahead of its time: Written over 30 years before the Black Studies movement, *The Mis-Education of the Negro* raises the very issues that ultimately caused the proliferation of Black Studies departments across the country. Furthermore, Woodson's work remains deeply relevant as public school systems continue to miseducate the masses of young African students.

— Rico X

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MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC PARTY

The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), which was also known as the Freedom Democratic Party (FDP), was active from 1964 to 1968 in endeavoring to obtain political power for Mississippians who were kept disenfranchised by the racists of the Mississippi Democratic Party (MDP). The MFDP was comprised of civil rights organizations and a considerable number of African residents of Mississippi, and

their goals were to replace the MDP within the national Democratic Party, empower the black population in Mississippi, and expose the racist terror that prevented enfranchisement in the South. The tactics they used to achieve these goals included voter registration, voter education, Freedom schools, Freedom Summer, negotiations, and protest within the Democratic National Conventions.

THE BACKGROUND OF DEMOCRACY FOR BLACKS IN MISSISSIPPI

During the first half of the 1800s, Mississippi was considered both an agrarian and a frontier society. It was populated with Native Americans, European settlers, and enslaved and manumitted Africans. Of these populations, only the European men had full rights as U.S. citizens. By the middle of the 1830s, a movement was afoot to discourage the presence of free Africans in Mississippi. A law passed by the Mississippi legislature in 1822 moved to limit emancipation in order to limit the size and proportions of the state's freed black population. This law gave the legislature authority to decide on all emancipations in Mississippi. Emancipations sharply declined and the free black population never exceeded 1,400.

MISSISSIPPI LAWS

Mississippi was notorious for its official sanctioning of racist relations. That there was such a small number of free blacks in Mississippi between 1810 and 1860 was attributable to unjust laws and racist codes. Free blacks were discouraged from moving into Mississippi, and free blacks who resided in the state suffered under laws that assumed all blacks were slaves. Blacks within the borders of Mississippi might be asked to prove their free status at any time by showing a certificate with their name, color, physical stature, and other distinguishing features. The certificate was to be renewed every 3 years at a cost that was high enough that many blacks could not afford to renew it. Without proper documentation presented in a timely fashion, free blacks in Mississippi were subject to enslavement and sale on the auction block. The collusion of the state government in this racism illustrates the tradition of hostility that lay at the cultural bedrock of the Democratic Party in the South, often called the Dixiecrat Party in reference to the Southern conservatism displayed by it. Mississippi's resistance to black emancipation and citizenship

culminated in the Mississippi government joining the Civil War effort on the side of the Confederacy.

THE ERA OF RECONSTRUCTION

After suffering a loss in the Civil War, the proslavery government of Mississippi was replaced by a reconstructed government with the help of the Union Army, which stood sentry over the transformation. Then the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution brought about another change in Mississippi by not allowing political officers to refuse to pledge allegiance to the union. Blacks entered positions in state government and on school boards, and black children entered schools in large numbers.

Under military jurisdiction, Mississippi voter registration in 1867 resulted in the enrollment of 60,167 blacks and 46,636 whites entitled to elect delegates to the state constitutional convention. Freedman's Bureau schools in Mississippi enrolled 13,721 black children, about 10% of school-age blacks. In addition, 83 whites and 17 blacks were elected as state delegates. The state constitutional convention met in 1868, with the majority of delegates listed as Republicans, the party that was seen at that time as the guardians of liberty. This convention approved a moderate state constitution that met the requirements of the Fourteenth Amendment. The terrorism of the Democratic Party was still prevalent, however, and their threats and boycotts kept many people away from the polls, which in turn prevented ratification of the state constitution by a majority of voters in 1868.

The Republican Party and "scalawags" elected Governor James Alcorn and changed the proposed state constitution to allow ex-Confederates to hold office, covertly reversing the stipulations of the Fourteenth Amendment. New elections were held and won by these Republicans. The voters in this election ratified the modified state constitution. In the beginning of 1870, a new state legislature met and ratified the Fifteenth Amendment. Congress accepted the results and approved the readmission of Mississippi into the union in February 1870. During 1871, the Ku Klux Klan increased their violent terrorism of blacks in Mississippi. They targeted the black schools. The state government only put up a feeble effort to defend its citizens, and federal troops were required to suppress the Klan.

During the next 4 years, a legislature with 25% black membership initiated changes, which included reforming

public education, founding a black state university, and reorganizing a judiciary financed by the state, as well as building new hospitals, asylums, and public buildings. Notwithstanding the black minority in the legislature, John R. Lynch, a 24-year-old formerly enslaved person, was chosen as speaker of the House in 1871 by the Republican majority in the legislature. As a result, Governor Alcorn resigned and led his Republican followers in unifying with the Democrats to form what was called the new Republican Party of Mississippi. Ironically, in February of 1874, the Mississippi legislature elected its first black senator, Blanche K. Bruce, to the U.S. Senate. Bruce served a full term but was the last of an era.

In 1876, a tightly run presidential race was resolved in the famous compromise known as the Tilden-Hayes compromise. Rutherford B. Hayes, the Republican candidate, agreed to remove Union Army troops from the South in exchange for the uncontested seat of the presidency. The compromise removed the soldiers who were protecting the black populace in Mississippi from being terrorized by hate groups, specifically the Dixiecrats. By 1876, the Democratic Party of Mississippi had come to power and overtly enshrined white supremacy in government operations.

Repression was on the rise and a new set of black codes was created in Mississippi that forced blacks to live in designated areas, outlawed miscegenation, forced labor on black citizens in the form of indentured servitude, and gave courts the ability to “apprentice” black minors to whites in indentured servitude. In essence, these codes, along with the repression of the Jim Crow social environment, created a new form of slavery. These policies set the stage for an economic system of sharecropping that kept blacks poor in Mississippi while rebuilding the wealth of former slaveowners. For close to a century, political, social, and economic power was out of reach for the blacks in Mississippi.

THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN MISSISSIPPI

The 1950s through the 1960s brought a second reconstruction era to Mississippi. Its prime agents were the African descendants residing in Mississippi, the civil rights movement, and the youth movement. The Mississippi Progressive Voter’s League and Regional Council of Negro Leadership emerged on the Mississippi political landscape in 1947 and 1951,

respectively. The league encouraged civic education and participation through motivation and literacy. The council advocated black voter education, registration, and voting. It also campaigned against police brutality and for full citizenship rights for black Mississippians.

In 1955, when the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), with Medgar Evers as its first field secretary in the state, was attempting to recruit adults to the organization, they met with unexpected success with young people. The NAACP Youth Councils were training youth to imagine the potential of political power. The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and its spin-off the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), participated in Freedom Rides that inspired the NAACP Youth Councils and fired their enthusiasm.

CORE and SNCC began sending people into Mississippi in 1961. As the action of the civil rights groups in the area increased, the groups launched an effort to coordinate their activities. From 1962 to 1965, an umbrella structure, the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO), was formed as a confederation of the civil rights and citizenship education groups in Mississippi. Its mission was to represent and promote the interests of all national, state, and local civil rights groups operating in Mississippi.

COFO, with a significant contribution from SNCC, worked with local populations to sponsor Freedom Summer in Mississippi. They organized college students from Mississippi and other states to effectively conduct voter education, register voters, serve as interviewers, teach in Freedom schools, and perform other duties that were needed. These activities were met with brutal repression from law enforcement agencies as well as hooded terrorists. After COFO assisted local citizens in preparing to exercise their political power, their next step was to help the local population develop political machinery to represent them, as the MDP disallowed black participation in the political life of the state.

THE TRAVESTY OF THE MISSISSIPPI DEMOCRATIC PARTY

In 1964, the MFDP challenged the MDP on its long history of the systematic exclusion of blacks from equal participation in the political processes of the state. The ideological force behind the MDP was the White Citizens’ Council—an organization committed

to white supremacy. The MDP, which controlled all the branches of government in the state, gave white supremacy state power. It passed laws and established regulations to discriminate against the potential black electorate. Some of the petty tactics of the MDP included changing the location or time of a convention to ensure black absence, blocking the entrance of blacks to convention halls, and denying blacks who did attend opportunities to speak or vote. The 1963 gubernatorial campaign blocked black participation. State conventions were held in segregated facilities, and dissent from whites and blacks was squelched in the manner of a dictatorship instead of a democracy.

The MFDP also challenged the MDP's conclusive demonstration of disloyalty to the national Democratic Party. Citizens of Mississippi who supported the national Democratic Party's goals were denied membership in the MDP. The MDP had declared in public speeches and in printed tracts that it was not a part of the national Democratic Party. It claimed in a piece of 1963 campaign literature that it was entirely independent of the national Democratic Party. This was a clear indication of its conscious disloyalty to the national parent organization.

In 1960, the MDP did not honor its pledge to support the nominees of the Democratic National Convention. The MDP intentionally voted against candidates put up by the national body, and a majority of its delegates at the 1964 Democratic National Convention supported the Republican candidate, Barry Goldwater. Similar to the days before this second reconstruction, there was little difference between the Mississippi Democrats and the conservative Republicans when it came to black enfranchisement.

Finally, the MFDP challenged the determination of the state's political power structure to keep Mississippi as a closed society. Rather than being an open society that welcomed democratic debate, the MDP-led government passed five restrictive bills that prohibited picketing, banned the distribution of boycott literature, restricted the movement of groups, established curfews, authorized municipalities to pool police staff and equipment, and increased the penalties assessed by city courts. This was all done to reduce dissent.

THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC PARTY

The MFDP was open to all citizens regardless of race and was officially established at a meeting in Jackson,

Mississippi, on April 26, 1964. The approximately 300 delegates present elected a temporary state executive committee, which was responsible for setting up precinct and other state meetings. The meetings were to parallel those of the Mississippi Democratic Party, and the MFDP made efforts to comply with state laws that applied to the formation of political parties. Registered voters in the MFDP had already attempted to attend precinct and county meetings of the MDP but were rebuffed. In the summer of 1964, which became known as Freedom Summer, the MFDP engaged in (1) Freedom registration drives, (2) picking Freedom candidates, (3) launching Freedom schools for literacy and political education, and (4) the Democratic National Convention challenge.

Freedom Registration Drives

In November of 1963, about 83,000 blacks voted in a mock gubernatorial election in which COFO president Aaron Henry ran against Governor Paul B. Johnson. Official registration figures in 1964 showed that only some 20,000 blacks were registered in Mississippi as compared to 500,000 whites. That figure represented less than 7% of the 435,000 blacks in the state who were at least 21 years of age. The Freedom registration drives were designed to show that thousands of blacks wanted to become registered voters. By setting up registrars and deputy registrars in counties across Mississippi, the MFDP registered 80,000 blacks in Mississippi in 1964. However, while those 80,000 Mississippians were being registered, 80 people were beaten, 35 churches were burned, 1,000 people were arrested, 30 homes and other buildings were bombed, 35 shooting incidents involving civil rights workers took place, and three civil rights workers were brutally murdered.

Freedom Candidates

In June of 1964, before the Democratic National Convention, the MDP excluded blacks from its process for selecting delegates. In response to generally being locked out of MDP meetings, the MFDP held its own set of parallel precinct meetings, including county conventions in 26 of the state's 82 counties and a state convention to select its own of delegates to challenge the seating of the regular all-white delegation in Atlantic City. The MFDP candidates, who planned to run in a mock election in November of 1964, were

Mrs. Victoria Gray, opposing Senator John Stennis; Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, opposing Representative Jamie L. Whitten; the Reverend John Cameron, opposing Representative William M. Colmer; and Mr. James Houston, opposing Representative John Bell Williams. The platform points of the candidates of the MFDP included antipoverty programs, medicare, educational aid, rural development, urban renewal, and the guarantee of constitutional rights to all. This was in sharp contrast to the platform of the MDP.

Freedom Schools

In the summer of 1964, 41 Freedom schools opened throughout Mississippi in nonacademic settings such as church basements. SNCC was a major organizing force in these efforts. During 1964, 3,000 children enrolled in these schools. Freedom schools were just the beginning of the improvement in education for blacks in Mississippi. The schools, staffed by volunteers, set out to provide black students with the basic literacy and citizenship skills they would need to organize for action and become a formidable voice of the civil rights movement. The schools didn't have it easy. They were often targets for white mobs and were consistently vandalized and burned.

The Democratic National Convention Challenge

The MFDP attempted to seat 44 delegates and 22 alternates at the Democratic National Convention. It was the role of the credentials committee to determine if the MFDP would replace the MDP. Although the MFDP was more loyal than the MDP to the national Democratic Party, the efforts of the MFDP were stalled by the direct intervention of the Democratic nominee for president, Lyndon B. Johnson. Johnson was concerned with offending the racist Southern Democrats who were a powerful force within the party, and he used undercover intelligence to spy on the MFDP for the MDP.

At the nationally televised credentials committee meeting, Fannie Lou Hamer, of SNCC and MFDP fame, described her experience as a sharecropper who was evicted for registering to vote. Aware of Hamer's ability to inspire with her words, Johnson announced a press conference during her testimony. Johnson's prospective running mate, Hubert H. Humphrey, cajoled Johnson into setting up a process to urge a pseudocompromise: two "at large" seats for the

MFDP, with the remainder of the seats going to the MDP. However, thanks to Johnson's pressure tactics, the credentials committee denied the MFDP any seats. The MDP, staying true to their renegade nature, announced after the convention that it would no longer permit seating delegations that were segregated.

Though the MFDP was unable to break the MDP's control over the convention, the challenge they posed in 1964 successfully forced the national Democratic Party to reform its rules for delegate selection. In 1964, Mississippi had no black officeholders, except in the all-black town of Mound Bayou. By 1994, it had 751 black elected officials, more than any other state.

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

The MFDP presented Congress with documentation of the rejection of thousands of qualified blacks from voter registration and of the brutality against those who tried to register. One congressional presentation involved the MFDP's unsuccessful bid to stop the seating of the all-white Congressional delegation in the U.S. House of Representatives in January of 1965. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 struck down the racially discriminatory voter registration tests used in Mississippi. Federal registrars were sent to Southern states to assist in the implementation of the act. A restrictive poll tax was also struck down in a Department of Justice lawsuit in a federal district court in Mississippi. Within 2 years, the black voter registration went up ninefold, from 6.7% of Mississippi's blacks voting to 60%. The Voting Rights Act was eclipsed in Mississippi, however, by a reign of segregationist terror that swept the South between 1965 and 1969. The following 8 years saw two Democratic parties in Mississippi.

In an effort to ensure implementation of the promise of the 1964 Democratic National Convention, a biracial coalition—consisting of the NAACP of Mississippi, the Freedom Democratic Party, the Prince Hall Masons, the Mississippi Teachers Association, the Mississippi AFL-CIO, and the Young Democrats—formed the Loyal Democrats of Mississippi (LDM). The chair of the configuration was Aaron E. Henry. Some of the coordinators of the LDM were Charles Evers, Hodding Carter III, and Lawrence Guyot. In 1968, the LDM protested the nearly all-white Mississippi delegation at the convention. The LDM was successful and was seated as the representation from Mississippi, replacing the MFDP.

The 1964 convention adopted a nondiscrimination requirement to be included in the call to the 1968 Democratic National Convention. The LDM, which had subsumed the MFDP, included many who had participated in the 1964 challenge and who again contested the seating of the racist Democratic Party delegation. This time they were victorious. The LDP eventually functioned as the nationally recognized Democratic Party in Mississippi.

The segregationist group, called the Regulars, included a mere 2 black delegates in their delegation, although the black portion of the Mississippi population was 40%. They were rejected by the 1968 Democratic National Convention but were recognized by state officials, ran the state Democratic Party primary elections, and continued to mount political resistance. Their new tactics included vote-dilution devices such as increased candidate filing requirements, at-large elections, and racial gerrymandering. Blacks were still prevented from electing candidates of their choice to office. In 1966, the MFDP had filed a suit in federal district court to halt the discriminatory gerrymandering of state legislative district boundaries. It took 14 years, until 1979, for significant black representation in the Mississippi state legislature to be obtained.

— Daryl Zizwe Poe

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MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT

In the 1950s, segregation laws and city ordinances deemed it a misdemeanor for blacks and whites to intermingle in public transportation in Montgomery, Alabama. This was the law across the South. Violators were promptly arrested and prosecuted under laws established to separate the races. A clear example of this is section 1413 of the Birmingham Racial Segregation Ordinance, which states that

Every owner or operator of any jitney, bus or taxi cab in the city shall provide equal but separate accommodations for the white and colored races by dividing separate vehicles or by clearly indicating or designating by visible markers the area to be occupied by each race in any vehicle in which the two races are permitted to be carried together and by confining each race to occupancy of the area of such vehicle so set apart for it. It shall be unlawful for any person to operate or cause or allow to be operated or to aid in operating for the carriage of white and colored passengers any vehicle not equipped as provided in this section. And it shall be unlawful for any person, contrary to the provisions of this section providing for equal and separate accommodations for the white and colored races, to ride or attempt to ride in a vehicle or a division of a vehicle designated for the race to which such person does not belong. Failure to comply with this section shall be deemed a misdemeanor.

Knowing that the segregation laws were morally unjust, several unknown and uncelebrated African Americans challenged this legislation by refusing to collaborate with laws that oppressed their humanity. In most instances, violators of segregation laws were jailed without due process. Prior to December 1, 1955—the date of the Montgomery bus boycott—there had been several rebellions against the bus laws. The African American community in Montgomery was not passive and complacent about segregation laws, but they were forced to endure many demeaning episodes before they were able to change the laws. In 1943, Rosa Parks had paid her bus fare in the front of the bus, exited, and then attempted to reenter through the rear door, only to watch the bus drive off, leaving

her on the curb. In 1949, a black professor, Jo Ann Robinson, sat in the whites-only front section of an empty bus and was verbally assaulted by the driver and then thrown off the bus. She commenced a strong and silent protest campaign against the system including several letters to Montgomery Mayor W. A. Gayle, informing him of an impending citywide bus boycott. In 1950, Dr. Vernon Johns was forced to give up his seat to a white passenger. These are just a few of the protest actions of African Americans.

THE NAACP AND ITS STRATEGY

With all these protest actions occurring, the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) was just waiting for the right “victim” and the right moment to galvanize public anger and sentiment against the bus segregation laws. In 1955, 15-year-old Claudette Colvin was arrested for refusing to give up her seat to a white passenger. NAACP officials thought they had found the perfect symbol, but then it turned out that she was pregnant. Although her pregnancy was not relevant to the segregation issue, a focus on it might have jeopardized the NAACP’s ability to win in their protest against the segregation laws.

On Thursday, December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks boarded a full bus and took her seat in the black section, in the fifth row of the bus. The first four sections of the bus were designated as the “whites only” section. That section filled up very quickly, leaving a white passenger standing. According to the law, and the ordinance above, whites and blacks were forbidden to occupy the same row. So the bus driver asked all African-Americans in the fifth row to vacate the section. The other three people in the section complied, but Rosa Parks did not. She was summarily arrested.

Rosa Parks had been educated at Alabama State College and became a seamstress. She had completed several workshops and courses in race relations and was a seasoned NAACP secretary and worker who had been active on the Claudette Colvin case. Above all, her record was impeccable. E. D. Nixon, a leader in the African American community, was quite familiar with her and was sure that in Rosa Parks the NAACP had found its “poster figure” against public transport segregation laws. Nixon went to the jail and posted bond for Rosa Parks. He solicited her permission to commence a public campaign against bus

segregation, and with her blessing he went to work. The next day, Nixon called the minister of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., as Coretta Scott King recalls in her introduction to *The Words of Martin Luther King*, “to describe the incident and to urge a boycott of the buses. ‘It’s the only way to make the white folk see that we would not take this sort of thing any longer,’ he said. Martin agreed and offered the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church as a meeting place. Over forty leaders from all segments of the black community came to the meeting. They formed the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA), elected Martin president, and organized a boycott starting on December 5.”

THE CAMPAIGN FOR FREEDOM AND RESPECT

This was to be the beginning of a painful, year-long campaign to end bus segregation in Montgomery, Alabama. The consequences were quite severe for the African American community and the price costly. There were no bargain outlets or cheap options for freedom and dignity. In 1954, just a year prior to the Rosa Parks incident, the U.S. Supreme Court had handed down the decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* that ruled segregation unconstitutional. However, most of the Southern states, and especially Alabama, refused to be in consonance with the nation and remained adamant about maintaining segregated social structures.

While the Montgomery authorities pressed on with the prosecution of Rosa Parks, the Women’s Political Council, under the leadership of Professor JoAnn Robinson, was taking steps to link strong political action to the trial. The group printed and distributed over 50,000 fliers asking Montgomery’s African American community to mount a one-day protest and boycott the Montgomery bus company by staying off the buses on December 5—the day of Rosa Parks’s trial. The one-day protest was successful, as the Montgomery buses with predominantly African American routes were empty, but Rosa Parks and the NAACP lost their case. Parks was convicted of violating segregated seating laws, such as section 1413 above. Fresh from this defeat, the MIA met to chart new strategies, including the extension of the bus boycott. That evening, over 8,000 people gathered at the Holt Street Baptist Church to listen to the president of the MIA and to resolve to continue with the boycott.

On December 8, after almost 4 days of the continuing boycott, MIA officials met with attorneys from the bus company and city commissioners to resolve their differences. The MIA presented a case for established racial seatings with no mobile area, as well as the employment of African American drivers to serve African American neighborhoods. The attorneys and commissioners rejected the proposal completely.

The MIA returned to the boycott with strategies to sustain it. This was a serious challenge because of the nature of the community: It was one of the poorest communities in the nation and its members needed the income that going to work on the buses provided. The protesters had no choice—they still had to go to work, go to school, and carry on the activities necessary for survival, such as paying the rent or mortgage and putting food on the table. Most members of the community were in service jobs and positions. They were nannies, cooks, maids, butlers, dishwashers, and laborers. This was not a community in which owning an automobile was a basic rite of passage.

ORGANIZED DEFIANCE

The MIA turned to the 45,000 African American community members to organize car pools to get people to and from work. With family and community members volunteering their cars and services as drivers, local insurance agents started canceling liability policies on what were called the “MIA taxis.” King’s response to this was to seek out a black insurance agent in Atlanta who provided policies covered by Lloyd’s of London. Thus the MIA had worked out a scheme and schedule that enabled the African American community to successfully continue the boycott.

Meanwhile, city officials were seeking ways to break the protest and the spirit of the boycott. They tried several strategies. On December 10 they put their first strategy into effect when they completely withdrew city buses from African American routes and neighborhoods. Their second strategy was to threaten taxi drivers with prosecution if they charged African American patrons less than the 45 cent minimum fare. Then, on January 21, 1956, they initiated their third strategy when the city commission met with three black ministers who were not part of the MIA and reported that a compromise had been reached and the boycott ended. This news was leaked to the press, with newspapers—especially the mainly white newspaper, the *Montgomery Advertiser*—encouraged to report

that the boycott was over. News of this trickery reached King and the MIA officials in enough time for them to counter it by spreading the truth in the grassroots establishments of the community, such as local eateries, bars, and nightclubs.

On January 26, when city officials made their fourth attempt to force the African American community to end the boycott, it was clear that the white establishment was getting desperate. While conducting a car pool, King was hawkishly tailed by a motorcycle cop. The moment that he dropped off his passengers, the cop ordered him out of the car and arrested him for driving 30 miles per hour in a 25 mile per hour zone. Following this, a less legal route was used by some members of the white community to try to dissuade the MIA from continuing their protest. On January 30, Martin Luther King’s Montgomery home was bombed while his wife and baby daughter and a friend were inside. Fortunately, no one was injured. On February 1, E. D. Nixon’s home was also bombed.

On February 21, King, along with 89 African American activists in the bus boycott, were charged with being a party to conspiracy. They were indicted for hindering and preventing the operation of business without any just or legal cause. King was ordered to pay \$500 in fines in addition to another \$500 in court costs. As the boycott continued, the business community, especially the downtown store owners, began to feel the economic pressure of the protest. The boycott was costing them thousands of dollars because African American patrons were less likely to take weekend shopping trips into the downtown district. The store owners formed a group called the Men of Montgomery in reaction to the boycott. The aim of the group was to negotiate a way to end the boycott—not for moral reasons, not to end segregation, but to keep their profits from evaporating. Their negotiations never really led to any outcomes.

On June 4, 1956, the U.S. district court ruled 2 to 1 that racial segregation on the Montgomery city bus lines is unconstitutional. A Southern judge cast the dissenting vote. The City of Montgomery resisted this ruling and appealed it. Five months later, on November 13, the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed the decision of the federal district court and declared unconstitutional Alabama’s state and local segregation laws. Even with this announcement, the MIA did not immediately endorse patronage of city buses. They waited patiently for the arrival of the mandate from the Supreme Court. On December 20, the federal

injunctions prohibiting segregation on buses were delivered to both the city of Montgomery and the bus company, and Alabama state officials were served with injunctions.

December 21, 1956 saw the end of racial segregation in Alabama. African Americans returned to the city buses, but not without a price and future anguish. The city halted bus service at 5:00 that afternoon due to several sniper attacks aimed at the buses. The Supreme Court decision to integrate the buses led to a wave of countless bombings of African American homes, churches, cab stands, and service stations. On January 27, 1957, an unexploded bomb was discovered on the porch of the King residence. Just over a year later, in February of 1957, King and several ministers who served in the MIA moved to Atlanta, where they formed the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and elected King as their president.

Yet Montgomery and Alabama remain the cradle of the civil rights movement, as they were the proving ground for King's nonviolent resistance techniques. Coretta Scott King, in *My Life with Martin Luther King Jr.*, wrote that "Montgomery was the soil in which the seed of a new theory of social action took root." Rosa Parks, the bus boycott, the nameless 45,000 African American citizens of Montgomery, the MIA, and the Women's Political Council can best be described as the droplets of water that would precede the flood of the 1960s civil rights movement.

— Adeniyi A. Coker

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MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE OF AMERICA

The Moorish Science Temple of America, Inc. is a nationalist and Islamic organization that was founded in 1913 in Newark, New Jersey. It was first called the

Canaanite Temple, then later it was reestablished as the Moorish Holy Temple of Science, and finally, it was incorporated in 1928 in Chicago as the Moorish Science Temple of America (MSTA). Its founder and prophet, Noble Drew Ali (1886–1929), was born Timothy Drew in North Carolina. There is still some mystery surrounding Ali's early life and influences. But it is known that he spent a portion of his youth on a Cherokee reservation, and that he was part of a Freemasonic lodge as a young man. Both experiences evidently played some role in his decision to establish the Canaanite Temple and eventually the Moorish Science Temple. Ali's stated purpose was to inform the people in the Americas who were labeled *Negro*, *colored*, and *black* of their true nationality and origins as Moors. The temple membership officially maintains that they were born in the Americas but are the descendants of the peoples of the old Moroccan Empire. The word *Moroccan*, according to the temple, is the modern word for *Moabite*.

POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

As a nationalist organization, the temple membership places great emphasis on identifying themselves specifically as Moors and Moorish. Although the members reject the use of the word *black* to describe them, nothing in the official literature instructs them to reject Africanity. They avoid describing themselves as black because they understand that the term *black* has no international recognition as an actual nationality connected to a nation and government. Moorish Americans also point to the negative meanings primarily associated with the term *black* in the English language. Although the membership does not directly assert an understanding of the ancient Kemetic concept of Nommo (the power of the spoken word), they adhere to the concept's basic principles by refusing to identify with the pejorative Eurocentric designates of *black*, *Negro*, and *colored*. The temple membership believes that in doing so they are spiritually, politically, and psychologically empowered.

TEACHINGS

The official teachings declare that Moorish Americans are to "propagate the faith . . . and to establish the faith of Mohammed in America." But Moorish Science Temple Muslims do not practice religious orthodoxy. MSTA Islam submits to Allah via adherence to a

simplified spiritual creed. Moorish Scientists, as they call themselves, are taught to maintain love, truth, peace, freedom, and justice. Temple members are taught to engage the world with these spiritual principles in this order, with love being first and justice being last. Moorish Muslims are more concerned with following the basic spiritual principles than they are with following the more orthodox practices associated with the religion of Islam. In fact, Ali called Moorish Science “Islamism” to distinguish it from the Islamic religion.

Ali represents a homegrown teacher whose teachings are seen as having direct relevance to the African’s peculiar conditions in the Americas, as evidenced by the fluid approach to the ritualized practice of spiritual laws. Nevertheless, his teachings are closely related to Sufism and to the Marabout and Murid Islamic Orders of Africa, in that they follow the basic elements of Islamic cosmology while remaining regionally centered and drawing their key guides and venerated ancestors from their own immediate community and unique history.

The sacred (i.e., “official”) literature of the Moorish Science Temple of America includes *The Holy Koran of the Moorish Science Temple of America* (which is also known as *The Circle Seven*), *Koran Questions for Moorish Americans*, and *Moorish Literature*. The Moorish Koran is different from the orthodox Muslim *Holy Koran al-Sharif*. Whereas the *Koran al-Sharif* (which is also known as the *Koran of Mecca*) focuses on the revelations of the Arab Prophet Muhammed, the Moorish Koran focuses on the life and teachings of the Prophet Issa (who is also known as Jesus). The Moorish Koran is much shorter in length than the voluminous *Koran of Mecca*, with the Moorish Koran consisting of only 63 pages. The *Koran Questions* is a kind of catechism that addresses key issues and perspectives concerning the Moorish worldview. An example of the 101 questions asked is “What does the word colored mean? Colored means anything which has been painted, stained, varnished or dyed.” This example illustrates why Moorish Americans have rejected the nomenclature of *colored*. The *Moorish Literature* is a collection of essays and editorials authored by the prophet Noble Drew Ali that includes the essays “What is Islam?” and “A Divine Warning by the Prophet for the Nations.”

When Ali established his temples, he instructed his membership to publicly and officially declare their

Moorish nationality and Islamic faith. Ali warned that it would be legally and spiritually detrimental for them to describe themselves using “slave” designates such as *Negro*, *black*, and *colored*. In his essay “A Warning From the Prophet in 1928,” Ali said that through the adoption of their “free National name [Moor],” Moorish Americans would “receive their divine rights unmolested by other citizens.” Temple adherents use the term *Asiatic* to refer to Africans and Asians collectively, and although MSTA members call the African continent Amexem, the Moorish Science literature still uses the terms *Africa* and *Africans* to refer to historical and cultural identity. Moorish Americans are customarily identified by their use of the surnames Bey and El.

ESSENTIAL BELIEFS

There are five essential beliefs that emerge from an examination of the temple teachings: (1) that the Moors were an Africoid people with historical roots in both Africa and Asia (which are viewed as holy lands), (2) that there was a pre-Columbian Moorish presence in the Americas, (3) that African Americans (i.e., blacks) are direct descendants of Moors, (4) that the Moorish Science Temple interpretation of Islam has both historical and theological precedents that justify its credibility, (5) that the official declaration of Moorish nationality via the government-recognized MSTA results in greater political rights for temple members as full U.S. citizens under federal law.

Presently there are several Moorish Science-oriented groups that stem from the original Chicago-based MSTA organization founded in 1928. Such splinter groups go by various appellations, but they generally utilize the Moorish name and use portions of the original teachings. The groups are varied, with some putting greater focus on the nationalist and political element than others. The MSTA is now led by Brother R. Jones-Bey, who was voted its National Grand Sheik in September of 2002. The heads of the various temples are known as sheiks or sheikesses, and the heads of the various states are known as grand governors or grand governesses. One of the most unique aspects of the Islamic MSTA is its history of having had women as the heads of temples and states.

— José Vittorio Pimienta-Bey

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MOYNIHAN REPORT

Published in 1965 and officially titled *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, the Moynihan Report was the product of a federally funded study designed to pinpoint the reasons for African Americans' lagging economic growth and stability in the wake of significant civil rights legislation. President Lyndon B. Johnson turned the government's attention to the noteworthy gap in wealth, employment, and income between whites and blacks. Johnson recognized that due to recent legislation, such as the Civil Rights Bill of 1964, legal barriers no longer existed for African Americans, and he desired to discover the root of this large discrepancy in order to help African Americans achieve economic success. To this end, he appointed a committee headed by Daniel Patrick Moynihan, a senator from New York, to study the reasons for the discrepancy.

The study was informed by research done by African American sociologist E. Franklin Frazier. Frazier believed that enslavement, urbanization, racism, and oppression inhibited African American families from functioning properly. Moynihan, the primary author of *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, ended the report with a quote from Frazier that described the detrimental impact of disorganized family structure on the African American community. Thus family structure was a central focus of the Moynihan Report.

After completing the study, the committee determined that while approximately half of all African

American families were securely middle class and living according to the dominant culture's values, the other half were struggling in a pathological existence. The committee concluded that much of the economic instability in the African American community was due to the legacy of 300 years of enslavement, which led to drastic structural distortions in African American lifestyles, specifically a deteriorating family structure. In particular, through the institution of slavery, the family structure of African Americans had become matriarchal. This matriarchal structure had continued into the 1960s when the Moynihan Report was written. However, while this family structure was initially the result of enslavement and oppression, the continuation of this structure after the removal of those conditions indicated that the pathology that plagued the black community had become self-perpetuating.

MATRIARCHAL FAMILY STRUCTURE CONTROVERSY

By "matriarchal families" the committee meant families that were headed by women and where women were the principle wage earners of the families. In this family structure, girls received more education than did boys, women secured better jobs than men, and women were the primary transmitters of culture. The committee cited the matriarchal structure as pathological not because it was inherently pathological, but because it was not the predominant mode of family structure in the dominant culture. The committee argued that matriarchal structure alienated African American men and made them feel inadequate because they could not attain economic or social status equal to that of either white males or their African American female contemporaries. Further, African American women resented their spouses for not contributing more to the family economically. As a result, many men abandoned their families, and the divorce rate rose. As marriage subsequently became less frequent, the number of illegitimate births in the African American community rose significantly. These phenomena in turn perpetuated the matriarchal structure in African American families.

The Moynihan Report further outlined the problems of female-headed households for the children reared in this family structure. First, children who were the products of such environments often suffered

from lower IQ scores, arguably because of limited opportunity rather than inherent intellectual deficiencies. Male African American children from these homes had a much more difficult time adjusting to the expectations of the dominant culture than did females. They earned lower grades in school than African American females, and engaged in delinquent behavior more often.

Family Structure Labeled Pathological

The report repeatedly indicates that the issues resulting from a pathological family structure only applied to the half of the African American population with this structure. However, the pathology of this lower class became problematic for all African Americans due to segregated housing, which resulted from the increased African American population in urban centers and the subsequent exodus of white residents to the suburbs. Middle-class African Americans could not move away from their lower-class neighbors, and they therefore could not escape the contaminating influence of the pathological existence of that segment of the African American population. This often resulted in African American families managing only a short-term (i.e., one generation) escape from that pathology.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE REPORT

The publication of *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action* thrust its principal author, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, into a rather harsh spotlight, because he had a reputation as a supporter of civil rights. He said that he had undertaken this study to help develop a plan to aid in the economic and social betterment of African Americans, with an eye to their achieving social and economic equality of opportunity with members of the white majority culture. All of the issues outlined in the Moynihan Report were deserving of the attention and action of the federal government. And yet, there were no specific recommendations in the report, because the purpose of the Moynihan Report was solely to articulate the problems.

In addition, due to the time of its publication, the Moynihan Report contributed to the turmoil being expressed by the civil rights movement. Some sought to use the report to prove the inherent inferiority of African Americans. This was not difficult to do, though the report explicitly states that there are no inherent

inferiorities in African Americans' capabilities. It was easy to overlook that qualifier in analyzing the extensive data that shows African Americans had lower incomes, higher rates of illegitimate births and infant mortality, more divorces, lower IQ scores, and higher delinquency rates, in addition to a pathological family structure. Further, although the report also states that these data are not reflective of all African Americans, generalization of the data was common because there were no data on the other half of African Americans, the African Americans who were succeeding in America.

Civil rights leaders and intellectuals criticized the Moynihan Report for many reasons, not the least of which was its questionable methods in calculating and reporting statistics. The Moynihan Report did not attempt to undertake the weighty task of examining contributing factors to each of the issues it raised, limiting itself to superficial explanations of the phenomena. This left the public with misunderstandings as to the nature of the problems faced by the African American community. Thus social program development, one of the fundamental reasons behind doing the report in the first place, would only touch on the superficial aspects of the problems rather than solving the much more critical, structural factors.

— Jill Kissick

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Rainwater, Lee, and Yancey, William A. (1967). *Moynihan Report and the Politics of Controversy.* Cambridge: MIT Press. This work was contemporary with the publication of the Moynihan Report. It includes the complete Moynihan Report, as well as analysis of the impetus for the study and the immediate public, governmental, and academic repercussions of its contents.

www.dol.gov/asp/programs/history/webid-meynihian.htm This is the official Department of Labor's historical Web site. It not only offers the complete Moynihan Report broken down by chapter (which is reliable considering the Department of Labor sponsored the original report), but it also has as an introduction President Lyndon B. Johnson's speech introducing the purpose and plan for the study that later became known as the Moynihan Report.

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Multicultural education is an idea, an educational reform movement, and a process. A major tenet of multicultural education is that all students, regardless of their race, ethnic group, culture, or language, should be provided an equal opportunity to learn in schools, colleges, and universities. Because multicultural education focuses on providing equal educational opportunities for all students, it is consistent with the democratic ideals and values that are expressed in the founding documents of the United States, such as the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. A major goal of multicultural education is to actualize for all the ideals that the founding fathers intended for a small elite. Multicultural education is a process because the goals toward which it aims, such as educational equality and justice, are ideals toward which we must continually work but may never totally achieve.

Multicultural education theorists and researchers believe that an important part of a political democracy is cultural democracy. When cultural democracy exists within a political democracy, racial, ethnic, cultural, and language groups are able to fully participate in the civic life of the nation-state while maintaining important aspects of their community cultures, identities, and languages. The history of ethnic groups in the United States and other nations indicates that it is difficult for a political democracy to exist when cultural democracy is denied to disempowered groups. Ethnic and racial groups focus on cultural survival and empowerment rather than on the overarching issues of the mainstream society when they are denied full participation in the economic and political communities of a nation-state. They also focus on cultural survival when the mainstream society does not reflect and incorporate their histories, struggles, perspectives, and dreams. The structural inclusion of ethnic, racial, cultural, and language groups is an essential requirement for justice and equality in pluralistic democratic nation-states.

EDUCATIONAL REFORM

In their quest to attain equal educational opportunities for students from diverse ethnic, racial, cultural, and language groups, multicultural educators have documented the ways in which educational achievement in

the United States and other nations is highly stratified by race, social class, and language. There are wide discrepancies in the academic achievement of middle-class white students and African American, Latino, and Native American students. The racial, ethnic, and class stratification in the larger American society is reproduced in the schools and the nation's colleges and universities.

Multicultural education theorists and researchers have constructed various theories to explain why schools and universities have not been able to create equal educational opportunities for disempowered groups such as African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans. Some of these theories focus on the need for curriculum content that includes the history and cultures of various racial and ethnic groups, the need for school reform that reflects the cultural and learning styles of diverse groups, and the need for more African American and other teachers of color. Other theories and research focus on the inequitable funding that is received by urban schools attended by African Americans, Latinos, and other groups that are disproportionately low income. A group of theorists who call themselves critical multiculturalists argue that schools and universities are carrying out their latent function, which is to sort various racial, ethnic, and income groups into their predetermined roles in adult society.

THE AFRICAN AMERICAN ROOTS OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Multicultural education emerged out of the civil rights movement that began in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s. An important consequence of the civil rights movement was the demand by African Americans that school, college, and university curriculums be reformed to reflect their history, culture, identity, and perspectives and that more black teachers and professors be hired. In response to these demands, colleges and universities established Black Studies courses and programs. The first response of the nation's schools to the civil rights movement was to implement black history courses at the high school level and to incorporate into elementary schools units and lessons on blacks who left a mark on history.

African American scholars who were teacher educators and curriculum specialists were among the first educators to create theories, curriculums, and materials for the integration of black history into school

curriculums. Later, these teacher educators broadened the scope of their work to include other ethnic groups who were victims of institutional racism, such as Native Americans, Mexican Americans, and Asian Americans. These African American teacher educators were among the first and major architects of multicultural education. They include James A. Banks, Carl A. Grant, Gwendolyn C. Baker, and Geneva Gay. *Teaching Ethnic Studies: Concepts and Strategies*, which was edited by Banks and published in 1973 by the National Council for the Social Studies as its 43rd Yearbook, was one of the first educational publications to use a comparative approach to the teaching of ethnic content. James A. Boyer, Asa Hilliard, and Barbara A. Sizemore are other African American scholars who have influenced the multicultural education movement in significant ways through their research, teaching, public lectures, and service.

The African American teacher educators who were among the architects of multicultural education were heavily influenced by the early work of African American scholars and Black Studies scholarship. The historical works of W.E.B. Du Bois, Carter G. Woodson, John Hope Franklin, and Benjamin Quarles heavily influenced Banks and the other African American constructors of multicultural education. These teacher educators were working to incorporate black history into school curriculums prior to participating in the formation of multicultural education. Consequently, the current multicultural education movement is linked directly to the early study of African Americans undertaken by scholars such as George Washington Williams, W.E.B. Du Bois, Carter G. Woodson, Horace Mann Bond, and Charles H. Wesley. The multicultural education movement is linked in another important way to Black Studies in that both have struggled for academic legitimacy since their founding.

THE DIMENSIONS OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Since the multicultural education movement emerged, a number of theories have been developed to provide a coherent overview of the field. James Banks's dimensions of multicultural education are cited frequently by scholars and used widely by school districts to conceptualize and develop courses, programs, and projects. The five dimensions of multicultural education delineated by Banks are (1) content integration,

(2) the knowledge construction process, (3) prejudice reduction, (4) equity pedagogy, and (5) an empowering school culture and social structure. Although each dimension is conceptually distinct, in practice they overlap and are interrelated. Each of the dimensions is defined and discussed below.

Content integration deals with the extent to which teachers use examples and content from a variety of cultures and groups to illustrate key concepts, principles, generalizations, and theories in their subject area or discipline.

The knowledge construction process describes teaching activities that help students to understand, investigate, and determine how the implicit cultural assumptions, frames of reference, perspectives, and biases of researchers and textbook writers influence the ways in which knowledge is constructed. The knowledge construction process helps teachers and students to understand why the cultural identities and social positions of researchers need to be taken into account when assessing the validity of knowledge claims. Multicultural theories hold that the values, personal histories, attitudes, and beliefs of researchers cannot be separated from the knowledge they create.

The *prejudice reduction* dimension of multicultural education seeks to help students develop positive and democratic racial attitudes. It also helps students to understand how ethnic identity is influenced by the context of schooling and the attitudes and beliefs of dominant social groups.

An *equity pedagogy* exists when teachers modify their teaching in ways that will facilitate the academic achievement of students from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, social class, and language groups. This includes using a variety of teaching styles and approaches that are consistent with the range of learning styles within various racial, ethnic, and cultural groups.

An *empowering school culture* involves restructuring the culture and organization of the school so that students from diverse racial, ethnic, social class, and language groups experience equality. Members of the school staff examine and change the culture and social structure of the school. Grouping and labeling practices, sports participation, gaps in achievement among

groups, different rates of enrollment in gifted and special education programs among groups, and the interaction of the staff and the students across ethnic and racial lines are important variables that are examined and reformed.

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION AND THE FUTURE

The U.S. Census projects that people of color will make up 43% of the nation's population by 2050. In 2002, students of color made up 40% of the population in the nation's public schools; they are projected to make up 60% of the school population by 2050. In 2002, one in five students in U.S. schools was a child of immigrants. It is projected that one in three students will be a child of immigrants by 2040. As racial, ethnic, language, and religious diversity in the United States increases and the nation's need to respond to this diversity intensifies, a conservative movement has become a powerful influence in the United States as well as in other Western nations.

The politically powerful conservative movement in the United States is questioning the nation's commitment to racial and ethnic diversity and promoting fear and concern about immigration to the United States. The September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States have given impetus to and helped to legitimize conservative sentiments in the nation. Consequently, multicultural education exists today within strong contradictory forces. Changing demographics, which have been called the "demographic imperative," are an important force prodding multicultural education and equity. The conservative movement exerts a counterforce. However, the greatest

force that supports multicultural education and its goals are the American democratic values embodied in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. Multicultural education's reinforcement and perpetuation of American democratic values provides it with its greatest possibility for survival and for being on the right side of history.

— James A. Banks

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N

NARRATIVES OF THE ENSLAVED

Narratives of the enslaved, which are also called slave narratives, are autobiographical stories about life in slavery, recounted orally or in writing. They range from the earliest recorded narratives of the 1600s to the thousands of oral histories collected from elderly Africans in the 1930s by the U.S. Works Progress Administration. These narratives are rooted in the oral tradition of storytelling, which has been an explicitly political tradition, combining both autobiography and social criticism. The narratives of the enslaved represent one of the few indigenous literary forms, if not the only one. Many themes commonly occur in the narratives: human suffering under the bondage of slavery; physical and spiritual abuse; the longing for freedom; the struggle to acquire literacy, which is associated with power and freedom; the importance of family and the difficulty of maintaining family bonds when enslaved; the growing determination to escape; escape from enslavement; and a new self-definition after freedom.

During the formative era of African-American autobiography, from 1760 to the end of the Civil War in the United States, approximately 70 narratives of fugitive or former slaves were published as discrete entities—some in broadside formats, others in bulky, sometimes multivolume texts. As the narratives of the enslaved evolved in the crisis years of the 1850s and early 1860s, they addressed the problem of enslavement with unprecedented candor, unmasking as never before the moral and social complexities of the American caste and class system in the North as well as the South.

With the rise of the antislavery movement in the early 19th century came a demand for stories that would emphasize the harsh realities of slavery. These began to appear in print in the late 1830s and early 1840s. White abolitionists believed that testimony of former enslaved Africans would touch the hearts of people in the North who were unaware of or apathetic about the situation of Africans in the South. These abolitionists would often add a preface or appendix to a narrative of the enslaved that introduced the writer as a person of good character and summarized what the narrative would reveal about the horrors of enslavement. The narratives of the enslaved of this period tell about passing from bondage in the South—a kind of hell on earth—to freedom in the North. Most of the narratives reveal a common experience: The enslaved person has a personal crisis, such as the sale of a loved one by the slaveowner, that causes him or her to decide to escape.

A MODEL FOR LITERATURE OF THE OPPRESSED

Narratives of the enslaved comprised most of the literature written by blacks from 1861 to 1865. After the Civil War and the abolishment of slavery in the United States in 1865, Africans continued to write about their experiences. From 1865 to 1930 at least 50 Africans wrote, or told to another person who then wrote down, book-length accounts of their lives. Most of the authors of African American literature before 1900, including Frederick Douglass (1818–1895), William Wells Brown (1814–1884), Harriet Ann Jacobs (1813–1897), and Booker T. Washington (1856–1915),

launched their writing careers through their narratives of the enslaved. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, the Federal Writer's Project gathered spoken personal histories and testimony about slavery from 2,500 former slaves in 17 states, generating about 10,000 pages of interviews that were published in 18 volumes.

The narrative of the enslaved reached a milestone in 1845 with the publication of the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself*. Selling more than 30,000 copies in its first 5 years of publication, Douglass's book became an international best seller. Abolitionist leader William Lloyd Garrison (1805–1879) stressed that Douglass's narrative represented the usual experience of slavery, but he also noted that Douglass presented his story from the viewpoint of a former slave who seeks mental as well as physical freedom. That view made Douglass's narrative stand out from the rest.

Harriet Ann Jacobs, the first African American woman to write her own narrative of the enslaved, showed how sexual control by white masters made slavery especially oppressive for black women. Her autobiography, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861), shows how she fought back against this oppression and gained freedom for herself and her two children. The best-selling narrative of the enslaved of the late 19th and early 20th centuries was Booker T. Washington's *Up from Slavery* (1901), a classic American success story. Because Washington's autobiography discussed black progress and interracial cooperation since the freeing of Southern slaves in 1863, it received more acceptance from whites than did the autobiographies of former slaves who told of injustices to blacks in the post-Civil War South.

CRITICISM AND REFUTATION

Ulrich B. Phillips, a Georgia-born Yale professor, posed profound questions regarding the slave narratives' authenticity. Phillips, considered the "historian's historian," dismissed the words of the formerly enslaved. Unfortunately, it took 40 years before scholarship began to refute the extremely biased, if not racist, research done by Phillips. However, some questions do linger about the legitimacy and reliability of the narratives of the enslaved. For instance, the majority of the interviewers were white, and this may have dampened the full force and truth of poor blacks'

speech, as the narratives solicited by black interviewers clearly elicited a more straightforward response on the part of former slaves. That ex-slaves dared to risk self-exposure to share as much as they did with white interviewers about the horror of slavery and the blacks' thirst for freedom is a tribute to the interviewers and, in many cases, a demonstration of the blacks' courage and reluctance to conceal the most fiendish examples of the antebellum South.

A LITERATURE OF TESTIMONIES

In most post-emancipation narratives, slavery is depicted as a kind of crucible in which the resilience, industry, and ingenuity of the enslaved person was tested and ultimately validated. Thus the narrative of the enslaved asserted the readiness of the freedman and freedwoman for full participation in the post-Civil War social and economic order. It has been estimated that a grand total of all contributions to this genre, including separately published texts, materials that appeared in periodicals, and oral histories and interviews, numbers approximately 6,000, a significant body of work for a people just out of enslavement.

In addition to autobiographies, slave testimonies appear in diaries; folklore; speeches; sermons; letters; pre-Civil War publications; church, legislative, and judicial records; petitions; abolitionist newspapers; major newspapers during that time, such as the *New York Times*; scholarly journals; private printings; and broadsides. These are the primary sources that were corroborating witnesses to the enslavement, resistance, and freedom of African people in the United States.

— Darrianna M. Proctor

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NAT TURNER'S REBELLION

In August of 1831, Nat Turner led the bloodiest slave rebellion in U.S. history. Believing that he had been ordained by God to free African Americans from bondage, the slave preacher from Virginia killed nearly 70 whites before militiamen stopped him and his followers. Although his rebellion ultimately failed, it forever affected slavery and race relations throughout the country and helped lead to the Civil War.

Nathaniel Turner was born the slave of a farmer named Benjamin Turner in Southampton County, Virginia, on October 2, 1800. According to local legend, Turner's African-born mother, Nancy, considered killing him at birth so that he would not grow up in bondage; the name of his father, who escaped from slavery when Turner was a baby and was never heard from again, has been lost to history. Several months before Turner's birth, an enslaved blacksmith named Gabriel Prosser had planned a full-scale rebellion in the state capital of Richmond but was betrayed by a fellow conspirator. Southampton suffered its own minor insurrection scare around the same time, when Africans murdered three whites in a span of less than 18 months, but it was generally thought that most enslaved persons would not rebel against their condition in this isolated backwater.

NAT TURNER BECOMES A LEADER

Turner showed exceptional intelligence from a young age, teaching himself to read and performing experiments with paper, gunpowder, and earthen moulds. He could recall events that had occurred before he was born, even though no one had told him about them, and he had congenital bumps and scars on his head and chest, which according to some African traditions were a sign that he would become a great leader. Many of his compatriots believed that he had supernatural powers, and even local whites agreed that he was uncommonly talented. The austere young man devoted himself to prayer and studying the Bible, focusing especially on the biblical idea that humans are to search for the kingdom of God before other things. In Turner's mind, whatever the African people required would be given to them if they sought first that which was pleasing to God. After weeks of reflection, he later recalled, a spirit twice spoke to him while he worked in the fields. This convinced him

that he was destined for some great mission on behalf of God. He began preaching among the enslaved, inspiring them with tales of his communion with the spirit and gaining a reputation as a divinely ordained messenger.

Turner often wondered why he remained enslaved on earth if God in heaven had chosen him for greatness, and in 1821 he finally decided to run away. After hiding in the swamps for 3 weeks, however, he returned to the plantation, explaining that the spirit had ordered him to resubmit to his master. Turner may have also been motivated by less spiritual concerns; according to some records, he married a woman named Cherry several months later. In 1822, the new couple was separated when their master died suddenly and his heirs sold Turner to prominent landowner Thomas Moore and Cherry to a nearby farm. Like his birth, this prominent moment in Turner's life coincided with a major insurrectionist scare. In July, Charleston whites uncovered a planned uprising that may have included as many as 9,000 enslaved and free blacks and was led by two church leaders, a free carpenter named Denmark Vesey and an Angolan-born "conjurer" known as Gullah Jack.

TURNER'S VISION

Turner began experiencing visions again while in his mid-20s. He told other Africans that when he looked at the sky he saw the sun darkened; blood flowing in streams, representing the hands of Jesus on the cross; and black and white spirits struggling in battle. On corn in the fields he saw drops of blood; on leaves in the woods he saw blood-drawn numbers and images. The spirit also instructed him, he later said, in the movements of planets and tides and the changing of the weather and seasons. This further convinced the African community that Turner was in direct communication with God, and he expanded his ministry through Southampton County. Some whites began to fear that Turner might inspire the enslaved to rebel, but since he was a dutiful worker and his preaching had no overt racial message, Thomas Moore and his wife Sally indulged him. For the most part, he was seen as a harmless dreamer whose religion made him more docile, even after he ministered to and baptized a white man in 1828. All of this activity proved an asset during the rebellion, when he would draw on not only his large following but also his familiarity with the local geography and his connections with some of the most disgruntled

Africans in the county. Even if he did not know it at the time, Turner was gathering intelligence for a war.

By the late 1820s, tensions between North and South over the issue of slavery had become so intense that some foresaw open war between the states. Antislavery sentiment was led by such activists as William Lloyd Garrison, Frederick Douglass, and David Walker, whose controversial *Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World* argued that it was the will of God that the enslaved should rise up against their masters. It was during this period that Turner had his most apocalyptic vision. According to *The Confessions of Nat Turner*, on May 12, 1828, the spirit told him to watch for a signal to “fight against the Serpent” and “slay my enemies with their own weapons,” for “the time was fast approaching when the first should be last and the last should be first.” Thus Turner came to believe that God intended for him to lead his people in armed rebellion against their masters.

He began waiting for a sign to begin, showing no outward sign of his plans except for an incident when he received what was probably the first whipping of his life after he told Thomas Moore that the enslaved should be freed. Moore died soon after and his widow married a carriage maker named Joseph Travis. By Turner's own admission, Travis was a relatively kind master, but this did not change Turner's convictions. When a solar eclipse occurred on February 12, 1831, Turner believed that he had finally received a divine signal to begin his war. He told several trusted allies about his vision and they began recruiting other enslaved and free blacks. Turner also revealed his plans to Cherry, although neither she nor their children took an active role in the rebellion. The uprising was scheduled to begin on July 4, but when the day came, Turner fell sick from anxiety. His courage returned on August 13, however, after another solar eclipse convinced him of the righteousness of his task. Eight days later, Turner and his lieutenants met in the woods near the Travis plantation and decided to begin their rebellion that very night while most of the local militia was away at a religious revival. They intended to head toward the county seat of Jerusalem, killing every white they encountered and recruiting more rebels from the African community along the way.

THE REBELLION

The insurrection began several hours after midnight with the murder of Joseph Travis and his family.

Turner himself struck the first blow, but his sword was too dull to inflict a mortal wound, so others finished the task. After securing several firearms and practicing military drills, the rebels swiftly moved through the countryside, killing white families and gaining new recruits at each stop until their number swelled to over 40 men. Among the victims were relatives of Turner's first master, although Cherry's master was spared. Turner took only one life, a young woman named Catherine Whitehead whom he beat to death with a fence post. She and most of the more than 60 white casualties were killed in the first hours of the rebellion while most people were sleeping. By early morning, however, frightened blacks and several whites who had narrowly escaped death fled to Jerusalem with tales of a massive black uprising led by a preacher named Turner. Some even thought that the enslaved had joined forces with an invading army from Great Britain or Haiti. Hundreds of militiamen headed toward Jerusalem to intercept Turner, some attacking any enslaved or free blacks they could find. In fact, the first black casualty was an innocent bystander who had drunk himself into a stupor after watching Turner's men kill his master.

THE CHAOS AFTER THE REBELLION

The uprising essentially came to an end at noon when militiamen routed the exhausted rebels on the highway to Jerusalem. Although the rebels initially held off the militia's charge, the greater number of militia finally proved too much for the rebelling blacks to fight, and Turner and his troops fled into the wilderness. Nearly all of them were captured or killed in the following few days, along with over 120 innocent enslaved and free blacks who fell victim to a reign of terror so brutal that even some whites found it excessive. One crossroads on the Jerusalem highway was thereafter known as the Blackhead Sign Post because the head of a lynching victim was mounted there. Many of the armed whites who began patrolling the countryside wanted to exact revenge on all the black people they saw, whether or not they had been involved in the rebellion. By the end of the week, however, the violence had largely died down.

Over the next few months, more than 40 rebels were tried and executed for murder and inciting rebellion. Another 10 who had played lesser roles had their death sentences commuted by the governor, provided that they left the state immediately. One of the last to

die was Turner himself, who remained free for 2 months but was finally captured on October 30 by a farmer who saw him emerging from his hiding place near a local farm. He was taken to the courthouse in Jerusalem, where he gave a full confession describing his religious visions and the details of the insurrection. Even though he had been defeated, he still believed in the righteousness of his actions. When asked about cash that was allegedly stolen during the revolt, he turned to a free black and said, "You know money was not my object."

TURNER'S CONFESSION

On November 1, Turner gave a second confession, this time to local slaveholder and lawyer Thomas R. Gray (who contrary to popular belief was not Turner's defense attorney). Later published as *The Confessions of Nat Turner*, Gray's account shows a proslavery, anti-Turner bias and contains details that cannot be verified independently, but it also shows a grudging respect for Turner's intelligence, spirit, and religious devotion. Most other whites, however, were not so generous. Turner's conviction and death sentence on November 5 were a foregone conclusion, and he was hanged 6 days later, disappointing the huge crowd by not making a statement from the gallows. Local whites skinned and dissected his body, making a purse from his skin and keeping his skull as a souvenir.

The effects of Nat Turner's rebellion were immense and far-reaching. Many Southampton Africans who were guilty of nothing more than failing to resist the rebels were sold away to the Deep South. Turner's wife and children seem to have escaped reprisals, possibly because their connection to the preacher was not widely known. In an effort to prevent future uprisings, Virginia and other Southern states greatly expanded their slave patrols and militias; this large group of armed, well-trained white men would one day form the core of the Confederate Army. Although many Northern whites condemned the rebellion, sectional tensions increased as slaveholders became further convinced that their way of life was under attack. Northern abolitionists in particular were targeted for inspiring violence. Bounties were placed on William Lloyd Garrison's head, and one jury in Raleigh even convicted him in absentia for inciting rebellion, although no evidence of a connection between Turner and Garrison—or any other abolitionist—has ever been found.

Free blacks and black preachers also came under fire after the rebellion. Most Southern legislatures banned or severely restricted both groups and made it more difficult for masters to emancipate their slaves. This in turn contributed to the growth of black communities elsewhere; many free blacks migrated to the North and West after they found that they would no longer be tolerated in Southern cities. Over 200 of Southampton County's free blacks, for example, migrated to the North or to Liberia within months of the rebellion. Since Turner had been literate, many states created or strengthened prohibitions against teaching Africans to read. Ironically, the rebellion nearly brought an end to slavery in Virginia. Decades-old debates about whether or not it would be safer to expel all blacks, free and enslaved, finally came to a head in the fall when the state assembly met. In the end, however, Virginia planters were not willing to give up the free labor that was the source of their wealth, and slavery survived until the Civil War.

NAT TURNER BECOMES A LEGEND

In the years that followed, Nat Turner was remembered by whites as one of the most hated figures in Southern history, becoming a boogeyman whose name was used to scare small children. Many whites continued to believe that he was a mentally unbalanced fanatic, influenced by abolitionists and free blacks, who had used false religion to take advantage of allegedly simple-minded and superstitious enslaved Africans. It was unthinkable that his actions might have been a calculated, understandable response to oppression. African Americans in Virginia and elsewhere took a different view, however, calling him "General Nat" and referring to the rebellion as "Nat's Fray" or "Old Nat's War." Through folk stories, he was transformed into a fierce general and a trickster hero who had defeated white men both in battle and with his mind. Despised by the dominant culture, Turner was lionized by Southern blacks as one of the few Africans who successfully waged open war against slavery.

— David Brodnax

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NATION OF ISLAM

The Nation of Islam is an indigenous African American socioreligious movement that was founded in 1930 by W. D. Fard in Detroit, Michigan, and developed by Elijah Muhammad. Though it began as a socioreligious protest movement, its worldview is to a large extent embedded in the Qur'an (which is also spelled Koran). It should not be confused with orthodox Islam, which evolved in Mecca around 622 C.E.

The Nation of Islam arose in the United States in response to the crude, racist bigotry; socioeconomic injustices; lynching; and mob violence against African Americans in the first decades of the 20th century. Another factor in the receptivity of the African American community to Islam was the failure of the Black Church to influence public policies in African Americans' favor. Hence, the most despondent members of the African American community began to search for a new cultural and religious identity, which they found in Islam.

ORIGINS AND EARLY TEACHINGS

The Nation of Islam evolved from the Moorish Science Temple founded by Noble Drew Ali in 1913 in Newark, New Jersey. When the temple split into two factions, W. D. Fard moved to Detroit and trained several ministers to create a new group—the Nation of Islam. Among them was Elijah Poole, later Elijah Muhammad, who at the time was an unemployed auto worker from the South. His knowledge of the Bible, as the son of a Baptist minister, was what inspired W. D. Fard to make Elijah Muhammad the Supreme Minister of the Nation of Islam. This explains why the Nation of Islam derives its ideology from both the Bible and the Qur'an.

A core of the socioreligious teachings of both Fard (who had become known as Fard Muhammad) and

Elijah Muhammad was that African Americans are the original black nation of Asia known as the Tribe of Shabazz. This nation was said to have originated in Africa when a great explosion divided the earth from the moon some 60 trillion years ago. The Tribe of Shabazz discovered that the rich land between the Nile Valley and Mecca was the best part of the earth on which to live. But since the Tribe of Shabazz was enslaved for 400 years, Fard Muhammad and his messenger Elijah Muhammad were sent by Allah to relocate the "lost-found nation" in an independent state. Therefore, since the so-called Negroes were not and could not be American citizens by nature or race, they could be said to constitute a nation within a nation. Hence, Elijah Muhammad renounced his U.S. citizenship and urged his followers to do likewise.

Another core belief of the Nation of Islam is that it is the religion of salvation and truth for black people, whereas Christianity is the religion of "evil white" people. The theme "white devil" comes directly from the teachings of Noble Drew Ali, which identify white people as the embodiment of the Satan in the Bible. The Nation of Islam also believes that Yacub, a descendant of the Tribe of Shabazz, 6,800 years ago in Mecca, created a vengeful plot to enslave the tribe. Yacub was skillful in genetics and developed the white race through creating Adam and Eve by cross-breeding. Two thousand years later, Allah raised Moses to civilize the white race.

The teachings of the Nation of Islam included images of the Armageddon by which the white race would fall ignominiously into destruction, while in the East the black Muslims would rise triumphantly to rule the world and freedom, justice, and equality would prevail forever. The belief that Allah would restore the New World Order after the final battle against the "white devil" was preached in Elijah Muhammad's Mosque in Chicago. Images of Armageddon were also significant in the sermons of Malcolm X, the national spokesman of the Nation of Islam, at Harlem's Temple Number Seven in the late 1950s.

Elijah Muhammad turned the Nation of Islam into a popular movement with a massive following. By establishing mosques in poor inner-city areas, the nation created several social and educational institutions and activities in places where there had been none. It reached into the poor, drug-infested neighborhoods and the prisons with its message of a radical break with the past and a new beginning.

CURRENT TEACHINGS

There is a continuation of some of these teachings in the contemporary Nation of Islam. Now the goals of the Nation of Islam are to secure freedom, justice, and equality under the law; equality of opportunity; and an end to police brutality and mob attacks against African Americans. The Nation of Islam's other goals for those of African descent include employment opportunities, exemption from all taxation, prohibition of intermarriage or race mixing, knowledge of Islam, and a separate state for African Americans.

The Nation of Islam believes it is important for its members to be clean in spirit, mind, and body. This belief is the source of the group's prohibition of alcohol, gambling, fornication before marriage, adultery, and dancing for its members. The members also have dietary limitations—excluding pork, collard greens, corn bread, and neck bones from their diets because they are reminders of slavery, and including foods such as fish, chicken, and rice. Members are required to change their last names to X in order to rid themselves of their “slave names.” The X is also said to represent the unknown identity associated with the African ancestry. In the Nation of Islam, men wear suits and ties and are clean shaven and women cover their heads, wear long dresses that reach to their toes, and wear no makeup. There is a separation between the sexes during prayers. Members are taught to adhere to a strict moral and economic code that fosters thrift, capital gains, and self-respect.

The economic development of the Nation of Islam has involved the establishment of farms, livestock and vegetable cultivation, rental housing, private home construction, real estate purchases, food processing centers, restaurants, Islamic schools, clothing factories, banking, business league formations, import and export businesses, health care, administrative offices, and men and women's development and leadership training units. In 1972, the Honorable Elijah Muhammad opened a \$2 million mosque and school in Chicago. This nation-building (*asabiya* in Arabic) program is an attempt at fostering the principle of self-determination through collective ownership of business.

CRITICISM OF THE TEACHINGS

In many respects, the Nation of Islam has brought hope to disenfranchised African Americans. It connects them to a religion not associated with the legacy of the

enslavement, as well as providing a break with degradation, poverty, and the racial bigotry of the American establishment. For African Americans, Islam symbolizes a rejection of white Christianity and its Eurocentric history and culture and offers a new way of life based on complete submission to the will of Allah.

However, the Nation of Islam's claim that it consists of the descendants of the original, great black Asiatic nation is a fantasy of a glorious history of black Afro-Asia. In addition, the notion of the Tribe of Shabazz located between the Nile Valley and Mecca is without any historical reality. The idea of Islam as the religion of nonwhites is also untrue and caused Malcolm X to break away from the nation after his visit to Africa and the Holy City of Mecca in 1964. This visit transformed him from a black Muslim into a Muslim, as he met blond, blue-eyed men he could call his brothers.

CHANGES IN LEADERSHIP

In 1963, Elijah Muhammad's son, Wallace D. Muhammad, and Malcolm X found themselves let down by Elijah Muhammad's infidelity within the *ummah* (i.e., the community of Muslims). By 1964, a serious breakdown had occurred in the relationship between Elijah Muhammad and Malcolm. When Malcolm was assassinated, many people accused the Nation of Islam in the death of its most popular spokesperson.

Wallace D. Muhammad (later known as Iman Muhammad) succeeded his father, Elijah Muhammad, as leader of the Nation of Islam after the latter's death in 1975. Iman Muhammad rapidly evolved the Nation of Islam into the World Community of Islam in the West. He accused his father of failing to give the “true” Islam to his community. He bestowed honor on Bilal Ibn Ribah, a great person of African heritage in the history of early Islam, and changed the title of the Nation of Islam's publication from *Muhammad Speaks* to *Bilalian News*. But by 2003, Iman Muhammad had resigned his leadership, explaining that the imams did not want to follow the strict Islam that he taught. Elijah Muhammad's brother, John Muhammad, took over the World Community of Islam in the West when Iman Muhammad resigned.

THE NATION OF ISLAM UNDER FARRAKHAN

The shift from the Nation of Islam's *asabiya* (nation building) to the purely *umann* (religious community)

of the World Community of Islam in the West had left a void that Louis Farrakhan, a follower of Elijah Muhammad and the most popular preacher in the Nation of Islam, sought to fill. Farrakhan succeeded in acquiring the major temple and residence of Elijah Muhammad in Chicago. The temple was renamed the Mosque Maryam and Muhammad's University of Islam School. It focuses on educating African Americans and other minority groups to arm them in their struggle against racism in the United States. The Nation of Islam under Louis Farrakhan has restored the worldview of Elijah Muhammad, including that of Fard Muhammad as the long-awaited Messiah of the Christians and the Madhi of the Muslims. The Nation of Islam also continues to uphold the December Fast to distinguish it from Ramadan, which is practiced by orthodox Muslims. Under Minister Louis Farrakhan, the legacy of Elijah Muhammad continues and the Nation of Islam advances as an institution committed to the transformation of the American society.

— Kwame Botwe-Asamoah

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was founded in 1909 in

New York City by a group of black and white citizens committed to social justice and improving the quality of life for African Americans. It was based on the Niagara movement, a group of African American activists and scholars who opposed Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Machine, which was a political network and the dominant voice and interpreter of the African American people at the turn of the 20th century. Washington used his vast connections to influential whites and their financial support to gain prominence and position as well as to build the Tuskegee Institute. He also used his access to money and influence to dictate the discussion about the future of the African American community.

In 1905 in Niagara Falls, Canada, 29 activists met to discuss how to minimize Washington's influence and create a new class comprised of what W.E.B. Du Bois called the "talented tenth" of the black population. The activists were educated men and women, and they felt that the social, political, and economic situation of blacks demanded bold action. The group, which included Ida B. Wells and Monroe Trotter, planned to move aggressively to gain full rights of citizenship for blacks.

The Niagara movement agitated in the courts and demonstrated a willingness to be defiant in its fight against racism. It was with this spirit that the Niagara movement members led the 1909 founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, which has grown to include half a million members and become the nation's most important civil rights group. There are 1,700 branch chapters and 450 college and youth chapters. The organization has had a powerful influence on the legal structure of the country, and Thurgood Marshall and Charles Houston, two of the most distinguished lawyers ever to serve in the organization, made legal history with their arguments before the Supreme Court.

The NAACP has made bold investigations of mob brutality and protested mass murders of blacks, segregation, and discrimination. The organization has also made testimony before congressional committees on the vicious tactics used to bar African Americans from the ballot box. Many members of the NAACP legal staff participated in the battles between the white Southerners and the progressive forces to eliminate racial segregation. Among these pioneers for justice have been some who are well known, such as W. E. B. Du Bois, Thurgood Marshall, Walter White, James Weldon Johnson, Roy Wilkins, and others,

thousands of others, whose names may not be remembered but who placed their lives on the line for civil rights and justice. This is what has given the NAACP its noble history.

— *Mario Root*

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Lewis, David Levering. (1993). *W.E.B. Du Bois: Biography of a Race, 1868–1919*. New York: Henry Holt. Written by one of the master historians of the contemporary era, this book shows the intimate way in which Du Bois led the discussions about race in the nation.

NATIONAL BLACK POLITICAL CONVENTION, GARY, INDIANA

From March 10 to March 12 in 1972, the National Black Political Convention was held at the Westside High School in Gary, Indiana. The convention was cochaired by Gary mayor Richard G. Hatcher, U.S. Representative Charles C. Diggs, and poet-activist Amiri Baraka of the Congress of African Peoples. The convention was an all-African American gathering that brought together both integrationist and nationalist leadership in an effort to create a progressive political agenda for the African American community.

Of the 8,000 convention attendees, 3,300 were delegates representing 42 states. The delegates claimed membership in various civil rights, community, and political groups and were selected via statewide political caucuses. African American elected officials were automatically given delegate status. Among the delegates were Jesse Jackson, Louis Farrakhan, Bobby Seale, Julian Bond, Betty Shabazz, Coretta Scott King, Barbara Jordan, Carl Stokes, Coleman Young, Louis Stokes, Vincent Harding, Patricia Patterson, Kim Weston, Walter E. Fauntroy, Ronald Dellums, Richard Roundtree, Yvonne Braithwaite, and Patricia Patterson.

The convention participants held diverse viewpoints regarding the best political direction for the African American community. The group addressed both local and national issues. What the attendees shared was a desire for African Americans to play a

larger role in the decision making that affected their communities on a daily basis. They sought to continue and further develop the visions of such key figures as Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. The hope was that an agenda could be developed that would be relevant not merely to the delegates but, more important, to the people they served at home.

Among the issues and goals that were discussed during the course of the convention were the following:

- the education of African American children
- the creation of a program for black farmers and rural development
- the institution of day care for all working parents
- the creation of geriatric centers for the aged
- the establishment of home rule for the District of Columbia
- the establishment of a national network of community health centers
- the elimination of capital punishment
- the creation of a national health insurance program
- a government guarantee of a minimum annual income of \$5,200
- a minimum wage guarantee of \$2.50 an hour
- the creation of a black united fund

Agreeing on which issues were relevant to the masses of African Americans proved to be a far easier task than coming up with viable solutions for the challenges raised. The ideologically diverse gathering of delegates struggled to reach consensus regarding many issues raised during the course of the event. The most dramatic occurrence involved the Michigan delegation, led by Detroit mayor Coleman Young. Fearing that the agenda was too separatist, the heavily unionized Michigan group walked out in protest of what they viewed as a platform that if it was endorsed might jeopardize what they considered beneficial ties with organized labor.

The work of the convention culminated with the ratification of the “Action Agenda for Black People.” This 55-page document touched on domestic and foreign policy issues and articulated a plan for African American empowerment in the public and private sectors of American life. After the convention, its delegates pressured President Richard Nixon’s administration to create several policies in line with the aims of the National Black Political Convention. The Nixon Administration created business funding, affirmative

action, and welfare reform measures that mirrored recommendations offered by the delegates. In addition, the Democratic Party created a platform that incorporated ideas first generated at the convention.

Although some goals in the “Action Agenda for Black People” became reality, much of the agenda was never implemented. One legacy of the convention was the upsurge in the number of African American elected officials and African American community groups after this 1972 meeting.

— Christopher K. Johnson

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NATIONAL BLACK UNITED FUND

In 1972, the National Black United Fund (NBUF) was founded as a black philanthropic institution whose purpose was to enhance the quality of life for black people and empower the African American community. The genesis of the NBUF is linked directly to the Brotherhood Crusade, which was created in Los Angeles in 1968 by a group of concerned black activists led by Walter Bremond of the Cummins Engine Foundation. These activists were inspired by the civil rights and social change movements of the era to create a group to promote charitable fund-raising in the black community. The Brotherhood Crusade’s mission was to create a systematic and strategic model for black fund-raising and black self-help.

In 1972, some nationally recognized black leaders sought to establish a network that would link the movement for social change with independent fund-raising efforts from around the country. Among these black leaders were the Reverend Negail Riley, the Reverend Dr. Leon Sullivan, Quincy Jones, Dr. Dorothy Height, Leroy Jones (later known as Amiri Baraka), and Lucius Walker, all of whom

would serve as founding members on the National Board of Directors. With grant support from the Cummins Engine Foundation, NBUF was incorporated in New York and located its national headquarters in Harlem. Walter Bremond served as the organization’s first executive director, and James Josephs, president of the Cummins Engine Foundation, became chairman of the board. Affiliate organizations immediately sprang up in major urban centers such as New York, Detroit, Boston, San Francisco, Dallas, and Houston.

NBUF’s overall mission was to find ways for the black community to fund its own liberation struggle. NBUF challenged social inequities and the unequal distribution of power in American society. Most important, it created a viable, systematic, and cost-efficient mechanism for black Americans to make charitable contributions to black organizations engaged in social change and the development of black human potential. Funding programs that focused on human services, community development, social policy development, social advocacy, and cooperative economics were given top priority.

During its initial stage of development, NBUF relied primarily on foundation support and payroll deductions as a means to support the work of the organization. Workplace giving was viewed as an appropriate fund-raising strategy since most black income was derived from salaries. Being cognizant of the high percentage of African Americans employed by the federal government (including in military service), NBUF recognized that the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) program, which permitted federal employees to contribute directly to nonprofit organizations through payroll deductions, could provide a stable and reliable source of revenue for the organization and its affiliates. However, NBUF was initially denied entrance to the CFC program. In response, in 1976 NBUF legally challenged the unfair, discriminatory practices of the CFC. In 1980, NBUF secured the legal right to enter the CFC program when a federal court ruled that the organization’s constitutional rights had been violated. This breakthrough allowed myriad other “alternative” charitable organizations to benefit from federal employee campaigns that had previously been dominated by the United Way of America.

Walter Bremond continued to provide visionary leadership for the organization until his death in 1982. However, following his death, NBUF board members

engaged in a bitter and eventually destructive struggle over the control of the organization. As a result, many prominent board members departed, leaving NBUF in a state of disarray. It was several years before Dana Alston was selected as the permanent executive director. Under Alston's leadership (1985–1987), NBUF continued to expand its mission, focusing on affiliate development, environmental concerns, and women's issues as part of its overall program objectives. In 1987, William T. Merritt assumed the position of CEO and president of the organization. Under his leadership, NBUF incorporated the National Black United Federation of Charities (NBUFC)—a federation of over 45 national black nonprofit organizations engaged in social justice, policy advocacy, community development, and charitable services—and expanded its mission to include wealth and asset building for individuals, families, and nonprofit organizations in the black community.

Throughout its over 30 years, NBUF and its affiliates have succeeded in generating millions of dollars in charitable revenue by participating in employee payroll deduction campaigns that have included federal, state, and local government employees as well as corporate employees. Through its local affiliates the organization distributes grants to community-based organizations and institutions serving the black community. However, NBUF's many accomplishments pale in comparison to the community's potential for philanthropic development. Substantial funding, educational programs, marketing tools, and adequate access to philanthropic dollars are still needed to continue realizing the dream of black social and economic empowerment. Moreover, internal strife, resulting in legal battles between the national body and several of its local affiliates, has threatened to divert the organization's resources and energies from its main purpose and mission.

NBUF strives to maintain its leadership role as the premier black fund-raising and philanthropic organization. By providing stable and ongoing support for black nonprofit organizations, NBUF hopes to serve as the anchor for a new vision of economic empowerment and the social revitalization of the African American community. The essence of its mission and ongoing purpose is clearly stated in the organization's motto, as NBUF continues to be: "The Helping Hand That Is Your Own."

— Patricia Reid-Merritt

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NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR BLACK STUDIES

The National Council For Black Studies, Inc. (NCBS) was founded in 1975 by a group of academics, under the leadership of Bertha Maxwell (later Bertha Maxwell Roddey), that pioneered some of the earliest Black Studies programs on university campuses in the United States. The purpose of the organization is to promote and strengthen academic and community programs in the area of Black Studies.

Bertha Maxwell Roddey, often referred to as the "Mother of the Black Studies Movement," was the person responsible for convening the group in 1975 in Charlotte, North Carolina, from March 18 to March 21. This group had as its goal to review and analyze the structure and goals of Black Studies programs across the nation. A follow-up meeting was held in July of that year at the Educational Testing Service (ETS) in Princeton, New Jersey. It was at this meeting, convened by ETS's William Harris, that the organization was created, with Maxwell elected temporary chairperson.

From its inception, the organization viewed itself as representing the academic discipline responsible for describing and analyzing the world from a black perspective. However, the term *black perspective* could not be sustained, as the organization's members came from various disciplines and professions and held numerous perspectives. Over the years, the organization matured, along with the discipline, placing the highest value on curriculums and scholarship rooted in the history, culture, social realities, and worldview of Africa. In 1985 the organization sharpened its statement

of purpose, specifying that the National Council For Black Studies is a professional organization that defines, promotes, and enriches Black Studies as a vehicle to further the development of people of African descent. The books *Afrocentricity: The Theory of Social Change* (1980) and *The Afrocentric Idea* (1987) by Molefi Kete Asante and *Kawaida Theory* (1980) by Maulana Karenga contributed immeasurably to this evolution.

In addition to its revised statement of purpose, the organization needed a concise slogan or motto that would communicate its *raison d'être* quickly and easily. The NCBS found such a motto in a phrase coined for a very successful NCBS conference, which was organized in 1983 by Abdul Alkalimat (then known as Gerald McWhorter) for the Illinois Council of Black Studies. The phrase "Academic Excellence and Social Responsibility" became and continues to be the motto of the organization because it so clearly reflects its commitment to scholarship for the betterment of its community.

A RADICAL ORGANIZATION

By its very nature, the National Council For Black Studies was a radical organization at the time of its founding. Black Studies programs were a logical intellectual extension of the civil rights movement of the 1960s that challenged the Eurocentric curriculum and white supremacist philosophies of the American academy. Maulana Karenga, in his *Introduction to Black Studies* (1982), indicated that one of the principal roles of Black Studies scholars is to critique and correct the literature written by others. Black students and other progressive students and community activists demanded a comprehensive transformation of higher education, requiring a rethinking of its curriculum, the hiring of black faculty, and the kind of student support services that would enhance the likelihood of success for students who had been socially and economically deprived. However, while these goals for Black Studies programs were clear, the establishment of the programs turned out to be for the most part a political compromise rather than the outcome of enlightened, rational decision making, and what was accomplished fell far short of what was envisioned. In fact, the old establishment did not expect Black Studies programs to survive, and whenever possible, institutions found ways to undermine Black Studies programs and the faculty who taught in

those programs. NCBS dared to organize black teacher-scholar-activists to defend their measured but essential victories.

Early on, the council formed an Intervention Committee, the primary function of which is to investigate complaints of institutional attacks on Black Studies programs or individual Black Studies faculty. In fulfilling its charge, the committee has advocated for and defended Black Studies through negotiating with university administrators, publishing editorials in local and national media, and filing amicus briefs with the court. In the mid-1980s, the attack on the discipline was widespread enough to prompt Delores P. Aldridge, then the president of NCBS, to issue a press release in July of 1986 to urge public elected officials to hold public hearings to address the issue of the destabilization of Black Studies through the removal from chair positions of persons of strong Black Studies leadership. All too often, poorly supported programs were being exploited by administrators anxious to seize the moment to disrupt Black Studies. Citing specific cases at the State University of New York at Albany, the Ohio State University, San Jose State University, and Portland State University, Aldridge related these attacks to the declining retention and graduation rates of black students, who depended on the mentoring of individual black faculty and the support of Black Studies programs for their academic success.

CHANGES IN LEADERSHIP

Headquartered for the first 16 years of its existence at Indiana University in Bloomington, NCBS benefited greatly from the unequivocal support of Herman Hudson, then the dean of African American Affairs, and Joseph Russell, who served as the executive director of the organization from 1976 to 1991. Under the auspices of Russell, as the newly appointed vice chancellor for Minority Affairs at the Ohio State University, the national office moved to Columbus, Ohio. Shortly after its relocation there, the executive director position was assumed by Jacqueline Wade, the former director of the Black Studies program at the University of Pennsylvania. In 1994 the organization's contract with the Ohio State University expired. Selase Williams, who was completing his second term as president of NCBS and had accepted an appointment as dean of the College of Arts and

Sciences at California State University, Dominguez Hills, was able to negotiate a new contract for NCBS on that campus. During its 8 years at Dominguez Hills, the organization had a series of executive directors: Hansonia Caldwell, Jossiah Cobbah, Tina Lee, and Faye Edwards. In the spring of 2002, the national office was invited to relocate to Georgia State University, under the auspices of Charles Jones, chair of the African and African American Studies Department, and with a new executive director, Patricia Dixon.

DEDICATION TO ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Because of the primary emphasis of Black Studies on high quality, accurate, and complete educational experiences for students, much of the council's attention has been devoted to curriculum development. This resulted in the publication of the *Black Studies Core Curriculum* (1981), which was developed by a committee chaired by Perry Hall and subsequently referred to as the Hall model. As an interdisciplinary model, it requires an introduction to Black Studies course and a series of three courses each in three broad subject areas: (1) social and behavioral studies, (2) history, and (3) cultural studies. The culminating course is a senior seminar in which students are expected to synthesize their knowledge from other courses and apply that knowledge in ways useful to their community.

In the 1980s, the Ford Foundation commissioned a series of studies on the discipline of Black Studies that were carried out by various African American scholars. Especially noteworthy among these studies was *Afro-American Studies: A Report to the Ford Foundation* (1985) by Nathan Huggins, the director of the W.E.B. Du Bois Institute for Afro-American Research at Harvard University. The report identified institutions like Harvard and Yale as home to the premier Black Studies programs in the country. NCBS challenged this assessment on the basis that the study had used only traditional criteria for determining quality. NCBS asserted that there were many programs whose outreach efforts and development of student leadership had significantly impacted the black communities around their respective institutions. They also stated that these achievements were more consistent with the goals envisioned for Black Studies programs than were the purely academic achievements measured by the study.

SURVEYS OF BLACK STUDIES

Between 1987 and 1988, Ford engaged noted historian Darlene Clark Hines to survey Black Studies faculty at various campuses to chronicle the achievements of the discipline. One of those campuses was the University of Washington in Seattle, which had only recently established the Department of Comparative American Studies, a consolidation of Afro-American Studies, Asian American Studies, and Chicano Studies. Selase Williams, who was then the director of Afro-American Studies, invited Hines to meet with the executive board of NCBS. That meeting resulted in the development of an NCBS proposal to the Ford Foundation and a 3-year, \$300,000 grant focused on three areas: (1) professional development, (2) curriculum standards, and (3) program data centralization. Delores P. Aldridge, president of the organization and the person who shepherded the proposal, became the project director. The awarding of this grant constituted a major milestone in the history of the organization.

Professional development was a very important component of the grant since many, if not most, faculty teaching in Black Studies programs were self-taught in areas of the black experience. While a scholar's dissertation research might have centered on some aspect of the black experience, his or her training was in a traditional discipline. The grant provided support for NCBS to enroll 15 to 20 scholars who recently graduated with their doctorates and newly appointed Black Studies faculty in the NCBS Summer Institute to study with some of the most prominent scholars in the field. Of equal importance were NCBS Administrative Training Workshops for new and aspiring Black Studies chairs and program coordinators.

The curriculum standards component of the grant was assigned to the Curriculum and Accreditation Committee, headed by William A. Little, in collaboration with Carolyn Leonard and Edward Crosby. The committee was charged with collecting data on existing curriculums and curriculum models, constructing model curriculums, and compiling curriculum development guidebooks. One of the products that resulted from this project was the *Holistic Afrocentric Curriculum Development Model* (1990), which differed significantly from the curriculum in the Hall model and broke away from other curriculum models that used Eurocentric disciplinary categories (e.g., history, psychology, sociology, art). Use of traditional

disciplinary categories had led Black Studies scholars to define the African world experience in terms of black history, black psychology, black music, black art, and the like, whereas the committee's holistic model reconceptualized and repackaged knowledge in ways that better reflect an African worldview and transcend the artificial disciplinary boundaries imposed on knowledge as if they were universal. The holistic Afrocentric model is also an alternative to the periodization model developed by Abdul Alkalimat and Associates in their textbook *An Introduction to Afro-American Studies: A People's College Primer* (1986), which is organized chronologically, focusing on critical periods in the social development of the African American community.

Delores Aldridge personally took on the task of collecting and analyzing baseline data on Black Studies programs across the country. While initially planning to survey only institutions with Black Studies programs, the project ended up designing a survey instrument that was administered to all 4-year colleges and universities in the United States.

SUCCESS WITH FORD FOUNDATION SUPPORT

The success of the projects funded by the Ford Foundation inspired the foundation to award NCBS an extension in funding for another 3 years. Thus, Ford provided the organization \$600,000 over the 6-year period from 1988 to 1994. The second period of funding coincided with the organization's interest in rekindling and formalizing its links with Africa. Although the early period in the development of Black Studies witnessed the first introduction of students and many faculty to Africa, by the 1990s most Black Studies programs focused primarily, if not exclusively, on the African American experience. In response to this situation, in 1991 NCBS began planning a series of international conferences, the first to be held in Ghana, West Africa, in the summer of 1993. Selase Williams, who was president of NCBS from 1990 to 1994, and William Little, chair of the International Affairs Committee, cochaired the Conference Planning Committee. In this capacity, they traveled to Ghana in 1991 and 1992 to lay the groundwork for NCBS's first international conference and to build relationships with educational, governmental, and nongovernmental organizations. As a consequence of these efforts, the conference was cosponsored with the Universities of

Ghana, the Association of African Universities, and the W. E. B. Du Bois Centre for Pan African Culture. NCBS was successful in taking 350 African Americans to Ghana, in addition to participants from England, Germany, the Caribbean, and many other African countries.

With the annual conference being held in Ghana during the summer, the organization located the Summer Institute there, availing the institute fellows of outstanding Ghanaian scholars, as well as those from the United States, and giving institute fellows firsthand exposure to West Africa. Many of the institute fellows collaborated with Ghanaian scholars in research projects, exchange programs, and other scholarly activities. Because of the multiple benefits that were gained from holding the institute in Africa, all subsequent institutes have been held in Ghana.

In addition to the success of its annual conferences, the council achieved a major milestone in 2002 when it joined the list of organizations that participate in the National Black United Fund (NBUF). Patricia Reid-Merritt, a member of the executive board and author of *Sister Power* (1997, Wiley), spearheaded the application process for this honor. As a member of this consortium, NCBS can solicit financial support through payroll deduction and ultimately build an endowment to support its efforts in perpetuity.

Over the years NCBS has maintained special relationships with organizations having similar missions. Among those organizations are the National Association of Black Cultural Centers, African American Heritage Studies Association, Association for the Study of Classical African Civilizations, Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History, the Assault On Illiteracy, the National Black Child Development Institute, National Society of Black School Educators, and the Association of Black Psychologists.

LEADERSHIP AND EXPANSION

While there are many prominent teacher-scholar-activists who have played essential roles in the development of the National Council For Black Studies—and an even larger number of those who have conducted the research, written the textbooks, developed the courses, and published the books and periodicals that serve as the foundation for the discipline—there are nine individuals who have provided leadership to the organization during the various

phases of its almost 30-year history. These people are listed below in chronological order:

Bertha Maxwell Roddey, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, 1975–1978

William King, University of Colorado at Boulder, 1978–1980

William Nelson, Jr., The Ohio State University, 1980–1982

Carlene Young, San Jose State University, 1982–1984

Delores P. Aldridge, Emory University, 1984–1988

Charles Henry, University of California, Berkeley, 1988–1990

Selase W. Williams, California State University, Northridge, 1990–1994

William A. Little, California State University-Dominguez Hills, 1994–1998

James Stewart, Pennsylvania State University, 1998–2002

Shirley Weber, San Diego State University, 2002–2004

Thanks to the many individuals who have dedicated themselves to the NCBS, the organization continues to expand into new areas. The NCBS conducts an annual student essay contest, administers program reviews, and publishes a newsletter, *The Voice of Black Studies*. In 1992, the NCBS published its inaugural issue of *The Afrocentric Scholar: The Journal of the National Council for Black Studies*, with partial support coming initially from West Virginia University and more recently from Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. With William Little as the editor, the journal was renamed the *International Journal of Africana Studies* in 1998 to reflect the global perspective being promoted by the National Council For Black Studies and the integration of African, African American, and diasporic studies in the evolving discipline.

— Selase W. Williams

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NATIONAL NEGRO CONGRESS

The National Negro Congress (NNC) had its beginnings at the conference Economic Crisis and the Negro, which was held in Washington, D.C., in May of 1935. The conference was sponsored by the Joint Committee on National Recovery and Howard University's Department of Political Economy. The conference produced evidence that depression and recovery trends were forcing African Americans into an even lower economic and social position than they had previously occupied. It decided to create a national congress to educate African Americans in the techniques of group action and in developing an action plan.

The organizing committee convened for the first time in November of 1935 in Washington, D.C. The meeting included all types of African American organizations and had as its goal developing a platform to unite them in a program addressing African Americans' economic, social, and civil security needs. The National Negro Congress was structured to be a federation of organizations, to include people of

different political parties and philosophies as well as those of different races, and to assume the responsibility of coordinating a national plan of action, which was to be developed the following year at the Chicago convention.

At that first organizational meeting in 1935, temporary national officers and organizers were elected and appointed. After the Chicago convention in February of 1936, the temporary officers became permanent. The elected officers were A. Philip Randolph, president; John P. Davis, executive secretary; Marion Cuthbert, treasurer; and Joseph Evans, assistant treasurer. The overall purpose of the NNC was to develop an organized protest against Jim Crow laws and traditions. Its agenda included ways to bring about social, political, and economic advancement for African Americans.

The participants at the Howard University conference agreed that African Americans were experiencing an economic crisis whose root was racism. American industry and unions made it a practice to exclude African Americans, thereby creating the crisis. It was believed that African Americans needed options to the NAACP, and that the NNC could provide a viable alternative. Members of the NNC intended to prove to their fellow Americans that African Americans are a valuable segment of the American economy, are an important resource in times of national emergency, and are only seeking what is rightfully theirs under the U.S. Constitution.

At the outset, the organization identified several immediate concerns. They were (1) to see that African Americans exercised their right to seek and find meaningful employment that provided a living wage; (2) to open the doors of trade unions to African American membership; (3) to provide assistance to African American farmers who were in dire straits and losing their farms; (4) to stop vigilante violence, lynching, and police brutality; (5) to help African Americans to be able to use their voting rights and serve on juries; (6) to secure rights for African American women and youth; (7) to oppose colonialism, fascism, and war.

During the first few years of its existence, the personal philosophy of the NNC's first president, A. Philip Randolph, guided the organization. He believed that it was only through constant struggle that African Americans could hope to get justice and freedom. In 1945, the NNC instituted a basic change in its policy. A view promoted by board member Benjamin J. Davis argued that new times called for a new

approach. In his view, problem solving could occur through statesmanship, politics, and appealing to the legislatures, and he saw no reason to continue the NNC practice of developing additional local units. This argument was opposed by Edward E. Strong, former national executive secretary, who believed it to be a communist plot to weaken NNC influence and increase the sway of the Communist Party. He remained adamant in his refusal to change the ideology of the NNC to one that supported educational forum over developing affiliated groups.

In the end, the executive committee's decision to become an educational forum contributed to the demise of the NNC. The new policy reduced the impact of the NNC in the Black United Front movement and removed the most effective avenue the NNC had to reach African Americans. The NNC had always had a problem with not following through on the resolutions adopted at its national conventions. With the new focus, the NNC was losing touch with its affiliate organizations, which had the responsibility to transmit these resolutions locally. To the organization's dismay, it soon became evident that the new policy of writing papers and issuing press releases rather than the old policy of confrontation was a failure.

Perceiving that there was no future in the NNC, many of its executive officers resigned. Local affiliates and labor unions also began to leave the congress after it was branded by the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) as a subversive organization. Losing members and influence, the NNC decided in November of 1947 to join forces with a new organization called the Civil Rights Congress (CRC), which had been formed in Detroit in 1946. The program of the latter organization was similar in nature to that of the old NNC. It used protest to attract attention to violence against African Americans in the form of lynchings, police brutality, and discrimination. The CRC, however, was also denounced by HUAC as a communist front organization.

The NNC did serve a useful purpose. During its first 4 years, it showed that it could deliver acceptable programs to its affiliates. For all of the years of its existence, it continued to use its forum to agitate for full citizenship with all of its inherent rights for African Americans. By far, its most significant contribution was its ability to keep in front of African Americans, and the American public at large, the idea that the guarantees of the Constitution are attainable, if the populace in sufficient numbers would marshal

their forces to bring to bear the moral condemnation of the world.

— Zetla K. Elvi

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NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE

The National Urban League is an organization that was founded on social work theory and research to initiate and promote community-based programs to assist urban black America. The need for such an organization emerged from the history of blacks in the United States after the end of the Civil War in 1865, when emancipation promised a great deal but actually offered little freedom to blacks in the South. Then *Plessy v. Ferguson* and Jim Crow laws increased oppression and legal separation of the races. The 20th century brought the industrial revolution to the North, which provided job opportunities for the wave of European immigrants to the United States. The availability of social, cultural, and employment opportunities contributed to an exodus of blacks from the South to Northern cities. Migrants new to the North encountered limited access to anything but menial jobs and were offered little except the effects of urbanization—poor housing and limited access to education. Although discrimination was prevalent, urban life in

the North still provided opportunities unavailable in the South.

ORIGINS

Philanthropic organizations funded initiatives to educate and train the unskilled labor pool in the North. Organizations established with interracial boards—such as the Committee for the Improvement of Industrial Condition Among Negroes in New York (founded in 1906), the National League for the Protection of Colored Women (founded in 1906), and the Committee on Urban Conditions Among Negroes (founded in 1910)—provided housing and vocational and educational training. These groups, led by Ruth Standish Baldwin and George Edmund Hays, later consolidated to form the National League on Urban Conditions Among Negroes in 1911.

Baldwin, the wife of philanthropist and railroad magnate William H. Baldwin, was active in the National League for the Protection of Colored Women and spent much of her time as an advocate for social justice, especially for the protection of women from mistreatment and manipulation. George Hayes, a sociologist who worked in New York for the Committee for the Improvement of Industrial Condition Among Negroes, believed in training blacks as social workers. Hayes approached Baldwin with his theory regarding the importance of both research and training to prepare blacks for urban life and of educating blacks in the social sciences. Together they worked to establish the National League on Urban Conditions Among Negroes, which Baldwin insisted that Hayes lead to ensure the incorporation of his ideas into the framework of the organization.

The league provided programs that included counseling, education, employment, and housing for the migrants. Under Hays, the league also created a social service department at Fisk University, which created a model for developing a vested interest in black colleges serving urban communities. Due to the success of its programs, by the end of World War I the league had grown to include 27 affiliates staffed by paid professionals.

The league had a pivotal year in 1918. The first of the year's many changes involved the league's name. Many thought the name National League on Urban Conditions Among Negroes was cumbersome, so the organization agreed to shorten its name to the National Urban League, with the change becoming

official in 1920. Also during this time, the New York office became an affiliate and plans were under way to establish a national program that would reorganize and change the direction of the league. George Hayes left the league to join the Department of Labor, and Eugene Kinckle Jones became the next to direct the National Urban League.

WORKS AND PROGRESS

This era of the National Urban League, with its national programming and leadership, became one of further expansion. League members, under the leadership of Eugene Kinckle Jones, expanded employment opportunities for blacks by creating personal relationships with business owners. In addition, the league engaged in a continual struggle to get blacks into unions by working with the American Federation of Labor and creating publicity campaigns urging blacks to join labor unions. To formalize this initiative, the National Urban League established a Department of Industrial Relations. It promoted its campaign by contributing articles to black trade labor and trade publications. The National Urban League also sponsored a study to ascertain the veracity of the notion that the unions discriminated against blacks. The study, which was conducted by Charles S. John and Ira De A. Reid, revealed that blacks were in fact being denied admission to major labor unions.

Another initiative the National Urban League and Kinckle embarked on was to persuade public agencies to adopt the organization's projects, which gave form to the league's social service ideology. The league also provided vocational and educational programs for children. In addition, the league realized the need to get back to the theory and practice of social science research, so it established the Department of Research and Investigations. The department collected and analyzed data on the social and economic conditions of blacks in cities, usually in the form of a survey. The surveys allowed the league to present its case with factual data. The league's Department of Research and Investigations also was responsible for getting the Carnegie Corporation to finance the New York Public Library's acquisition of the Schomburg Collection, the largest collection of research materials about the African world, which had been founded by Arturo Schomburg, an Afro-Puerto Rican. In addition, this department of the league filled requests for information about blacks for research and educational purposes.

The league also sporadically published the *Urban League Bulletin*, which reported the work and progress of the organization. To broaden its audience, in 1923 the league started its own magazine, *Opportunity: Journal of Negro Life*. The magazine's purpose was to create a forum for black authors and provide the public with authoritative, scholarly articles pertaining to the issues and situation of blacks in the United States. It also chronicled current activities, providing information about people, programs, practical information, values, education, work, self-sufficiency, and recognition of black artists.

As the Depression hit, the National Urban League's Department of Industrial Relations worked tirelessly to create and retain opportunities for blacks, who were losing jobs and consideration in favor of the white workforce. To understand the severity of the situation, the league conducted two major studies, "How Unemployment Affects Negroes" and "Unemployment Status of Negroes." The studies confirmed that the number of unemployed blacks was disproportionately high relative to their proportion of the population. Jones led petition drives and letter-writing campaigns to impress upon business leaders that the league could not economically support any establishment that would not employ blacks. During this era, the league also expanded its responsibilities by creating access to middle-class employment for blacks through providing preparation that enabled them to pass civil service exams.

CIVIL RIGHTS BATTLES

After World War I, the National Urban League began its foray into the political spotlight and also began to address civil rights issues. In 1934, the National Urban League approved a proposal of antilynching legislation and initiated letter-writing campaigns to senators. As the federal government became the nation's chief employer, it became necessary for the league to involve itself in ensuring blacks a place in New Deal programs set up by the U.S. government for the recovery of the economy. By encouraging public protests and providing facts and recommendations, Jones and the National Urban League played a significant role in ensuring that blacks were on the agenda of the New Deal.

In 1941, Lester Granger succeeded Eugene Kinckle Jones and continued the crusade for the National Urban League. He took a more public stance than Jones had in fighting for civil rights and social

work programs. Granger continued the league's cause of integrating trade unions. During this period, the league also focused on housing issues in urban black communities. The National Urban League had had a Housing Bureau for some time, but it was not until Granger's tenure that local league affiliates saw representation of their city governments and organizations. The league also supported the 1941 March on Washington for jobs and civil rights. Granger used pressure tactics to force the attention of the federal government on the issue of discrimination by unions. The strategy worked, and he also represented the NUL on government committees to investigate discrimination in the defense work and armed services. Consequently, Granger and the league played a significant role in desegregation of the military forces. The league also committed Fortune 500 companies to recruit at historically black colleges and universities. In addition, the National Urban League Guild was formed to provide volunteer assistance to any organization that received support from the league.

In its next phase, from 1950 through 1972, the National Urban League became a multifaceted advocate for the black community. The league's new executive director, Whitney Young, Dean of the Atlanta University School of Social Work, was the catalyst for this growth. Young transformed academic social work and urban studies theories into government and organizational policy during his leadership of the league. He expanded fund-raising twofold and brought the National Urban League back from a financial deficit. The league revamped its board to reflect geographical, occupational, and racial balance and challenged the infrastructure of the organization to be relevant to the issues it was currently facing. With the additional funding, the league continued its efforts of recruiting blacks into the social work field by providing graduate degree and fellowship programs within the organization.

Young also created bold proposals to aid the disadvantaged. An example of this was the full commitment of the National Urban League in the struggle for civil rights. Young coordinated the league's efforts with those of other organizations to forward the cause of justice and equality for blacks. Young and the league contributed significantly to the 1963 March on Washington. Facilitating commonality and communications with other civil rights groups, like the United Negro College Fund, NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People), the SCLC (Southern Christian Leadership Conference), CORE

(Congress of Racial Equality), and the SNCC (Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee). Young networked and brought the civil rights movement to the government and corporate America, which created programs and funds to eradicate discrimination. He pushed for a domestic Marshall Plan in the book *To Be Equal* (1966), influencing President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty policies. There was a need for the government to understand the dimensions of urban affairs, and they focused attention on Young because of the expertise and leadership he'd shown in this area. Consequently, he was appointed to determine the infrastructure for the U.S. government's Department of Housing and Urban Development. Under Young's direction, the league was able to expand its affiliates to new locations, including the South, where programs to serve the black community had never existed before its presence. Whitney Young took a stand, outside of his role as leader of the league, to speak out against the Vietnam War. Tragically, Young died in a drowning accident in Lagos, Nigeria, in 1971.

PUSH FOR CORPORATE REPRESENTATION

In 1972, under Vernon Jordan, the next leader of the National Urban League, the boundaries of equality and opportunity continued to expand. While many believed that the work of the civil rights movement was over, the league moved to ensure its foothold in the black community. The National Urban League changed with the times and created programs that reflected the needs of the black community. Jordan pushed for black representation in corporate boardrooms and for minority business development. The league became a resource for the government in coordinating programs and giving aid to communities in need. The league's other new initiatives included increasing the number of black voters, environmental programs, and new job opportunities for women of color. Under Jordan, the tradition of research continued by introducing the yearly report *The State of Black America* in 1976. This report, under the direction of Robert Hill, gave statistics and other relevant information on blacks and the community.

GROWTH AND OUTREACH

John E. Jacobs began his reign of leadership in 1982 and sustained the growth of the league. He memorialized

Whitney Young by establishing the Whitney Young Training Center, the Whitney Young Race Relations Program, and the Whitney Young Commemoration Ceremony. Jacobs also established programs to prevent teen pregnancy, assist single mothers, and curb crime in urban communities.

As the world became a global market, the National Urban League again had to restructure its programming for outreach. Hugh B. Price, who was appointed president of the league in 1994, focused on economic empowerment, youth development, affirmative action, and the digital divide. Marc Morial, former mayor of New Orleans and the youngest to hold the post, was elected league president in 2003. His challenge is to make a connection to the hip-hop generation and young professionals who have no connection with the civil rights era. His goal is to continue in bridging the gaps between blacks and whites in education, home ownership, health care, leadership development, and voter participation.

— Tiffeni Fontno

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NÉGRITUDE

Négritude is a literary, primarily poetic, movement that emerged in Paris in the 1930s. Its main proponents were Aimé Césaire (from Martinique), who coined the word *Négritude* and gave the movement its masterpiece, *Return to My Native Land* (1939); Léopold Sédar Senghor (from Senegal), who defined and theorized Négritude as the sum-total of the cultural values and expressions of the black world; and

Léon Gontran Damas (from Guyana), who in 1937 published the first book of Négritude poetry, *Pigments*, which was quickly banned by the French government because of its unapologetic challenge to French colonialism. The three poets, who came from countries colonized by France, were then students in France. They had been influenced by the Haitian indigeniste movement of a few decades earlier, in which Jean-Price Mars led the Haitians in resisting the American military occupation of Haiti.

PAN-AFRICAN CONNECTIONS

The Négritude poets were in close contact with the poets of the Harlem Renaissance, and the ideas of Négritude are reminiscent of the early pan-Africanist thinker Edward Wilmot Blyden and his efforts to identify the “African personality.” *Présence Africaine*, the Paris-based publishing company created by Alioune Diop, played a major role in disseminating Négritude ideas and writings. In addition, two Martinican women, the Nardal sisters, held literary salons in Paris, where Négritude was widely discussed.

The Négritude movement was very influential and truly pan-African, since in addition to the three major poets mentioned above, it included scores of others from all over the African world, such as Jacques Rabémananjara (from Madagascar), Jacques Roumain (from Haiti), Etienne Léro (from Martinique), Paul Nizer (from Guadeloupe), Guy Tirolien (from Guadeloupe), and David Diop (from Sénégal), to mention only a few. The writings of the pan-African poets were gathered by Senghor in his famous *Anthologie de la Poésie Nègre et Malgache de langue Française* (1969).

RESISTANCE AND CRITIQUE OF SOCIETY

Négritude was primarily born out of resistance to assimilation and colonial alienation. The French official policy toward its colonial subjects worldwide was openly assimilationist. While an assimilationist policy seems to imply that the colonized can acquire the colonial culture, it is nonetheless predicated upon a deeper, more fundamental belief in the inferiority of the colonized. Indeed, if the colonized were not inferior, why would they renounce their own cultural ways and adopt another culture? Therefore, Africans in French colonies were viewed as culturally deficient and forced to submit to French culture, supposedly

for their own good. The French language was, and continues to be, a crucial component of that precious French cultural package.

Thus, to counter the African cultural deficiency fabricated by the French and other Europeans in their attempt to rationalize their white supremacist plans, Césaire, Senghor, and Damas elaborated the concept of Négritude. As Senghor put it, Négritude is “a certain way of being a man, especially of living as a man. It is sensitivity, and as such, soul rather than thought. African expressions such as ‘I want you to feel me’ as opposed to ‘I want you to understand me’ are significant in that regard.” The values and attitudes that characterize and define African people, Senghor further explained, constitute a specific black ontology, the African essence. All the black people in the world, according to Senghor, have in common a particular physiopsychology that is unique to them and manifests itself independently of where they find themselves in the world.

DEDICATION TO AFRICAN CULTURE

The main characteristic of Négritude, as understood by Senghor, is an intimate, unmediated contact with the cosmos and the life forces, resulting in an extreme sensitivity to rhythm, the pulse of life. Through this positive definition of African culture, Senghor and his friends were attempting not only to deflate all claims of African cultural inferiority but also to encourage African people to re-embrace what is theirs. In one of his poems, Damas demanded that his “black dolls” be given back to him, while Senghor advocated “African socialism” as the ideal political and economic form of organization for African people.

In fact, Senghor insisted that cultural independence was the indispensable requisite for economic, political, and other types of independence. Césaire also made the case for the critical importance of a conscious return to African culture on the part of diasporic Africans. Africans could expect regeneration only from Africa, and not from Europe, which could only be expected to further their alienation and dislocation. Négritude and Western culture were presented as being in dialectical opposition to each other. Indeed, the Négritude proponents made a critical assessment of Western culture and its many shortcomings and concluded that it is materialistic, individualistic, hypocritical, and violent and has only succeeded in creating a world devoid of real life, joy, and imagination. In

contrast, they viewed the African universe as dominated by life and rhythm, spirituality and mystery, innocence. Unfortunately, the integrity of the African world has been greatly jeopardized by Europe’s savage assaults on Africa. Hence, the necessity to retrieve a precolonial consciousness, the true Négritude of Africans everywhere.

CONTRADICTIONS AND ISSUES

However, the Négritude movement was not without some serious contradictions. It seems as though, indeed, the apostles of Négritude, in particular Senghor and Césaire, never fully succeeded in removing themselves from the French cultural and intellectual matrix, despite their repeated assertions about the beauty and worth of African culture. For example, Césaire, in his famous *Return to My Native Land*, did not hesitate to refer to the black man as “one who has never invented anything,” while Senghor did not have any qualms identifying rational thinking as fundamentally European. There are at least two reasons for this. First, there is the great influence of Eurocentric anthropology, a fundamentally racist enterprise, over the definition of Négritude. Second, there is Césaire and Senghor’s deep love and admiration for French culture and language. In the end, Senghor in particular argued that there was no contradiction between chanting the merits of Négritude and embracing French culture. Indeed, in the name of humanism, Senghor developed his concept that since all cultures have only cultivated fragments of humanity’s potential, the best of each culture should therefore be gathered and a “civilization of the universal” offered to tomorrow’s humanity. The main problem with the “civilization of the universal” construct is that it negates the self-sufficiency and autonomy of African culture vis-à-vis European culture, while locking African culture in a relationship of dependency on and necessity with European culture, a reflection of Senghor’s own ambiguity.

Other issues have been raised as well. Some have cast doubt on the existence of a black essence, while others have questioned the sincerity of the Négritude poets, in particular that of Senghor, who supported the French neocolonial agenda in Africa. Césaire’s vote in favor of the total assimilation of Martinique into the French republic in 1946 was not missed either. As Négritude was to be lived, not simply written about, it has been asked whether or not the primary audience of the Négritude movement was in fact African people.

Whatever the answer to these questions, though, it is undeniable that the Négritude movement played a major role in raising the racial and cultural consciousness of many African people worldwide and that it was responsible for inspiring numerous talented African writers.

— *Ama Mazama*

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NEGRO

The term *Negro*, similar to *Nègre* in French and *Neger* in German, had its origins in the romance languages, as it means “black” in Spanish, Portuguese, and Latin. Negro as a primary racial and/or color referent was not used to identify people of African descent until the middle of the 15th century, with the initiation of the African Holocaust (i.e., the enslavement and genocide of African people). By the 18th century, *Negro* had become an Anglo-American term applied to all persons of African descent and used to designate them as the lowest division of humankind (with Caucasians first, Mongolians second, and Negroes third). Later

the term was specifically applied to all African ethnic groups central and below the Sahara desert, particularly those persons of the Congo and Sudan. The term has also been used to describe enslaved persons (in North and South America as well as the Caribbean) whether they were directly descended from Africa or mixed with Europeans or Native Americans. The term was also expanded to *African Negro* to categorize and distinguish Africans born on the continent of Africa from Africans born in the diaspora.

Negro was further developed into the derogatory *nigger* and applied to all African peoples before and since the period of enslavement. The concept was always imbued with notions of racial inferiority and was made synonymous with the word *slave*. In socio-cultural context, the Negro is a creation or invention, a primitive subhuman being who embodied the negative and stereotypical beliefs and ideas that European Americans applied to all African people. In the expansion of racial idealization of African people, the term and several derivatives of it and related words were applied to Africans by European Americans. The outgrowths of the word include terms such as *Negress* (an African female), *Negrillo* (a “bushman” on the African continent), *Negrito* (a diminutive African person), *negritic* (of black people), *negroid* (possessing African features and characteristics and, also, the lowest category of human beings), *négritude* (an aesthetic, cultural, and intellectual movement of African culture), *negrophile* (someone—usually Caucasian—who has a filial relationship with Africans or an extreme interest in African history and culture), *negrophobia* (fear of African people and African material culture), *Negroness* (the circumstance and/or quality of being Negro).

Before the interaction with Europeans, indigenous Africans and Africans born in the African diaspora had no words that identified them as black, nor did they refer to themselves as such. U.S. postbellum Southern whites used the term *nigger* to refer to Africans in day-to-day interaction and in the popular media. In response, many blacks began to refer to themselves as Negroes as a social corrective, in order to challenge being called by the routine epithet *nigger*. This was an attempt made by blacks to give the term a different face. In this search for collective pride in nomenclature, discussion also surrounded using a capital or lowercase *N* to refer to Negroes in print. In 1925, Alain Locke offered the idea of the “New Negro” in American society—the individual of

African descent striving for self-realization and acceptance in white society.

By the 1950s, there was a concerted movement among people of African descent in North America to cease using the term *Negro*. The terms used to supplant it included *colored*, *black*, and later, *Afro-American*. Because of the imprecision of the terms *colored* and *Afro-American*, however, beginning in the 1960s and continuing into the 1980s, the terms preferred and used by Africans born in the United States included *African American*, *African*, and *black*. Despite the negative denotations of the color black, the term *black* continued to be used to describe African Americans because the black power movement of the 1960s used the term as a designation of political protest against racism.

One of the main criticisms of the terms *Negro* and *colored* was that they did not identify people of African descent with their ancestral homeland of Africa. In 1988, Jesse Jackson and other black leaders called for the uniform use of the term *African American*. In contemporary African world society, the term *Negro* is considered outmoded and offensive, and there are many critiques of the term. Richard B. Moore examined the term *Negro* as a function of naming by either external forces to control blacks or as self-identification and actualization (agency) by blacks. Malcolm X (also known as el Hajj Malik el Shabazz) linked the term *Negro* to the system of oppression that enslaved African people. Molefi Asante analyzed the concept of Negro and concluded that it ignores the ancestral bond that people have to the continent of Africa and is a “cryptoterm.” In contemporary African American cultural, social, and intellectual thought, the term is a pejorative applied to Africans and African Americans perceived as sell-outs by the black community (i.e., those who seek only to serve the status quo and who actively work against the interests and needs of African people). According to Nathan Hare and Katherine Bankole, those who demonstrate “Negro” behavior seek only to fit in, serve, and emulate the dominating culture; they shun activism and reform and are often rewarded for their unswerving anti-African attitudes and actions.

Racial and ethnic categories for Africans born in North America continue to be used in the government and private sector. Such categories include “African American/Black” and sometimes “Black/Negro” as a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa. Scholars note the exclusion of North

Africans and other Africans designated with “honorary white status” from references to all people of African descent. While there remains discussion about the concept and term *Negro* in world society, most scholars agree that its original designation was that of slavery and servitude. It should also be noted that the term, as expressed in many other languages, is considered as offensive as the term *nigger*. Thus, the term *Negro* is rooted in the imposed social condition of Africans. In addition, the term is usually not included as an ideological concept in examinations of race, in the advanced study of racial formation among people of African descent in the diaspora, or in understanding critical theories of the concept of race. The term *Negro* is still used as a research indicator for finding materials about African people before the 1960s.

— Katherine Olukemi Bankole

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NEGRO CONVENTION MOVEMENT

The Negro convention movement was a series of national, regional, and state meetings organized by free blacks in the North in the three decades leading up to the Civil War. This period was at the height of the abolition movement, which was largely dominated by whites. The conventions were an attempt by African American leaders to unite and formulate a national agenda. The first national convention was initiated by Hezekiah Grice of Maryland and assembled

in 1830 at the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, with Bishop Richard Allen presiding. This was shortly after the publication of David Walker's *Appeal* and a year before Nat Turner's revolt. Subsequent national meetings were held each year through 1835, when the American Moral Reform Society was founded with a similar spirit of defiance and resistance to slavery and racism. Delegates at these early conventions consistently voiced opposition to the American Colonization Society and its scheme to return Africans to Africa. They were adamant that the issue of slavery had to be settled in America and that if Africans wanted to return to Africa it had to be on their own terms. However, they did consent to establish a black settlement in western Canada for those who felt emigration was a last resort. This was in response to the discriminatory laws or black codes established in Ohio and other Northern states that severely restricted black freedom. Convention delegates endorsed William Lloyd Garrison and the American Anti-Slavery Society. They expressed strong support for temperance and sought to establish a vocational school for black youth.

The following national conventions were initiated by the fervent abolitionist David Ruggles and took place in the early 1840s. The conventions continued to be comprised of leading businessmen, clergymen, and abolitionists and grew increasingly radical over time. At the Buffalo, New York convention in 1843, Henry Highland Garnet called for a slave insurrection and Frederick Douglass opposed the suggestion. At the Troy, New York convention in 1847, delegates called on all freed persons to "agitate! Agitate!! AGITATE!!!" against the institution of slavery. While William Lloyd Garrison continued to utilize a strategy of moral persuasion, black convention delegates were more inclined to support political parties calling for abolition. This trend continued into the 1850s, when convention delegates rejected Garrison's notion that the Constitution was a proslavery document. Many attendees insisted that the United States was their home, although emigration garnered substantial support following passage of the fugitive slave law in 1850 that allowed white enslavers to pursue escaping Africans across state borders.

The 1840s and 1850s also witnessed a proliferation of state conventions, which achieved greater success than national conventions had in compelling state governments to revoke discriminatory legal measures. The convention movement was largely dominated by

African American men. Although some women did seek to participate, acceptance of female delegates varied. At the Rochester, New York, convention in 1848, a presentation was made by Mrs. Sanford and delegates extended three cheers for woman's rights. Mary Ann Shadd Cary was accepted as a delegate to the 1855 convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, after a spirited discussion resulted in a vote of 38 yeas to 23 nays. The last-known national convention met in 1864 in Syracuse, New York, to plan a course of action following the Civil War. Delegates formed the National Equal Rights League, which was short lived. Although the convention movement ultimately failed to produce a lasting organization, it was among the earliest attempts at autonomous political organizing by African Americans in the United States.

— Michelle Rief

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NEOCOLONIALISM

Neocolonialism is a complex system of economic domination of a politically independent country by a former colonial power and/or the capitalist world. It operates not only in the economic field but also in the political, religious, ideological, and cultural spheres. The word *neo* is Greek for "new" or "modern." Thus, neocolonialism is new colonialism. A neocolonial state is a client-state, meaning the entrapment of a state in the claws of a former colonial power or imperialist powers. Thus the necessary condition exists for the establishment of client-states by imperialist nations for the continual hegemony of Africa, Asia, and Latin America (including the Caribbean region). Neocolonialism, therefore, is the highest stage of imperialism.

Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of the Republic of Ghana, coined the term *neocolonialism*

during the All African Peoples Conference in Ghana in 1958. But it was in Cairo in 1961, during the Third All African Peoples Conference, that the term gained international currency. At this conference, speaker after speaker denounced neocolonialism. They saw neocolonialism as posing the greatest danger to the political and economic independence of the African countries. One such danger is the policy of balkanization of African states for manipulation by the capitalist world. This can be more insidious with regard to the legitimate aspirations of African states for political stability and economic freedom than is the outright political control of colonialism. Neocolonialism was similarly denounced at the first Tri-Continental Conference of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, which took place in Cuba from December of 1965 to January of 1966. The delegates at this conference set out the characteristics of neocolonialism and the necessity to struggle against it; they also endorsed a comprehensive resolution to fight neocolonialism.

During the colonial epoch, the nature of economic and political domination of Africa, Asia, and Latin America (including the Caribbean region) was transparent. In Africa, there were colonial governors, officials, police, and missionary schools. Colonialism permitted the European colonial powers to exploit African peoples in a variety of ways. They settled and/or seized fertile lands, controlled natural resources, and secured cheap labor. They imposed a system of low-priced payments for the peasants' cash crops and established a monopoly-controlled market for the importation of the manufactured goods from the metropolis, thus securing profits through investment. The result of the imposition of unfavorable terms of trade on the colonies is that it obliged the peasants to sell their cash crops cheaply and pay higher prices for the manufactured goods imported from the capitalist world. Also, the colonies were turned into bases for producing primary products such as minerals and single agricultural products for export. Often an entire country was turned into a one- or two-commodity producer country. For example, Ghana concentrated on cocoa, India on cotton, Tanzania on sisal and coffee, Zambia on copper, Senegal on peanuts, Jamaica on sugar and bananas, and Chad on cotton.

This unbalanced, mono-economic culture was to serve as a colonial legacy in the newly independent countries. In postindependence Africa, the former colonial rulers and the capitalist world sought to

secure favorable political and economic policies via remote control. This was accomplished by various means, such as the propping up of puppet governments, systematic propaganda, and psychological warfare against or physical assassination of independent-minded political leaders like Patrice Lumumba of the Congo, Walter Rodney of Guyana, and Amílcar Cabral of Guinea-Bissau. In some cases, it was attained by sponsoring military overthrow of governments pursuing noncapitalist paths of economic development, as was the case of Kwame Nkrumah's government in Ghana.

THE NATURE OF THE NEOCOLONIAL STATE

A nation becomes neocolonial or a client-state if it is independent *de jure* and dependent *de facto*. Such a state is one in which political power lies in the intransigent forces of the former colony, while economic power remains under the control of international finance capital. In this case, the country continues to be economically exploited in the interest of foreign investors. The primary objective of neocolonialism is the maximizing of superprofits for the capitalist nations, which accomplished this by using puppet and corrupt regimes in the client-states.

In a neocolonial state, the state in theory has its political independence and all the outward accoutrements of sovereignty, such as national flags, national anthems, and a seat at the United Nations. In spite of that, its economic system and political policies are directed by outside powers. Neocolonial states thus become pawns of the very former colonial powers that are supposed to have granted them national independence. In this case, the client-states become enmeshed in the net of foreign financial and diplomatic dependence. Thus, such states are independent only in name, since their ability to pursue an independent course of action is usurped by those who control international finance capital.

Political Operatives Within the Government

Neocolonialism operates covertly by manipulating politicians, military generals, business moguls, and intellectuals into maintaining and preserving the economic, political, administrative, and cultural ideas and policies of the former colonial government. These were the phenomena that had been entrenched in the neocolonial state before the transfer of power from

colonialism to independence. The client-state was left with economic, political, administrative, and educational systems based on European models and designed to perpetuate the colonial relationship. Thus political leaders became culpable for their lack of enthusiasm for formulating and pursuing an independent course of action, one that may have involved losing contributions offered in exchange for their continued conformity to the policies of the colonial and imperialist powers. Such leaders are strongly dependent on foreign contributions to maintain the machinery of their government.

Economic Dependence

The imperialist forces employ every means possible to undermine the national, political, and cultural values of the independent country. In addition, they form an apparatus of domination, including armed forces that are docile with regard to imperialist policy. Likewise, the imperialist powers resort to a policy of containment by employing their arsenal of alliances; network of military bases; and economic devices such as aid, corruption, sabotage, and blackmail; they employ psychological weapons of propaganda with a view to indoctrinating the masses with the imperialist ideological dogmas. Western democracy and the parliamentary system are singled out as the only valid forms of governance. Hence, the slightest departure from the Western notion of democracy by a political leader in a developing country deems the leader a totalitarian, dictator, or communist. Capitalism, the free market competition, and laissez-faire theory are put forward as constituting the only economic system capable of promoting development. In the economic field, imperialist forces resort to the deception of using groups such as Food for Peace, Alliance for Progress, Economic Recovery and Structural Adjustment Programs, and New Partnership Development, which are linked to international financial institutions like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

Military Dependence

Furthermore, the imperialist powers force military and defense pacts and treaties on the client-states, thereby subjecting the states' foreign policies to the intentions of the imperialist powers. In some cases, the treaties lead to securing military bases and standing armies of the imperialist powers in the neocolonial states. Not only does this serve as an essential weapon

in the defense of neocolonialism, but it also serves as the basic component in protecting and enforcing the adherence to the imperialist policies. Neocolonialism maintains various contacts with the military personnel of the developing countries. This situation is perfected by arms procurement and military training by foreign personnel in the client-states and military academies in the imperialist countries.

NEOCOLONIALISM AS A THREAT TO WORLD PEACE

Neocolonialism poses a serious threat to world peace. Contrary to the views held by the corporate media's commentators and the ruling classes in the capitalist world, this danger does not come from those who seek its demise. It comes from the puppet regimes, grafters, self-seeking technocrats, elite class, nonmanufacturing business communities, and intellectuals who champion the course of foreign privatization of public corporations, institutions, utilities, social services, and natural resources, as well as from superpower nations that use military might to ensure the entrenchment of neocolonialism in "third world" countries. Neocolonialism creates a situation whereby the masses of the people become systematically exploited beyond what Nkrumah described as "safe" limits of exploitation. Hence, masses of the third world people frantically migrate to the capitalist countries seeking economic haven.

For social and political activists, the prerequisite for creating the correct internal and global strategies to defeat neocolonialism lies in their capacity to dissect and expose to others the means by which a neocolonial state is made and sustained. The eradication of neocolonialism in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and Latin America can be accomplished through revolutionary policies and independent action springing from a non-violent direct confrontation with the imperialists that draws its strength from the exploited and disinherited masses. In the case of Africa, an African-centered curriculum at all centers of learning must be recognized as fundamental to the defeat of neocolonialism.

— Kwame Botwe-Asamoah

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NEW DEAL

The New Deal was a federally funded initiative implemented by Franklin Delano Roosevelt that was designed to reverse the impact of the Great Depression of the 1930s. Roosevelt became president of the United States in 1933, at the height of the greatest economic disaster that has ever devastated the nation. He recognized that the hands-off policy adopted by his predecessor, Herbert Hoover, was not helping to revitalize the economy, provide jobs, or boost morale of the American people. Because of this, he saw the necessity of federal intervention in the economy on an unprecedented scale. Roosevelt kept the American public informed of his goals, objectives, and progress through his now-famous Fireside Chats. These informative messages were delivered via the radio and helped to keep up people's morale and maintain their trust in their president.

The New Deal was three-pronged: It focused on enacting regulatory legislation for banking practices and the stock market, it dedicated significant monies to relief agencies and securing fair labor practices, and it sought to boost the economy by creating employment. Roosevelt was not timid in his approach to any of these spheres, and within 2 months of taking office, he shut down all of the banks in the United States through the Emergency Banking Act. He took this step to determine how all of the banks in the country were faring. This drastic step led to the creation of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, or FDIC, which insured the deposits of participating banks for up to \$5,000. For the first time since the rush on the banks in 1929, which had left many without their life savings and contributed to the Great Depression, Americans again entrusted their money to banks.

Another major piece of regulatory legislation was the Federal Securities Act of May 1933, which was accompanied by the establishment of the Securities

Exchange Commission. The Federal Securities Act required the disclosure of information on stocks that were being sold, while the SEC's function was, and continues to be, to ensure that the laws were being followed. These innovations leveled the stock market playing field so that those interested in investing in the stock market could do so as informed consumers.

The second aspect of the New Deal, the commitment of federal money to relief agencies, was significant in that up to this point in history, America had not committed itself to the aid of the needy. However, as the majority of the country fell into the category of "the needy," it was clear that action was required by the government. Therefore, the Social Securities Commission, which was dedicated to providing pensions for retired workers and those who had been victims of work accidents, was established. Also, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) was founded to administer funds to a variety of relief agencies.

FOCUS ON EMPLOYMENT

While these changes were significant, the New Deal is mostly remembered for its creation and regulation of employment through a large number of agencies. The Civil Works Administration (CWA), Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA), Public Works Association (PWA), Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), and Farm Security Administration (FSA) provided jobs for men and women throughout the country. Citizens were set to work beautifying parks and beaches, building dams, and planting crops, among many other projects. These programs provided work for many who had been unemployed for years, pumped money back into the people's pockets, and helped to revitalize the economy, if even just temporarily. And the New Deal also created legislation that regulated employment practices. The National Industrial Recovery Act, the National Labor Relations Act, and the Fair Labor Standards Act all sought to establish safe, amicable working environments by setting a minimum wage and child labor laws, encouraging unionization, and regulating working conditions.

FAILURE OF THE INITIATIVE

However, the New Deal did not pull America out of the Great Depression. It left the government with a huge deficit and did not provide nearly enough jobs to put all

the unemployed Americans back to work. Further, the rapid influx of money into the economy led to swift inflation. It was not until World War II, which Roosevelt hesitated to enter due to the state of the domestic economy, that America finally came out of the Great Depression. Also, Roosevelt seized an unprecedented amount of authority in the name of bettering the economy, which threatened the balance of power established by the U.S. Constitution. Ultimately, the Supreme Court rendered some of Roosevelt's policies unconstitutional in that they overstepped the administrative boundaries of the U.S. government. In essence, the New Deal's greatest achievement was not in improving the American economy but instead in boosting the morale of the American people.

The New Deal was of particular interest to African Americans, who during times of economic difficulty are often the first to lose their jobs, remain unemployed the longest, and encounter the most difficulty in securing new positions due to the increased competition for even the lowest paying, least skilled positions. African Americans were thus especially hard hit during the Great Depression; however, rather than reaping any of the financial benefits of the many programs of the New Deal, African Americans found themselves on the outside of economic development. Like many programs designed to help Americans, the New Deal really only benefitted white Americans. Roosevelt focused very strongly on unionization, and unions routinely excluded African Americans, thus making finding jobs virtually impossible for African Americans. Further, programs such as Social Security largely favored whites. Therefore, it was not until the United States entered World War II that African Americans were able to find steady gainful employment.

The New Deal was innovative and ambitious, to say the least. It sought to bring the United States out of the largest economic depression ever encountered in this country. Unprecedented amounts of government money were spent to regulate banking and the stock market, as well as to provide relief and jobs for Americans. However, these efforts were only superficially helpful to Americans in general, and they were decidedly unhelpful to African Americans.

— *Jill Kissick*

FURTHER READING

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Mid-Hudson Regional Information Center Web site, on which Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Fireside Chats, a staple of his presidency and the New Deal, are available in their entirety. The speeches are from 1933 to 1944, the duration of Roosevelt's presidency, and on a wide variety of topics including the New Deal and World War II.

Gupta, Pranav, and Lee, Jonathan. Retrieved November 15, 2003, from <http://www.bergen.org/AAST/Projects/depression/successes.html> This is the Bergen Technical Schools Web site, which was created by the school's students as a class project and is user-friendly. In chart form, it very generally outlines the programs created during the New Deal, as well as the programs' successes and failures.

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THE NEW NEGRO

The New Negro: An Interpretation is a collection of essays by various authors that was edited by Alain Locke and published in 1925. Locke theorized the concept of the New Negro to identify members of a community emerging from hundreds of years of enslavement and beginning to develop mechanisms to live their lives on their own terms. The book was inspired by "Harlem: Mecca of the New Negro," a 1925 issue of the *Survey Graphic Harlem Number*, which was the monthly illustrated number of the social work journal *Survey Magazine*. *The New Negro* addresses the themes of African American culture and identity, as well as the socioeconomic, political, and educational issues pertaining to African Americans.

The New Negro was a critical text in the initial development and articulation of black thought and thus is an ancestor of Black Studies. Locke organized a cadre of artists and scholars from all disciplines who were challenging the perceptions of black people that were articulated by outsiders and interpreted as fact. Locke provided a rationale in *The New Negro* for developing the text, which included the issue of too much being written by people who did not know the African. His inspiration to establish in a text the humanity of the black people, illustrate blacks' potential, and highlight blacks' achievements provided

some of the earliest documentation of the production of many of the 20th century's greatest black artists and scholars early on in their careers, as well as recording the birth of the Harlem Renaissance.

The work of Bavarian artist Winold Reiss largely dominates the visual art in *The New Negro*. He did the cover illustrations, the book decorations, and many of the portraits in the text. This begs the question, why would an author whose rationale for a text is African Americans' lack of ownership over their community then select an artist outside that community to illustrate the faces of the New Negro? This question was not answered satisfactorily by Locke, who in his introduction to the book gave a weak explanation of the value of Winold Reiss's illustrations to new African American artists, many of whom still lacked sufficient outlets for their own works, while Reiss, a white artist, was featured prominently. Still, this is not a major criticism of a book that contributed so much to black thought.

The New Negro is divided into two parts: "The Negro Renaissance," which addresses the diversity of blacks' creative expression, and "The New Negro in the New World," which outlines the many people and institutions contributing to the emerging black world. Both parts of the book begin with an essay written by a scholar in the field to provide the context. This essay is followed by first-person essays that delve more deeply into the themes the scholar addressed.

In the case of the arts explored in "The Negro Renaissance," in addition to essays, Locke has taken the bold step of letting artists' works speak for themselves. The literary contributions include poetry, plays, essays, and critiques, as well as fiction such as Zora Neale Hurston's *Spunk* and *Negro Dancers* by Claude McKay. The inclusion of nonfiction and fiction in this section allowed, for example, for William Stanley Braithwaite in "The Negro in American Literature" to discuss the burgeoning field of black literary expression and for the following pages to invite the reader to sample the works themselves.

Whereas "The Negro Renaissance" addressed the issues of education, community, gender, and economics from the perspective of the arts, "The New Negro in the New World" dealt with those same topics in a more direct and formulaic way. What is most interesting about this second section is that many of the discourses presented in it are still relevant and are currently being taken up by scholars and by the communities dealing with the challenges under discussion.

Two essays that illustrate this situation are James Weldon Johnson's "Harlem: The Culture Capital" and Elise Johnson McDougald's "The Task of Negro Womanhood." In his introduction to *The New Negro*, Johnson questioned the future of Harlem as well as its potential. He wondered if blacks were going to be able to hold onto Harlem or if it would become just a famous ghetto. The prophetic nature of Johnson's inquiries is amazing, as these are some of the very same questions still being debated in the 21st century.

McDougald's statements are equally penetrating. In her essay, she attempted to enumerate the contributions of Negro women to society, while simultaneously addressing and dismantling stereotypes. She first located black women in the center of her community, then she battled misconstrued perceptions head on, arguing that sexual promiscuity was a matter not of race but of socioeconomic conditions. McDougald's essay is an important resource that demonstrates the snail-like pace at which black women's issues are being dealt with today.

Melville J. Herskovits's essay in this section, "The Negro's Americanism," embarked on a mission to find out whether there is an African genius that is peculiar to America. He thus attempted to discover a black culture that was not purely imitative of white culture by undertaking an anthropological journey in Harlem. Herskovits determined, however, that it was the same cultural pattern in a different shade. For him to have suggested that no culture exists beyond white American culture and that black people are perhaps only colored-in white people is a serious indictment and smacks against the very progressive and proactive position of the rest of the essays' authors. Although the impetus for the inclusion of this questionable essay in *The New Negro* is unclear, the position taken by Herskovits has adherents in this century as well.

The New Negro: An Interpretation should be required reading for any serious scholar of Black Studies. The creative work and theories presented in the text provide a view of the past that serves as a measuring stick of African Americans' potential and progress. W.E.B. Du Bois said it well in the final line of the final essay in the text, "The Negro Mind Reaches Out," when he reminded his readers in 1924 as he had done in 1899 that he saw the problem of the color line as the problem of the century.

— Kheli R. Willetts

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NGUZO SABA

Although most widely known as the Seven Principles of Kwanzaa, the *Nguzo Saba* (pronounced En-goo'-zôh Sah'-bah) are the core values of Kawaïda philosophy, a philosophy of cultural and social change out of which Kwanzaa and the Nguzo Saba were created. Evolving in the midst of the black freedom movement of the sixties, the Nguzo Saba reflect central themes from it as well as from communitarian African culture and philosophy. Developed in 1965 by Maulana Karenga, an activist scholar, chair of the organization Us, and currently a professor of Black Studies at California State University, Long Beach, the Nguzo Saba were put forth as a communitarian African value system essential to building and developing community, strengthening the African liberation struggle, and cultivating and expanding social practice rooted in African culture.

As originally introduced by Maulana Karenga and the organization Us, the Nguzo Saba were given in Swahili and English to affirm their rootedness in African culture and to capture their communitarian character, that is, their emphasis on family, community, and culture. The words *nguzo saba* are Swahili words for principles and seven, respectively. Karenga provided the Seven Principles with their original meanings as follows: “*Umoja* (Unity)—to strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation, and race; *Kujichagulia* (Self-Determination)—to define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves, and speak for ourselves; *Ujima* (Collective Work and Responsibility)—to build and maintain our community together and to make our brother’s and sister’s problems our problems and solve them together;

Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics)—to build and maintain our own stores, shops, and other businesses and to profit from them together; *Nia* (Purpose)—to make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness; *Kuumba* (Creativity)—to do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it; *Imani* (Faith)—to believe with all our hearts in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders, and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.”

Since their introduction in the sixties, the Nguzo Saba have become the basis for cultural grounding and value orientation of many independent schools, rites of passage programs, cooperatives, Black Student Unions, educational programs, and various other community and professional organizations, institutions, and programs in the United States. The Nguzo Saba have also spread throughout the world African community through educational and cultural exchanges and through the practice of Kwanzaa, a pan-African holiday that celebrates family, community, and culture. In fact, one of the reasons Karenga created Kwanzaa was to introduce and affirm the importance of the Nguzo Saba and other communitarian African values (i.e., values that stress family, community, and culture). Thus, Kwanzaa is a 7-day holiday in which each day is organized around the discussion and practice of each of the Seven Principles.

As Kawaïda and the Nguzo Saba have developed over the years, the original interpretation of the principles has expanded to reflect both a reaffirmation of the original message of cultural grounding and struggle and extended meanings to address current concerns and issues. Thus, in Karenga’s Annual Founder’s Kwanzaa Message, 2000, on the official Kwanzaa Web site, he explains the following particular and the universal meaning of the principles.

Umoja (Unity) calls for a commitment “to work for a continued and heightened unity of African people in their families and communities through the world and to continue to forge their future in the historic struggle to expand the realm of freedom and increase shared good in the world.” And it is also a call “to work for an increased unity for common good among the peoples of the world based on mutual respect for each person, people and culture; liberation for the oppressed, justice for the

wronged, power for the people and a just peace at every site of conflict and war in the world.”

Kujichagulia (Self-Determination) calls for a commitment to “work for the right of every person and people to determine their own destiny and daily lives, to speak their own special cultural truth and make their own unique contribution to the forward flow of human history.”

Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility) calls for a commitment “to work for the good world we all want and deserve to live in, a world, as the *Odu Ifa* of ancient Yorubaland says, where there is full knowledge of things, happiness everywhere, peace, well-being, security of person and where everyone can live lives of dignity and decency in a context of maximum human freedom and human flourishing.”

Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics) calls for a commitment “to work for the strengthening of the principle and practice of shared work and shared wealth in society and the world . . . and . . . for economic practices that reflect due respect for the dignity of work and the rights of the worker, that link a right to a life of dignity with a right to a decent life, and that demonstrate appropriate care for the poor, responsibility for the ill, disabled and aged, and a right relationship with our environment.”

Nia (Purpose) calls for a commitment “to work for the realization of the collective vocation of restoring the rightful power and proper place of African people in the world and of daring greatness through the amassing and using of knowledge to serve and do good in the world.”

Kuumba (Creativity) calls for a commitment “to work for a world which is better and more beautiful than we inherited it . . . [and to] reaffirm the ancient African ethical commitment to constantly heal and restore the world, a practice called *serudjta* in ancient Egyptian. This moral obligation calls on us, everywhere and at all times, in society and in nature, to raise up what is in ruins; to repair what is damaged; to rejoin what is severed; to replenish what is depleted; to strengthen what is weakened; to set right what is wrong; and to make flourish that which is fragile and undeveloped.”

Imani (Faith) calls for a commitment “to work for a sustained and steadfast belief in the good and the

possible in people and in the world, and in our capacity to create good, to find it, cultivate and harvest it and share it in an unlimited number of meaningful and mutually beneficial ways.”

Finally, the Nguzo Saba continue to be viable and dynamic responses to historical and cultural challenges to the African community. The principles are incorporated into every institutional form, including family, churches, corporations, schools, committees, and so forth, that now exist in the African American community, making the Nguzo Saba the most ubiquitous symbols of the cultural revolution of the 1960s.

— *Tiamoyo Karenga*

See also Kwanzaa; Kawaida

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NOMMO

In West Africa, the Dogon people of Mali believe that the African concept of *Nommo*, the power of the spoken word, carries a life force that produces all life and influences everything. By human utterance or through the spoken word, human beings can invoke a kind of spiritual power. *Nommo* is a force that gives life to every thing. It is present everywhere and it causes everything. Furthermore, humans have power over the word and direct the life force. Thus all of human creation and natural phenomena emanate from the productive power of the word—*Nommo*, which is itself a life force. For the Dogon, all magic is ultimately word magic whether the word is manifested in incantations, blessings, or curses. In fact, if the word did not exist, all forces would be suspended, there would be no procreation, and therefore no life. For the ancient Egyptians, *Nommo*, or the power of the spoken word, was linked to their ethical principle, *Maat* (meaning “truth, harmony, balance, reciprocity”). *Maat* provided the ancient Egyptians with a value system to live by. The ancient Egyptians believed that the nature of *Maat* was expressed by the living person, indeed,

its essential quality related to the life sustaining power of speech itself. The Dogon's conception of the word and its life sustaining power is no different from that of the ancient Egyptians.

The power of the word is different from one individual to the next. The word power of the creator is more powerful than that of any other being. In African philosophy, individuals have, by the power of their words, dominion over things, which they can command and change and make work for their purposes. The Dogon believe that to command things with words is to practice magic. The power of the speaker will determine how fascinated the audience will be. Nommo is derived not only from the spiritual nature of words but also from the spirituality of the presentation. However, morality is the prime consideration for African oratory or public discourse. The power of words, Nommo, is in proportion to the moral character of the speaker as well as the oratorical skill he or she possesses. It is imperative for the speaker to guide his or her creativity in the direction of a higher level of consciousness.

Ultimately, cosmic harmony is the objective of human utterance within the African worldview. The attainment of harmony is the aim of all participants when the community is called together for a common cause. Nommo, through the spoken word, is a powerful instrument that is evident in numerous ways. It addresses profound life circumstances. Furthermore, the spoken word creates human relationships that bring about social transformations. The word, in an African sense, is the sacred force of life and creates reality for African people. The preeminence of Nommo is a defining cultural characteristic of African people.

The contemporary African preacher in the Black Church is an ideal example of the power of Nommo. The nature of African communication can best be appreciated by understanding that Nommo flows through the African's existence in the United States. Most Africans, given the nature of American history of slavery and the subsequent racism and oppression, can immediately recognize the transforming power of vocal expression. It is clear when someone says, "Man, that cat can rap," and also when someone leaving a Baptist church says, "I didn't understand all those words the preacher was using, but they sure sounded good." Although Africans revere the spoken word, there is an extensive literary tradition in Africa. However, the written word is, to a large degree, without life. It creates distance between the writer and the reader, who may never have a chance to interact or build a human

relationship. This relationship is imperative wherever Nommo exists.

The African's preference for the spoken word over the written word speaks to the word being viewed as a life force. The written word does not have the transformative powers of the spoken word. Only the word that is spoken can engage the human being and put him or her on the path of harmony. Furthermore, Nommo creates a relationship between the speaker and listener. The written word cannot facilitate human interaction and is therefore lifeless. The spoken word permits us to experience life in the most significant of ways. The effective African orator understands the transformative power of the word. Africans everywhere know that words have power when they walk away from events invigorated, ready for revolution, or "praisin' the Lawd."

In African culture, naming is also an area in which the concept of Nommo or the power of the word is ever present. Naming is an essential characteristic in the philosophy and religion of peoples throughout Africa. Understanding Nommo, the power of the word, is primary to an understanding of the universe. Naming is a creative act. What we cannot conceive does not exist. And every human thought that is expressed becomes reality, that is, is spoken into being. Once a person names it, it moves into existence. The power of Nommo through naming creates life. In addition, without naming, life would be static; there would be no possibility of social development or growth and no integration into human society. Naming is significant for Africans because it identifies who they are and where they hope to ascend. African naming ceremonies are sacred, and each time parents name a child they are commenting on the life path of that child, how that child will see himself or herself, and their hope for what the future of African people will be. The name goes with the child as a symbol as he or she navigates through life.

In Africa and in all other places where Africans are present, every boy and girl is given a name with some significance. Many Africans believe that names are important because a child's name has a psychological effect and may affect his or her behavior. A name is a description for the totality of a person, and is thus tied to a person's behavior, attitude, and feelings of self-esteem and importance. Therefore, it is important to make the right choice when naming.

— Adisa A. Alkebulan

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NORTH STAR

The first edition of Frederick Douglass's *North Star* newspaper was published in Rochester, New York, on December 3, 1847. Douglass had moved from New Bedford, Massachusetts, to Rochester so that the circulation of his paper would not interfere with that of the *Liberator* or the *Anti-Slavery Standard*, papers heavily influenced by William Lloyd Garrison and other white Boston abolitionists. Douglass determined to publish the *North Star* after tiring of Garrison's stifling influence and returning from a successful anti-slavery speaking tour of the United Kingdom with \$2,175. Thus, to free himself from white abolitionists, Douglass joined fellow black activist Martin R. Delany and published his own newspaper.

Dedicated to hastening the demise of slavery, Douglass mortgaged his house and incurred significant debt to present his views about slavery, the "peculiar institution." It was Douglass's indefatigable perseverance that enabled the fledgling newspaper to survive. Douglass had Delany travel throughout the nation to raise subscriptions, while he remained in Rochester to edit the newspaper. After 6 months, Delany had unfortunately failed to generate sufficient funds to enable the paper to achieve solvency. Delany's inability to garner funds contributed to a rift between the two men that resulted in Delany's quitting the enterprise and leaving the paper entirely in Douglass's care. After Delany's departure, Douglass enlisted the support of prominent white patrons, who

sustained him until the paper became self-sustaining. A British woman named Julia Griffiths became most instrumental in rescuing Douglass from financial disaster and preserving the *North Star*. Griffiths moved to Rochester from Newcastle-on-Tyne, England, and became the paper's financial manager and journalism supervisor, as well as an advisor to Douglass. Her efforts enabled Douglass to become financially secure and afforded him the opportunity to focus primarily on producing the paper.

African Americans provided little financial assistance to the *North Star*. During its initial year of publication, the paper acquired five white subscribers to each black subscriber. Whites possessed greater wealth than blacks did and could afford to purchase subscriptions. However, the financial limitations of African Americans only partially explained the dearth of black support for Douglass's newspaper. Abolitionists functioned on the periphery of American society, and Douglass may have been viewed as a curiosity or even a pariah. Cautious blacks therefore eschewed abolition to ingratiate themselves with the larger white society. Less than 20% of the African American population supported the abolitionist cause.

Underlying factors involving the *North Star's* production carried equal significance to the antislavery message it conveyed in print. As a man who had been a slave and never received a formal education, Douglass, as publisher, represented a 19th-century anomaly. The crisp, lucid prose and clarity of thought that Douglass displayed in the *North Star* produced both awe and recrimination. A self-taught man gifted with the writing elegance and elocution of a Harvard graduate, Douglass undermined the erroneous concept of black inferiority. Douglass's abolitionist "friends" extolled his virtues as long as Douglass remained dependent on white largess and functioned as a non-voting abolitionist. However, when Douglass sought equal stature with his benefactors, including as a voting abolitionist, whites withdrew their support and limited the *North Star's* financial success.

The hostility white abolitionists displayed toward Douglass's enterprise proved mild compared to the venom of those who recommended that he should be exiled to Canada and have his publishing equipment thrown into Lake Ontario. Fortunately for Douglass, the printers and publishers of Rochester supported his literary enterprise, which they viewed as publishing business that would bring revenue to their community. Rochester's business leaders proved clairvoyant.

Douglass estimated that in the 16 years his newspaper existed, white men in the city earned approximately \$100,000 from it.

Published weekly at a cost of \$80 for the 4 pages and 6-column spread, and boasting an average circulation of 3,000, the *North Star* enabled Douglass to be an extremely proud man. As the first newspaper facility and printing establishment owned by an African American, the *North Star* served as an exemplary representation of black achievement. The paper ran features on the Fugitive Slave law, freedom conventions, and the inhumanity of slavery and provided information on myriad additional topics related to race, racism, and the failure of American democracy.

By 1851 the *North Star* had become *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, a name that remained with the paper until its publication ceased in 1860. Douglass stated in a self-deprecating manner that since so many newspapers used the word *star*, as a neophyte his publication should drop the term. In reality, Douglass acted out of economic self-interest. He believed that his name and notoriety could boost sales, particularly after he bought the *Liberty Party Paper* and its subscription lists from Gerrit Smith (who later ran for president as a candidate of the Political Abolition Party).

As the new organ for the Liberty Party, *Frederick Douglass' Paper* engaged in political abolitionism. It published antislavery speeches in their entirety, presented debates on the Constitution, apprised its readership of antislavery meetings, and reprinted antislavery features from other abolitionist newspapers. Douglass also acquired a list of contributors who spoke with authority about the antislavery movement in the local and national context and revealed the breadth of the unrelenting attack against slavery.

Perhaps one of the most unique aspects of *Frederick Douglass' Paper* was Douglass's demand that it be high quality. Douglass had no tolerance for typographical and grammatical errors. Thus black contributors, without exception, wrote extremely well. Like Douglass, they endeavored to show their erudition and mental acuity and refute charges of Negro inferiority.

Although Douglass spent 20 years in servitude and lacked any formal education, his paper had an enormous impact in furthering the abolitionist cause—enlightening whites about the injustices and immorality of slavery and revealing the humanity of blacks. His work revealed that blacks could speak ardently on behalf of their race and that Americans'

principles were inconsistent with their practice with regard to those of African ancestry.

— H. V. Nelson

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NUBIA

Ancient Nubia is vitally important to the reconstruction of African history. The Nubian pharaohs of the 25th Dynasty revitalized the glory of Kemet (Ancient Egypt). Nubia was the nucleus of trading between Kemet and other parts of Africa. Thus Nubia not only affected the course of the civilization of Kemet but actually donated its own intellectual and material infrastructure to its junior. The concept of divine kingship was born in Nubia, which was indeed the "Mother of Kemet."

LOCATION AND NAMES

Nubia was located south of Kemet in the area that is now the Sudan and parts of Egypt. This area has been known by several names. Ancient Greek historians—contemporaries of the Nubians—wrote that Nubia was a land inhabited by black people and named it *Ethiopia*, which means "the Land of the Blacks."

Another of the early names for Nubia was *Ta-Seti*, meaning "the Land of the Bow," so called because the Nubian warriors were renowned for their skill with bows. Nubia was also referred to as Yam. Yam was considered to be an affluent land. Official letters reveal that the 6th Dynasty Pharaoh Merenra (2287–2278 B.C.E.) dispatched his official Harkhuf to Yam to trade and to obtain soldiers. Harkhuf, one of Kemet's most esteemed ambassadors, was an adventurer and a noble diplomat. On Harkhuf's first journey to Yam, he returned with an array of gifts. He brought

back even more gifts on his second voyage, which took 8 months. On Harkhuf's third journey, he reported that the cargo from Yam included multiple grains, unusual animals, extraordinary incenses, and remarkable woods. However, it was on his fourth expedition to Yam, for the 6th Dynasty Pharaoh Pepi II (2278–2184 B.C.E.), that Harkhuf brought back the most prized item, an African of very small stature who was a dancer. Pepi II was extremely delighted because he believed that this small person was the embodiment of powerful spiritual forces. Yet another name for Lower Nubia was Wawat. The time period when the name Wawat was in use is unclear. There is, however, a textual reference from the 6th Dynasty in which ancient Egyptians obtained the help of the Chief of Wawat in building wooden barges. Thus Wawat is one of the many names by which the area that is now the Sudan had been known during ancient times.

ORIENTATION

Whatever the boundaries of Nubia may have been, it is clear that the Africans of the Nile Valley looked “up south” and “down north.” African-centered scholar Cheikh Anta Diop gave us insight into the significance of this orientation by analyzing the word *king*, which in the ancient language Mdw Ntr is *nswt*. The origin of this word is *swt*, meaning “the sedge plant,” which was indigenous to upper Egypt, the area closest to Nubia. *Biti*, meaning “lower Egypt,” was never a synonym for king, as was proposed by those who argued that the kings came from the north. The word for “west” in Mdw Ntr is *imnt*, which is a variation of *wntmi*, meaning “right hand” side. The word for “east” is *i3bt*, a variation of *i3bi*, meaning “left hand” side.

Using the orientation of the original African people of the Nile Valley, what is currently called the “sixth” cataract, located in the heart of Africa, near the Butanna Steepe, is actually the beginning of the Nile, the first cataract. The “fifth” is the second; the “fourth,” the third; the “third,” the fourth; the “second,” the fifth; and finally, the “first” will be the sixth. Diop posited that this “southern” orientation of the ancient Africans is related to the south to north flow of the Nile, the origin of the Nile being in Central Africa, and the Nubian origin of the concept of divine kingship. However, scholars have never been in complete agreement on the boundaries of Nubia. This is not to say that the Africans did not know where the boundaries lay; however, no one in modern times has determined them

to the satisfaction of all. The primary point of contention is the southern boundary and how far into Africa it extended.

EARLY NUBIAN CULTURE

A Group

There is evidence of an early Nubian culture of the mid-4th to early 3rd millennium B.C.E. This cultural group is commonly referred to as the *A group*, a term that was coined by archaeologist George Reisner. He believed that the people were culturally similar to the ancient Kemites, but that they were unable to form their own culture. His influence is key to understanding the low respect accorded early Nubian culture by Eurocentric historians, for he laid the foundation for archaeological excavation as it is practiced today. There is no book written about Nubian culture that does not refer to his work. Although the quality of his excavations cannot be denied, all material remains must be interpreted, and Reisner's interpretations asserted the superiority of a Eurocentric worldview.

The A Group and Divine Kingship

Archaeologist Bruce Williams of the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute challenged the view that the early Nubians, the A group, were unable to form an advanced culture. Williams argued that a stone incense burner found during excavations conducted by the University of Chicago during UNESCO's International Salvage Campaign of 1963 and 1964 showed clearly that Nubia preceded Kemet in royal inscriptions. The incense burner depicts a king in a royal boat, wearing the white crown of Kemet, a *serekh* (a representation of the palace facade), and a representation of the falcon god, Heru. This is the most ancient depiction of a king in the Nile Valley or anywhere in history. This artifact was found in one of the richest and earliest tombs in Cemetery I in ancient Nubia. Through the context in which it was found, the quality and quantity of the wealth of the cemetery, and the style and composition of the incense burner, the date of this item was determined to be about six or seven generations before the dynastic era in Kemet. This would place it with the so-called A group.

Divine kingship and the origins of Kemet are inextricably intertwined. The placement of the monarchy in Nubia before it appears in Kemet could also place

the origins of the people of ancient Egypt in the south. This leads to the conclusion that the Kemites were black. Furthermore, the matriarchal essence of the Egyptian royalty reflects the role of the queen mother of Nubia. Indeed, the notion of divine kingship and the Kemetic word for royalty (*nsw* in hieroglyphics) means “the one who came from the south.” This clarifies why the people of Kemet always turned toward the south during rituals, just as Muslims turn toward Mecca. It also helps to explain why when foreigners from the north invaded and conquered Kemet during the 24th Dynasty, the people turned to the south once again and the Nubian Pharaoh Piye (Piankhi) answered their call.

KUSH

The most well-known name given to Nubia was Kush. It was the name given to a period of Nubian history during which there were two successive capitals, Napata and Meroe. The name Kush has been identified in Pharaonic texts from 2000 B.C.E.

Napata

It is generally agreed that Kush extended from 900 to 350 B.C.E. The exact location of the administrative center of Napata is unknown, but it was associated with the area surrounding the Jebel Barkal Mountain, named by the ancients the “Holy Mountain.” The location of the city near the sacred mountain must have been very significant because royalty were still being buried there even after the capital was moved.

Meroe

The Meroitic period is generally agreed to extend from the 6th century B.C.E. to the beginning of the 4th century C.E. The origin of the city of Meroe is unknown. It is known that by 538 B.C.E. royalty who were being buried at Napata had ruled from Meroe. An unknown event of political significance must have brought about the transfer of the capital of Kush from Napata to Meroe. It may have been the result of the increase of trade routes to Meroe or it might have been because the Kushite rulers wanted to move away from the powerful priests at Amun temple in Jebel Barkal. The first historical mention of Meroe occurred when it was at the height of its power. Incorrectly called an island, it was a center of trade and one of several settlements located between the second and first

cataracts of the Butanna Steepe, a triangular area formed by the confluence of the Atbara and Nile rivers.

The transfer of the center of rule to Meroe marked the beginning of a cultural, economic, and artistic “Imhotepean” period in the history of Kush, that is, there was a rebirth of artistic and political excellence. (Imhotep was the chief advisor to the Pharaoh Djoser, a king of the 3rd Dynasty. He was an architect, a priest, a physician, a writer of proverbs, and the builder of the first pyramid—the Step Pyramid. After his death, the ancient Egyptians worshipped him as a demigod. Furthermore, his fame was widespread, as the ancient Greeks and the Phoenicians also worshipped him.)

THE 25TH DYNASTY OF KEMET

The 25th Dynasty of Kemet was a union of Kemet and Kush and one of the most beloved and respected dynasties remembered by the Kemetic people. It was launched when the Kushite King Piankhi saved Kemet from foreign invaders. He wrote about his triumphs in the famous *Victory Stele*, which is one of the most thorough and well-known documents from the Nile Valley. When Piankhi saved Thebes in 740 B.C.E., he installed his sister, Amenirdis I, as divine wife of Amun. The female in this position played a major part in the sacred ceremonies in Amun worship. She owned a large amount of property and supervised large numbers of temple officials, and thus was politically and spiritually powerful. In this way, Piankhi established a solid power base, which allowed him to rule Kemet and Kush.

The power that the divine wife of Amun held can be gauged by a description of Karnak during the reign of Ramses III of the 20th Dynasty. There were 81,322 people in the service of the Amun, working in 125 different categories of labor. There were also 421,262 animals, 433 gardens, and 83 ships. All of this was contained within 2,395 square kilometers of field, including 46 work sites and 65 villages. These data about the temple come from an inscription made during the reign of Ramses III.

There is not as detailed a description of Karnak as that left during the 25th Dynasty. However, the kings of the 25th Dynasty enhanced Karnak, and the worship of Amun became more extensive; thus we can safely assume that Karnak was considerably grander. The divine wives of Amun wielded so much power that they were treated as queens and addressed as “Your Majesty”; their names were written inside of cartouches.

The Candaces, Queens of Kush

The position of divine wife of Amun was not the only source of power over spiritual and material realms that women had in Kush. Women had enjoyed a long-standing tradition of respect and elevated position in Kushite culture. Kushite kings Taharqua, Piankhi, and Anlamani all emphasized the importance of their mothers and wives in their coronation ceremonies and during their reigns. The appearance of a series of queen regents in Meroe, commonly called Candaces, was a natural development of the elevated position of women in the Kushite culture. This could hardly have happened in Greece, where women neither owned property nor made decisions concerning the election of kings. This phenomenon is still not completely understood, partly because even though there was a Meroitic script, it is not been fully translated.

Candace Queen Who Fought the Roman Emperor and Won

One of the Candaces was famous for her military valor. The Greek writer Strabo tells the story of how the Candace, believed to be Amanirenas, led an attack against the Romans. The Romans were distracted with fighting the Arabians. The Africans were not as fully equipped as the Romans, but they felt that they had been maltreated, so they waited until the Romans were vulnerable and then they struck. Some of them were captured, and they went into negotiations. During negotiations, the Candace obtained everything for which she had negotiated. The Roman Emperor even cancelled taxes. She lost the battle but won the war.

Strabo describes this Candace as “a masculine wo-man, and blind in one eye.” The iconography generally shows the Candaces to be large women with long, pointed fingernails and very sophisticated jewelry. Scholars have referred to these queens as large, fat, obese, or very obese. There is a distinct possibility that the large size of the Candaces represented fertility and maternity. African culture must be viewed through the lens of spirituality. Fertility and motherhood have always had significance to African people. The Candaces were divine rulers and thus represented the spiritual and material wealth of the people.

THE CHRISTIAN PERIOD

During the time of the Roman emperor Justinian, from 550 to 1400 C.E., Nubia became a Christian nation. Tradition has it that the Byzantine Empress Theodora sent a missionary to Nobatia and that was the beginning of the conversion process. The Nubians, similar to the Egyptians of the time, practiced monophysite Christianity. They recognized the spiritual supremacy of the Coptic patriarch of Alexandria. Royal and religious leaders held concurrent power. The queen mother still played a major role and the succession to the throne was determined by birth or marriage to a royal woman. Christian Nubia lasted for many centuries. It was at its height in the 9th and 10th centuries.

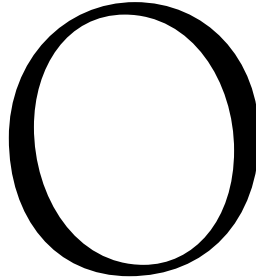
ISLAM

Muslim Arabs conquered Egypt in 640 C.E. and made several unsuccessful endeavors to conquer Nubia almost immediately afterwards. By the 12th century, they were successful. All that is left of the Christian period are beautiful paintings on the walls of the cathedral at Faras. By the 15th century, the majority of Nubians had converted to Islam. Currently it is called the Sudan and most of the people are Islamic.

— *Miriam Ma'at-Ka-Re Monges*

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OBEAH

Obeah is an African belief system and set of practices present in many former British Caribbean colonies, such as Jamaica, Barbados, and Guyana, where it was introduced during slavery. The word *Obeah* is of Akan (West African) origin. Originally, it referred to a spiritual force that can act for anyone, provided that proper rituals have been observed. From an Obeah point of view, and consistent with African spirituality, there is present in the universe a cosmic force that permeates all that is. That energy can be harnessed through different procedures, commonly referred to as magic. Cosmic manipulation can take place for good or bad purposes. The world itself is inhabited by spirits, who are particular forms of energy readily available for guidance and protection but also for mischief.

Obeah operates in all aspects of life. It may be used to cast a spell to protect oneself and one's property, family, and friends; to neutralize or destroy one's enemies; to amass wealth; to gain employment, love, and so on. It may also be used for healing purposes, through the use of herbs and other natural remedies. It is the responsibility of the *Obeahman* or *Obeahwoman* to bring about the desired result through the performance of appropriate rituals, such as services for particular spirits; the making of protective guards or cleansing baths; the sacrificing of animals (often chickens); or others. Thus, Obeah practitioners are expected to help solve a great variety of problems, such as those associated with marriage, children, health, work, money, the police, the court, and so on. In that respect, Obeah priests and priestesses are

regarded with both deference and fear in their respective communities.

In fact, since the days of slavery, Obeah priests and priestesses have been greatly feared. Indeed, as in many other places, African spirituality, and in this case, Obeah, was used by enslaved Africans as a source of unity and as an effective weapon against their white oppressors. It is a well-established historical fact that Obeahmen and Obeahwomen were often responsible for leading insurrections to destroy slavery and the plantation system. Among other things, they were known to poison whites and to administer oaths of secrecy. It is because of this strong link between Obeah and resistance, and in a futile attempt to break it, that Obeah was banned by the Europeans. For example, in Jamaica, the practice of Obeah became a capital offense after the formidable Tacky Rebellion of 1760; and in Guyana, in 1855, the punishment for practicing Obeah was imprisonment and public floggings. But not only was Obeah outlawed, it was also vilified, as it became equated with witchcraft and sorcery. Unfortunately, many Africans have internalized this negative view of Obeah and reject it. However, for many others, Obeah remains an important and intricate part of their culture and of their life, as they deal with the multiple challenges that life presents them as African people.

— Ama Mazama

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ODU IFA

The *Odu Ifa* is the sacred text of the spiritual and ethical tradition of Ifa and one of the great sacred texts of the world. The Ifa tradition has its origins in ancient Yorubaland, but it holds a unique position among African religions as the only African religion which has continuously survived and developed on an international level. The religion appears in numerous countries under various names and forms—Lekumí (Santeria) in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the United States; Voudun in Haiti; Shango in Cuba; Candomblé in Brazil; and Ifa in Nigeria and the United States. But regardless of its various names and forms, it is the same tradition, rooted in the ancient teachings found in the same text, the *Odu Ifa*. Also, Ifa shares a unique status with Maat, the spiritual and ethical tradition of ancient Egypt, in their being the only two ancient African religions that have organized bodies of texts in which the tradition is rooted and developed.

The meaning of the word *odu* is open to various interpretations, whereas the word *Ifa* clearly refers to both the teachings in the text as well as the divine sage who taught them. In the Kawaida tradition, *odu* is translated as “baskets of sacred wisdom.” Thus, the *Odu Ifa* contains the “baskets of sacred wisdom of Ifa.” This reading is based on the Ifa creation narrative in which Olodumare, God, gives divine and human beings baskets of sacred wisdom to make the world good. Thus, each *odu*, or chapter, is a container of sacred wisdom that humans are to use to make their lives and the world good.

The *Odu Ifa* is composed of 256 chapters (*odu*) and innumerable verses (*ese*). Like other great sacred texts, it contains a wide range of literary forms and subjects, including poetry, proverbs, songs, chants, and sacred narratives, as well as prescriptions for divination and moral instructions for life. The seminal works on the *Odu Ifa* in translation, with commentary

and analysis, are by Wande Abimbola, who is Awise Agbaye or International Spokesperson for the Ifa tradition. These works include *Sixteen Great Poems of Ifa* (1975), *Ifa: An Exposition of the Ifa Literary Corpus* (1976), *Ifá Divination Poetry* (1977), and *Ifa Will Mend Our Broken World* (1997).

In addition, there are also important works of translation of the *Odu Ifa* by others, including William Bascom’s *Ifa Divination* (1969) and *Sixteen Cowries* (1980), Afolabi A. Epega and Philip Niemark’s *The Sacred Ifa Oracle* (1995), and Solagbade Popoola’s *Practical Ifa* (1997). Although the Ifa tradition is usually focused on divination and ritual sacrifice, within the *Odu Ifa* there is a rich corpus of ethical teachings that I have collected and translated in the text *Odu Ifa: The Ethical Teachings* (1999) and from which I will extract and discuss core concepts of the Ifa tradition here.

Although Ifa has other names, Orunmila is the most often used to represent him as the teacher of the Ifa texts. Orunmila is an *orisha*, a divine being or divinity, who is an assistant to Olodumare, who created heaven and earth. According to the sacred narrative of creation, Orunmila was present at creation and mastered knowledge of the world. He thus is regarded in Ifa tradition as the wisest of counselors and the custodian of divine or sacred wisdom. And it is the *Odu* that is the central source of this sacred wisdom of Ifa or Orunmila.

A SCRIPT FOR ETHICAL LIVING

The teachings of the *Odu* are rooted first in the concept of the essential goodness of the world. The *Odu* states that at the time of creation, Olodumare, the creator, sent *orisha* and humans in the world to finish the world and make it good (*dara*) (*Odu Ifa* 10:2). And he gave them the power and authority (*ase*) to accomplish this task. Thus, the world is endowed with an inherent goodness at the time of creation and this good, the *Odu* teaches, must be increased and sustained. Moreover, although the world is essentially good, it is constantly in need of being renewed, repaired, and enriched with good. For there are negative forces that threaten to undo the good. Five major threats to human good are death, disease, conflict, loss, and ignorance. But there are other vices that threaten not only human good but the good of the world—greed, selfishness, lying, injustice, cruelty, and others. Thus the *Odu* speaks of the need to “stop

making sacrifices for wealth and instead make sacrifices that would protect the earth from its enemies,” which in modern Ifa ethics are plunder, pollution, and depletion (*Odu Ifa* 10:5).

Tied to this concept of the goodness of the world is a second pillar of *Odu* teachings that “humans are divinely chosen to bring good into the world” (*Odu Ifa* 78:1). In fact, the very word for human is *ènìyàn*, which literally means “one chosen” or “chosen one.” Now the implication of this is of enormous moral significance, for unlike other chosen people concepts in which there is only one chosen people, the Ifa concept gives all humans this special divine status. And it is a chosenness based not on an ethnic or religious identity but on a divine assignment—the *task of bringing good into the world*. And this ongoing moral obligation and task of bringing good into the world is the fundamental mission and meaning of human life. This status of divine *chosenness* is interlocked with its companion concept of humans as the offspring (*omo*) of Olodumare. And these provide the philosophical and ethical grounds for the concept of human dignity or the inherent, transcendent, and equal worth of human beings.

Another important concept of *Odu* teachings and the Ifa tradition is the right of everyone to a good life, and the personal and collective responsibility of all to create this. Again, the *Odu* says that Olodumare has ordained a good life for everyone and each of us is morally obligated to work to achieve the good world in which a good life can be established and flourish for everyone (*Odu Ifa* 78:1). The *Odu* cautions against selfish conceptions of good when it says that “doing good worldwide is the best expression of character” (*Odu Ifa* 166:2), and that “anyone who restricts goodness to one’s house will not find goodness outside the house” (*Odu Ifa* 124:2).

Orunmila, the sage and master teacher, describes the good world as a world with several essential aspects: full knowledge of things; happiness everywhere; freedom from anxiety and fear of hostile others; the end of antagonism with other beings on earth (i.e., animals and reptiles, etc.); well-being and the end of forces that threaten it, especially death, disease, loss, and ignorance; and finally, freedom from poverty and misery (*Odu Ifa* 78:1).

Key to the *Odu* teaching is also the respect for knowledge (*imo*) and its higher form, wisdom (*ogbón*). Knowledge and wisdom are seen not only as the first criteria for a good world but also as the first

criteria for achieving a good world. Thus, the text (*Odu Ifa* 78:1) says the first criterion for achieving the good world is “wisdom adequate to govern the world.” This wisdom is obviously multifaceted—representing the full range of bodies of knowledge or disciplines. But none is more important than *moral wisdom*. For even with mathematic, scientific, technological, sociological, and other forms of knowledge, only with moral grounding can one serve the world rightly. Thus, the *Odu* says, “Those whose turn it is to take care of the world should do good for the world” (*Odu Ifa* 33:2). This calls for a morally grounded wisdom that conceives and approaches the world in its interrelated wholeness, respects its integrity, and takes seriously the divine assignment of humans to constantly bring good into the world. Therefore, the *Odu* says, “Speak truth, do justice, be kind and do not do evil” (*Odu Ifa* 3:1).

The *Odu* also places great emphasis on sacrifice as both ritual performance and moral practice. In the Kawaida interpretation and tradition, sacrifice is approached as essentially a moral practice of self-giving, as distinct from ritual sacrifice as object giving. Nevertheless, it is recognized that the two also can be engaged at the same time. This stress on the morality of sacrifice calls for great effort to master oneself, to cultivate character and do good in the world.

The central moral quest in developing the Ifa person is to cultivate character. This is called *iwapele*, a gentle character, or *iwarere*, a good character, and thus these are interchangeable concepts. Character is not only the basis of a long life in this world and eternal life in the next, it is also the basis of a good life on earth. Indeed, the *Odu* says, “All the good things we have, if we don’t have character, the good things belong to someone else. And so it is character, *iwa*, we are looking for” (*Odu Ifa* 39:1). The word *character* is used to mean a relatively stable disposition toward doing good (*ire*). And again, the text says “No one needs to have a bad destiny, character is all that is required” (*Odu Ifa* 31:3).

The *Odu Ifa* also places stress on the love of doing good in the world. This is a moral practice rooted in the *Odu* teaching that one should do things with joy, knowing that humans are chosen to bring good into the world (*Odu Ifa* 78:1). By this stress on loving to do good, the *Odu* seeks to build a moral community based not simply on a sense of duty and obligation but also on a profound sense of joy in doing good, rooted in the benefit it has and brings for both giver and

recipient. And this love of doing good must be for everyone, but especially the most vulnerable and needy, as well as those who seek our help. Thus, the *Odu* states that creation of the good world requires “love of doing good for everyone, especially for those who are in need and those who seek assistance from us” (*Odu Ifa* 78:1).

Finally, the *Odu* teaches the importance of eagerness (*itara*) and struggle (*sisá ipa*) in order to bring good in the world as a requirement to create a good world. This reinforces the stress on moral feeling, a sense of joy and urgency in doing good, and a profound commitment to struggle. The theme of struggle permeates the *Odu* and includes struggle to master oneself, cultivate character, build quality relationships, create and sustain moral community, and insure good in the world. Indeed, the *Odu* speaks of the struggle for good in the world in three basic ways (*Odu Ifa* 78:1). These include the struggle to bring (*mu—lo, ko—wa*) good into the world, to increase (*kun*) good in the world, and to sustain good in the world (*laijeki ire eyikeyii ti a ti ni lo*—literally, “not let any good be lost”). Thus, it is in the constant waging of these struggles to bring, increase, and sustain good in the world that we honor our status as chosen ones, *èniyàn*; achieve the good world; and realize the fundamental mission and meaning of human life.

— Maulana Karenga

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See also Maat

OPPORTUNITY: A JOURNAL OF NEGRO LIFE

Opportunity: A Journal of Negro Life was published from 1923 to 1949 as the official organ of the National Urban League, a civil rights organization dedicated to the assimilation of blacks into mainstream America and noted for its research on blacks in the United States. The monthly journal is most frequently cited for the major role it played in formalizing and sustaining the arts movement known as the Harlem Renaissance; however, it was most consistent in publishing book reviews, editorials, and several articles each issue based on studies by the League’s department of research and development.

These articles typically took about two thirds of the publication and addressed crime, labor, housing, intelligence testing, education, interracial relations, and so on. The journal’s name was taken from the League’s motto “Not Alms, but Opportunity,” and its stated mission was to report objectively on black life to “provide a basis of understanding” and to “encourage interracial co-operation.” Specifically, it published information that would refute and discredit racial stereotypes then held about blacks in the Americas and Africa.

Charles S. Johnson, the journal’s founder and editor from 1923 to 1928, graduated from Virginia Union University and the University of Chicago, where he was trained as a sociologist. It was Johnson’s scientific training in Chicago that would shape much of his writing and the research published in the journal. Typical of his interest in analyzing the complexity of popular beliefs was his August 1923 essay on Marcus Garvey. While his contemporaries at *The Crisis* and *The Messenger* had joined mainstream pundits in denouncing Garvey and calling for his imprisonment and deportation, Johnson insisted that Garvey could not be seen as a joke. Instead, he drew analogies between Garvey’s African nationalism with the nationalistic movements elsewhere in the world supported by downtrodden peoples. Garvey wanted for Africans what the Irish wanted for Ireland and the Indians for India.

Johnson also thought it equally important to foster among blacks and influential whites an understanding and appreciation for black contributions to the “classical” arts. *Opportunity* regularly included poems, literary criticism, essays, and photos of sculpture and art

by black artists, as well as artifacts from African countries. Johnson is most often praised, however, for his orchestration of the now-famous March 1924 “coming out” dinner at New York’s Civic Club for Harlem’s literary giants to meet mainstream publishing brokers. Attendees included editors at *Century*, *Survey*, *The Nation*, and Harper Brothers, as well as the black writers Alain Locke, W.E.B. Du Bois, James Weldon Johnson, Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, Gwendolyn Bennett, and Jessie Fauset. This was followed in *Opportunity*’s September issue with the announcement of what would be the first of three literary contests that paid modest cash prizes to winners. These efforts are frequently credited with being the catalysts for the formalization of the Harlem Renaissance, where black artists were published and patronized by wealthy, influential whites. The journal, however, would continue until 1949 with the publication of statistics-driven research about blacks in the United States.

— Harry Amana

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ORAL TRADITION

The oral tradition, also termed *oral literature* or *orature*, refers to a wide body of oral discourse encompassing every subject and in every type of expression created by a people. The oral tradition is an art form that can be analyzed in accordance with an approved and recognized set of traditional standards. The nature of the African oral tradition is drawn from African belief systems and traditions.

The oral tradition is the complex corpus of verbal or spoken art created for the purpose of remembering the past based on the people’s ideas, beliefs, symbols, assumptions, attitude, and sentiments. There are three main categories of orature—literary, historical, and erudite knowledge. The literary includes poetic genres, divination poems, and songs. It also includes proverbs, parables, and incantations. The historical includes narratives based on myths, legends, and historical plays or epics. The erudite knowledge includes specialized, and often secret knowledge, such as initiation formulas, herbal recipes, and so on.

The poet serves many functions in traditional African society. The *griot* or court poet for the Mandika of West Africa was charged not only with singing the ruler’s praises but also with documenting through songs the historical events surrounding the royal or ruling family. He is also the linguist or spokesman for the king. The *umusizi* of the Rwanda in Central Africa, the *imbongi* of the Zulu in Southern Africa, and poets in other ethnic groups all serve the same purpose.

Ever present in traditional African orature is the productive power of *Nommo*—the Word. The African poet commands things by using words according to traditional African philosophy. Not only are these “magical” poets used at the discretion of royalty, but others consult them as well. For example, goldsmiths often call upon poets to work their “word-magic” for the creation of their art.

While at the same time appreciating the oral skill of the poet, Africans recognize their orature and its

performance (again, you cannot have one without the other) as a functional part of society. The purpose of orature is not merely to entertain, or to appeal to some romantic sensation, but to enlighten and stir the audience into some productive action or initiate or facilitate spiritual action.

African orature does not departmentalize literature into poetry, prose, and drama; orature is just language used by the speaker or poet. Examples of the use of language rooted in the indigenous African culture are copious. This is important because it demonstrates that there is no line drawn between a speech act and a performance in African communities. They are one and the same. To speak *is* to perform. Traditional African literature, or African orature, exists alongside or within African languages. It is not compartmentalized into separate and distinct categories. Therefore, when discussing the African oral tradition, one is speaking of artistic verbal expressions—and its performance in the form of poems, songs, proverbs, myths, legends, incantations, sermonizing, lecturing, testifying, signifying, and other modes—based on a complex worldview designed to elevate and transform society. In Africa and the diaspora, past and present, the spoken word dominates communication culture. This is part of the continuity with the ancient African past.

— Adisa A. Alkebulan

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ORGANIZATION OF AFRO-AMERICAN UNITY

The creation of the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) was announced on April 28, 1964 in New York City by Malcolm X, who is also known as El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz and as Omowale (“the child has come” in Yoruba). The OAAU was founded and modeled after the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The OAU was the union of African states that came into being in order to overcome common obstacles faced by member states. Malcolm X, as a spokesperson for his people who were being oppressed in the United States, had been warmly received in Africa. He had taken his case before the collective OAU as well as individual statesmen to petition for the assistance of newly independent African nations in securing freedom for Africans in America.

This underscores the profound pan-African orientation of the OAAU from the start. Indeed, although the OAAU was created in the United States of America, the vision was clear: The Organization of Afro-American Unity was established to unite the struggles of all the people of African descent, in the diaspora and in Africa. Their stated aim was to consolidate the ideas, skills, and resources of all Africans for the cause of freedom from oppression. Their underlying aim was to transform the civil rights movement into a human rights movement.

The primary goals of the OAAU were as follows:

1. to establish organized resistance to oppression;
2. to secure freedom through action;
3. to foster African unity and pan-Africanism through the nurturing of philosophical and cultural ties.

The OAAU envisioned freedom being achieved in this way: First, two primary mechanisms would be employed—self-determination and national unity.

Self-determination is best understood here as the ability of African people to pursue economic, political, social, and cultural enterprises that promote their right to shape their history, present and future, according to their best interests. *National unity* refers to Africans everywhere overcoming the divisions that obstruct the progress of people of African descent, as well as strengthening the bonds that unite all Africans. The OAAU proposed that obstructive divisions be eliminated in order to allow the fusion and convergence of talents, skills, resources, and ideas toward the common goal of freedom. In that respect, divisive agendas, which were encouraged by oppressors, would be set aside. Another important factor in the process of national unification would be the reconnection of African Americans with their African roots. Indeed, the rediscovery and reexperiencing of the true African culture and history, deliberately distorted and misrepresented by oppressive non-African groups, was also an important tenet of the OAAU. In this rediscovery process, Africans from the continent and the diaspora would become aware of their common heritage and identity. In the spirit of efficiently pursuing freedom, the OAAU developed three key concepts for national unity: pledging unity, promoting truth and justice, and transcending compromise.

The OAAU was made up of many branches, which would each specialize in specific issues. In this way, the many fronts on which oppression existed would be simultaneously engaged. Chapters of the OAAU were begun by African Americans residing in African countries, so that they could better contribute to the cause of freedom in America. The short-lived OAAU would, however, start with the human rights issue in the United States.

A distinctive feature of the OAAU was that any ideology was acceptable in its midst, as long as it aimed at securing African freedom. Pluralism was thus encouraged: The OAAU was inclusive with regard to religious differences, class differences, citizenship differences, as well as any other divisive constructs that would hinder unified action for the cause of freedom. While common grounds for action were the OAAU's primary focus, this pragmatic flexibility regarding differing ideologies and methods was a built-in feature of the OAAU.

Major OAAU rallies were held and planning activities were created from the start of the OAAU in the spring of 1964 until February 21, 1965, the day that Omowale Malcolm X Shabazz was assassinated. The

OAAU would never realize its potential. Omowale Malcolm X Shabazz, the revolutionary, was killed, and for all intents and purposes the institution of the OAAU died with him.

— Daryl Zizwe Poe

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OYO EMPIRE

Oyo came to power under the reign of Alafin Ajagbo in 1670. The Oyo Empire then lasted until the middle of the 19th century, when an internal civil war pitted the Oyo Muslims and Islamic traders against the traditional ruling house of Alafin Afonja, ultimately leaving a vacuum of power in Oyo. The people of Ibadan then conquered the territory that had once been under the power of Oyo.

Oyo is one of the oldest sites of the Yoruba peoples of southwestern Nigeria. During its imperial days, Oyo conquered Dahomey and controlled a territory larger than France. Oyo sold manufactured goods to Hausa and Fulani traders, who eventually had a large presence in the capital city of Oyo.

Oyo imported horses from the north, which were used in the kingdom of Oyo for military purposes, festivals, and state ceremonies and as status symbols. The horse appears early in Yoruba culture, but it is not entirely clear who introduced the animal to West Africa. However, the royal house of Oyo had an ancient practice of keeping horses long before Hausa

traders came with horses from the north. Oranmiyan, an Ife prince, is said to have founded the royal dynasties of both Oyo and Benin and been the first to introduce horses to Oyo society.

Horses may have been used earlier for nonmilitary purposes, but evidence suggests that the the Oyo army may have begun using horses only during the 16th century. By the 17th century, Oyo had become a powerful military state under leaders such as Oranmiyan, Sango, Orompoto, Abiodun, and Awole. However, by 1836 the kingdom had spent its best days and would be succeeded by the vigorous government of Ibadan.

— *Willie L. Brown*

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P

PATRIARCHY

Patriarchy is an authoritative male system that is both oppressive and discriminatory. It is oppressive in social, political, economic, and cultural environments. It is discriminatory in its control of access to power, management of resources and benefits, and manipulation of public and private power structures. Patriarchy is grounded in the assumption that the individual European male is a universal reference point and the source of defining visions of the cosmos, society, citizenship, and the individual self within hierarchical concepts of gender, race, and class relations.

Although some authors contend that matriarchy preceded patriarchy, patriarchy did not replace matriarchy. The two social systems originated in different parts of the world, and they are antithetical systems in that they are based on very different principles. In the African conception, a matriarchy is a society in which maternal energy and mother love are socially cohesive forces. Thus matriarchy is not, like patriarchy, a dominating ruling system—it is a social organization focused on the power of women as mothers and on the matrilineal ownership of the home and wealth.

Patriarchy is an authoritative system, in a broad sense, that resulted from the Western European historical and sociological approaches to the development of social and family structures as addressed by Western scholars. Thus, the paradigm that underlies the modern assumptions of patriarchy may have emerged from the insight of specific European authors drawing on the patriarchal basis of Greek and Roman philosophies. These authors saw matriarchy, and the

matrilineal system of the ancient southern societies, as barbaric and sexually promiscuous. This pervasive notion on which patriarchy has based its assumption of superiority has left an undeniable curse on women and it has always been and still is the ultimate reason for the oppression of women in society.

QUESTIONING THE PATRIARCHAL MODEL

Whether considered from a sex or gender perspective, in terms of male control of women's reproduction, or from a materialistic perspective where class relations and the sexual division of labor in the marketplace as economic and social extensions of male and female roles in the family are mutually self-reinforcing, patriarchy always stands for the totality of oppressive and exploitative relations that affect women in both the capitalist and the socialist systems. Patriarchy is, therefore, an all-encompassing oppressive paradigm whose transformation doesn't seem possible without a revolutionary questioning of every concept involved, beginning with the evolutionary model proposed by the classical theory of 19th-century Western writers.

Questioning the Western model is precisely what Cheikh Anta Diop committed himself to, and he succeeded in fully scientifically demonstrating its invalidity when he established a link between patterns of survival and systems of social organization geographically separated by the Mediterranean in a northern and a southern cradle. Diop clearly demonstrates that rather than a universal evolution, where one could speak of a transition from an inferior to a superior state, the two systems, with matriarchy favored by the agricultural societies of the southern cradle

and patriarchy favored by the nomadic people in the northern cradle, encountered one another and even disputed with each other as different human societies. Furthermore, at certain places and times, the two cradles were superimposed on each other or even coexisted.

Cheikh Anta Diop's presentation of matriarchy from an African perspective appears more complete than the Western male-centered discourse that shapes the Western patriarchal construction with its emphasis on the male as a universal point of departure in conceptualizing human existence. Thus Diop provides an opening for criticizing the ideas based on the assumption of a universal male referent (i.e., representation of the white male as the standard model for all ideological and theoretical positions), ideas that are rooted in biological differences and that account for much of the current hierarchical distribution and attribution of resources and power. This contrasting of matriarchy and patriarchy is a true revolutionary approach that places African cultural patterns at the center of the exploration of a distinctive concept of degrees of importance assigned to male and female subjects in African societies.

This revolutionary approach initiated by Diop, and developed by Afrocentric scholars such as Molefi Asante and Ama Mazama, defines the basis of the quest for an ideology of nonoppression. These scholars have based their views on ideas that derive from African holistic thought, which stresses collectiveness, relativism, nonhierarchicality, egalitarianism, and a balanced construction of life. Their intellectual idea is to confront patriarchy as an oppressive political and cultural system in order to eradicate it.

Indeed, such an Afrocentric task is in line with the harmonizing of the world, a central feature of Afrocentric thought. When one considers the fact that the enslaved African men and women brought to the Americas by Europeans were deprived of family bonds and faced the deepest destruction of family unity, order, and harmony from the 16th century on, it is possible to understand Africans' urgency in working to reclaim balance in society. In addition, slaveholders' sexual harassment, violation, and rape of the enslaved African girls and women could not but leave burning psychological marks in every black female. When the time came for Reconstruction, however, black men and women in America often built their family and social ties in the image of the European models of white America. By imitating the white male

pattern, the black men could not, would not, or were unable to affirm themselves as the alternative male model that black women would legitimately have expected to join in the consolidation of a cohesive African tradition of respectful communal values.

The Afrocentric paradigm as a holistic philosophical approach to the reality of the Africans in the diaspora contains, in its essence, the germ of a generating creative power that pursues a much more humanistic society than the prevailing Western patriarchal society. A genuine Afrocentricity seeks to examine the ancient continental African cultures for patterns of matriarchal social organization, family bonds, and human relations in an attempt to find a basis for a global revolutionary paradigm of female-male relationships in the 21st century.

— Ana Monteiro Ferreira

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THE PHILADELPHIA NEGRO

In 1896, white aristocrat and reformer Susan P. Wharton, in conjunction with the University of Pennsylvania and the College Settlement Association, commissioned William Edward Burghardt (W.E.B.) Du Bois to undertake a study on Negroes in Philadelphia. Since Philadelphia contained the largest black population north of the Mason-Dixon Line (of all U.S. cities, only New Orleans, Washington, D.C., and Baltimore had larger populations), African Americans residing in the City of Brotherly Love became a logical group for examination. The genesis

of the study originated in late 19th-century reform movements, comprising New Social Science, Social Gospel, and College Settlement House Associations, which were designed to investigate the debased condition of downtrodden urbanites and offer problem-solving suggestions to ameliorate life for the urban poor.

Those who instituted the study held more than altruistic thoughts toward the black community, however, as their ulterior motive for the investigation was self-serving and pertained to politics. Elite reformers became disgruntled by the behavior of the corrupt political machine that derived support from the black electorate. They therefore sought to document the moral and social condition of local blacks. Du Bois, who had studied in Berlin and recently graduated with his doctorate from Harvard, became the ideal researcher for the project. Du Bois's extensive study on research methodology, which he had learned in Germany, and publication of his *Suppression of the Atlantic Slave Trade*, the first monograph published in the Harvard Historical Studies, demonstrated he possessed the acumen and preparation for the task at hand. Thus Du Bois easily complied with the stated goals of the benefactors of the research project, who sought to understand the "Negro problem" by focusing on the Seventh Ward, the largest and most diverse black ward in the city.

DU BOIS'S FIELD RESEARCH FOR THE STUDY

Du Bois's extensive field research and writing conducted on black Philadelphians was completed within the short time span of 15 months and achieved a series of firsts. Indeed, when Du Bois's *The Philadelphia Negro* was published in 1967, it became the first book of modern sociology. As members of a fledgling academic discipline, sociologists traditionally read books, reflected on the information presented, and offered ideas without conducting investigative research. Therefore, the interviews Du Bois conducted with Seventh Ward residents broke new ground in scientific inquiry. A second novel contribution inherent in Du Bois's work pertained to the original analysis that evolved from the format and methodology of his work. After conducting house-to-house interviews with all the black families in the Seventh Ward, Du Bois acquired candid information from 9,675 subjects. Through these investigations, Du Bois gained insight on the condition, aspirations, trials, and tribulations of the black community.

The Philadelphia Negro contained information about African Americans never previously presented to interested readers. Conscious of the need to make his work comprehensible to readers, Du Bois divided his study into four parts. The first part describes the history of the black people in the city, their present condition as individuals, their behavior as a social group, and the physical and social confines of their community. The second part is devoted to "the general condition of Negroes" and contains information on age, gender, education, and means of earning a living. The third part focuses on the group life of the black community, including the number of blacks in Philadelphia and their family situations and secular and religious organizations. Here, Du Bois also presents information on social maladjustment and individual deprivation characterized by crime, pauperism, and alcoholism. Finally, Du Bois assesses the physical and social environment, references and analyzes interracial relationships, and offers advice and suggestions for social reform.

Throughout the study, maps, statistical tables, charts, and graphs provide convincing testimony to the accuracy of the work. The ecological map detailing the distribution of the black population by socioeconomic class garnered special interest. Du Bois divided the black population into four categories: (1) the "middle classes" and those above, (2) the working people—fair to comfortable, (3) the poor, and (4) the vicious and criminal classes. Du Bois's study made it clear that African Americans can best be studied and understood within the context of class, consequently, ever since publication of *The Philadelphia Negro*, serious students of black communities have devoted attention to social stratification.

Du Bois intended to do far more than present evidence about the black situation. Prior to any previous scholar, Du Bois presented an assessment and expectations of the black elite. He excoriated the black aristocracy for drawing a line between themselves and the masses, and he chided the elite for being unprepared to lead their race. While the Harvard-trained Du Bois displayed aloofness and aristocratic tendencies himself, he nevertheless believed unequivocally that the better classes should recognize their duty to the masses.

DU BOIS'S EMERGENCE AS A MAJOR SOCIAL SCIENTIST

Unwittingly, those who contracted Du Bois to perform research on black Philadelphians created

an intellectual activist who never forgot the racism he experienced. Although the University of Pennsylvania listed Du Bois as an assistant professor in the sociology department, it never considered offering him a teaching position. Du Bois never forgot the slight. He later complained that the university never placed his name in the catalogue, and he believed the university's invitation had not been cordial. For most of his life, Du Bois would serve his race by galvanizing and encouraging blacks of higher station to fight relentlessly against racial discrimination. Du Bois and others with talent and ambition bristled at the "color line" that prevented them from acquiring the social and occupational positions worthy of their station.

The scholarly brilliance Du Bois displayed in *The Philadelphia Negro* was immediately recognized as a credit to American scholarship. Reviewers praised Du Bois's objectivity and willingly accepted his conclusions. And yet, few could have predicted that this seminal work on black Philadelphians would have far-reaching consequences that continued throughout the 20th century. The genesis of Du Bois's most important contributions to the black community appeared in *The Philadelphia Negro*—his demands for leadership emanating from the black elite, his condemnation of intraracial dissension caused by class differences, and his persistent expectations that those he termed the "talented tenth" (the 10% of blacks capable of leading the rest) receive proper respect from their white peers and the black masses. Throughout his career, Du Bois engaged in research and writing with a clear focus in mind: He sought freedom, justice, and equal opportunity for all African Americans. One may argue that the research skills he honed and shaped as he worked on *The Philadelphia Negro* served as motivating tools that culminated in the civil rights movement of the 1960s.

— H. V. Nelson

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THE PITTSBURGH COURIER

Established in 1907 by Edwin Harleston, a guard in an H. J. Heinz food-packing plant, *The Pittsburgh Courier* gained national prominence after attorney Robert Lee Vann became the newspaper's editor and publisher, treasurer, and legal counsel in 1910. By the 1930s and 1940s, it was one of the top-selling black newspapers in the country. In fact, with a circulation of almost 200,000, *The Pittsburgh Courier* was once the most widely circulated black newspaper, and on a par with *The Chicago Defender* and the *Afro-American* in Baltimore.

A network of Pullman Porters who worked for the railroad companies helped with the distribution of the paper, especially in the South. Because the paper advocated equal rights and campaigned against lynching and discrimination, sheriffs in the Jim Crow South tried to ban the paper's distribution and frequently destroyed and burned stacks that made their way into town. *The Pittsburgh Courier* launched its "stop and drop" program in 1936 and continued it through the mid-1940s. During that time, railroad porters helped to get 100,000 papers a week into the South. The porters were trusted because they worked under the strong leadership of A. Philip Randolph, a labor and civil rights activist who was the founder and president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. Every week the black newspaper would be smuggled in small bundles to the Pittsburgh railroad station, and porters would hide them aboard or under the trains. Once the papers arrived in the South, the porters dropped the papers 2 miles outside major cities and black ministers gathered the papers and held them until Sunday, distributing them to the children in their congregations who served as newsboys and newsgirls.

From its inception, *The Pittsburgh Courier* sought to empower African Americans economically and politically. It called for improvements in housing, health, and education; protested the slum conditions in which black people were forced to live in Pittsburgh and throughout the nation; and encouraged the black community to support black organizations such as the National Urban League and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. In 1932, Vann helped influence black voters to support the Democratic presidential candidate Franklin D. Roosevelt; for blacks this was a major political shift

from their prior allegiance to the Republican Party, which had been thought of as Lincoln's party.

The Pittsburgh Courier was the first black newspaper to publish both national and local editions. At one time, there were as many as 14 editions circulated in states in the North and the South including Texas, Louisiana, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and New York. Many of the 20th century's well-known and influential black journalists and intellectuals contributed to the paper, such as George Schuyler, Marcus Garvey, W.E.B. Du Bois, James Weldon Johnson, Elijah Muhammed, and Zora Neale Hurston. It was also one of the few black newspapers to provide coverage of news in Africa as the countries on the continent moved toward independence.

The paper, which was often known simply as *The Courier*, protested misrepresentations of African Americans in the media and in sports. Thus, in the early 1930s, the paper began a nationwide protest against the *Amos 'n' Andy* daily radio serial, attempting to have the program removed from the air. *The Courier*, which wielded much influence, came out strongly against segregation in professional sports. Wendell Smith, the paper's sportswriter starting in 1938, used his column to denounce segregation in the major leagues, and his efforts contributed to Jackie Robinson's signing with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947.

Ira Lewis, a sportswriter himself, became editor of the paper after Vann's death in 1940. *The Courier* reached its highest circulation under Lewis because of the "Double V" Campaign, which from 1942 through 1943 demanded that African Americans who were risking their lives abroad receive full citizenship rights at home. But in 1948 Ira Lewis died, and without his leadership *The Pittsburgh Courier's* circulation began to decline—especially in the 1950s and 1960s. In 1965, the paper was sold to John Sengstacke, owner and publisher of *The Chicago Defender*. Today the paper, as *The New Pittsburgh Courier*, continues to be an active, responsible voice for the African American community.

— Deborah F. Atwater

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PLESSY V. FERGUSON

Abraham Lincoln's success in the Civil War and the end of slavery signaled the beginning of a new era for blacks in America. However, in an attempt to restrict the freedom of newly freed blacks, many Southern states passed "black codes" that limited blacks' right to vote, to engage in certain occupations, and to participate in the judicial system. In response, the "radical Republicans" in Congress passed a civil rights bill and Reconstruction acts to limit the impact of the black codes and guarantee blacks their rights. But lawmakers intimidated by such organizations as the Ku Klux Klan passed laws that segregated blacks from whites. While the Fourteenth Amendment ended slavery, it still left many questions about the relations between blacks and whites unanswered. These questions became a significant factor in the case of *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), in which the U.S. Supreme Court decided that a Louisiana law mandating "separate but equal" accommodations for blacks and whites on intrastate railroads was constitutional. This decision provided the legal foundation to justify many other actions by state and local governments to socially separate blacks and whites.

A LEGAL CHALLENGE TO SEGREGATION

The arrest of Homer Adolph Plessy (1862–1925) on June 7, 1892 was part of a planned challenge to the constitutionality of the 1890 Louisiana Separate Car Act by the Citizens' Committee, a small group of black professionals in New Orleans. The committee hired the

white lawyer and novelist Albion Winegar Tourgée, who had begun calling attention to separate-car laws in his newspaper column in August of 1891. After the committee successfully led a test case in *State v. Desdunes*, in which the Louisiana district court declared forced segregation in railroad cars traveling between states to be unconstitutional, the committee was anxious for a case to test the constitutionality of segregation on railroad cars operating solely within a single state. Part of Tourgée's strategy was to have someone of mixed blood violate the law, since to do so would allow him to question the arbitrariness by which people were classified "colored." Plessy, a Louisiana Creole of Haitian descent who was a mix of seven-eighths white and one-eighth black, agreed to be the test case.

The committee arranged with the railroad conductor and with a private detective to detain Plessy until he was arrested. This challenge received some silent support from railroad companies, which did not like the added expense of providing separate cars. A month after his arrest, Plessy came before a Louisiana district court presided over by Justice John Howard Ferguson. A native of Massachusetts, Ferguson had ruled earlier in the *States v. Desdunes* case that the separate car act was unconstitutional on interstate trains because of the federal government's power to regulate interstate commerce. When Plessy appeared before the Louisiana district court, the court ruled that a state had the constitutional power to regulate railroad companies operating solely within its borders and concluded that the Louisiana Separate Car Act was indeed constitutional. The decision was appealed to the state supreme court in 1893 and was appealed again to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1896.

By the time *Plessy v. Ferguson* arrived at the Supreme Court, Tourgée and his colleagues James C. Walker and Samuel F. Phillips had solidified their strategy. Tourgée argued that Plessy was denied his equal protection rights under the Fourteenth Amendment and that Louisiana had violated the Thirteenth Amendment by perpetuating the essential features of slavery. Tourgée also exploited the fact that Plessy had only one-eighth African blood and argued that the reputation of belonging to one race or the other was a form of property, in that the financial benefits incurred from being labeled white, Tourgée claimed, were a form of property that was being denied to his client.

THE SUPREME COURT VERDICT

On May 18, 1896, the Supreme Court rendered its decision. Eight of the nine justices were unconvinced by Tourgée's arguments, and they ruled that neither the Thirteenth nor Fourteenth Amendment was applicable in this case. The majority opinion delivered by Henry Billings Brown attacked the Thirteenth Amendment claims by distinguishing between political and social equality. According to this distinction, blacks and whites were politically equal (in the sense that they had the same political rights) but socially unequal (blacks were not as socially advanced as whites). In effect, Brown believed that legislation was powerless to remove racial differences and that to attempt to do so would only accentuate those differences: If the civil and political rights of the races were equal, one race could not be inferior to the other civilly or politically. If one race were inferior to the other socially, the Constitution of the United States could not put them on the same plane. The majority also attacked Tourgée's Fourteenth Amendment claims by arguing that enforced separation does not "stamp" blacks with a badge of inferiority, because blacks and whites were treated equally under the law—in the sense that just as blacks were barred from white accommodations on trains, whites were forbidden to sit in railroad cars designated for blacks.

THE VOICE OF THE LONE DISSENTER

The single dissenter who argued in favor of Plessy's case, and seemed to be the only one with a real understanding of equality, was Justice John Harlan, the only Southerner on the Supreme Court at the time and a former slaveholder. Inspired by the infamous *Dred Scott* case, which denied citizenship to all blacks, he wrote his own speech regarding the case and its decision. Harlan asserted that the Constitution was color-blind and did not know or tolerate classes among citizens, and that therefore the decision rendered by the Court would be as pernicious as the decision made in the *Dred Scott* case. Harlan further believed that the decision would stimulate aggression against blacks and encourage the belief that second-class citizenship of the black race was supported by the Constitution. Justice Harlan's words proved to be prophetic. It was not until the case of *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954 that "separate but equal" would no longer be the law of the land.

— Garvey F. Lundy

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POPULAR TRADITIONAL AFRICAN RELIGIONS EVERYWHERE (PTARE)

PTARE, the acronym for Popular Traditional African Religions Everywhere, expresses that all African traditional religions have similar conceptualizations and are fundamentally ways of life. PTARE was coined during the early 1990s in the writings of the Temple Afrocentric Circle, which included Molefi Kete Asante, Kariamuwelsh, C. T. Keto, Ama Mazama, Nah Dove, and others. Since few words exist in any African language for religion, it was not possible to discover one word for all the traditions; therefore scholars came up with PTARE to cover the commonalities in all of the African religions.

Whether one is Yoruba, Ibo, Zulu, or Congo, one has certain basic values that are seen throughout African experiences. For example, all African people have a notion of a first deity, a creator deity, who is beyond all other spirits and ancestors. In addition, all African religions have a strong belief in reverence for ancestors. Most African religions place emphasis on nature spirits and have prohibitions or taboos against certain violations of the natural order. There is no concept of guilt in PTARE, but there is a developed concept of shame, because instead of an individual emphasis most African religions have a group or communal emphasis when it comes to values and morality.

Westerners conceptualize religion in Africa merely as rituals involving "fetishes," that is, objects believed

to be imbued with the power to bring either good or evil. The term *fetish*—which is derived from the Portuguese word *feitiso* and the French word *fetich*, meaning "artificial or false"—does not begin to explain to Westerners the methods and significance of African religion. The Western conception of African religion was a misconception from the beginning, one that added to a general misunderstanding of the nature of African ways of life. Such facile explanations of African religion do not deal with the ethical and moral complexity of Africans' beliefs about their relationship to the universe, the community, the living and dead, and the supernatural. Furthermore, there are numerous religious expressions that must be considered as a part of the equation when trying to determine the nature of African religion.

In fact, just as the Christians have several denominations, the Jews several expressions of Judaism, and the Muslims several types of Islam, Africans have many expressions of PTARE. Although there are many forms of PTARE—such as those seen in Yoruba, Efik, Ibibio, Shona, Ga, Ewe, and so on—the religion is singular.

— Molefi Kete Asante

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PROTEST PRESSURE

Protest pressure refers to demonstrative, rhetorical, physical, and political actions taken by Africans to reject enslavement, discrimination, racism, and prejudice. Protest pressure may be thought of as having

started with the slave revolts prior to the Civil War and continuing into the 21st century.

In the field of Black Studies, scholars study protest pressure emanating from individual and collective organizations. Articulated primarily through political and physical actions, protest pressure is meant to create tension within the social structures that support white racial domination of African people. Protest pressure evolved during the 17th century as African people began to protest against the abuse, disrespect, and violence of whites. After the end of the Civil War and the brief period of the Reconstruction, Africans were viciously attacked by many white Southerners whose claim to racial superiority had been called into question by the Civil War and the subsequent rise of African American legislators in the South. The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) was founded in the late 19th century as the reactionary arm of the proponents of white supremacy.

It was not long after the creation of the KKK that the African American community began organizing against the racist group. In 1909, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was formed and quickly became one of the dominant organizations to bring protest pressure against racism. Soon after World War I, the African population began to use large street demonstrations to express censure of discrimination. By the end of World War II, this strategy had gained widespread use and the increase in the expertise of the organizers meant that a demonstration could be called immediately.

Protest pressure has two characteristics: (1) the threat of violence and (2) the moral legitimacy of free speech. It is because of these two qualities that demonstrations such as those led by Martin Luther King, Jr., during the civil rights era were so successful. African Americans had learned from A. Philip Randolph, the founder of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, that protest pressure could be a valuable asset to the struggle for full liberation.

Active propaganda against racism appeared in the early 20th century as a form of literate warfare. Writers like W.E.B. Du Bois, Ida B. Wells, and Carter G. Woodson made it their business to agitate for racial equality and social justice. Soon direct action, a form of protest pressure that involved physical action such as sitting at counters that were ostensibly segregated, sitting in the front of buses that did not permit African people to sit in front seats, and physically occupying offices and buildings, became the most prevalent way of bringing pressure on racist institutions.

Protest pressure has most often been brought to bear in the two directions of economics and culture. Economic radicalism has been concerned with developing boycotts and other forms of economic sabotage on racist institutions. Cultural radicalism has directed its efforts to cultural institutions such as schools, churches, social agencies, and arts and cultural institutions. In the end, the African American community has used protest pressure when necessary to demand Black Studies, women's rights, youth justice, and an end to racial profiling of motorists.

— Molefi Kete Asante

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THE PSYCHOPATHIC RACIAL PERSONALITY

The Psychopathic Racial Personality is a collection of essays written by Bobby Wright, a University of Chicago psychologist, and published by Third World Press in 1982, two years after Wright's death. Wright used his training and skills in the best interest of black people. He took a scientific approach in *The Psychopathic Racial Personality* by outlining the psychosocial characteristics of Western society in relation to racism, methodically addressing the areas of government, military tactics, science, the medical community, religion, and education.

Wright coined the term *mentacide*, which he defined as the deliberate and systematic destruction of a group's minds with the ultimate objective being the

extirpation of the group. The solutions Wright offered for the African community included the creation of a black social theory and the fulfillment of the obligation of African intellectuals to perform black scientific inquiry (i.e., the study of white supremacy and culture, not the oppressed of such culture). He believed in the necessity of reestablishing black culture, and that a black social theory would establish and institutionalize methods and a direction for the liberation of African people.

The essays in *The Psychopathic Racial Personality* include “Black Suicide,” “Educating the Black Child,” and “The Black Child: A Destiny in Jeopardy.” These essays reinforce the warning in the African proverb Wright quotes: “If you don’t know where you are going, any road will get you there.” Wright’s concern is that destruction will result for the black community because it lacks direction and a black social theory: “Social theory determines the destiny of a people by establishing guidelines of life and Blacks should therefore develop a Black Social Theory.” The objective of a black social theory is to recreate a black culture that will allow for the liberation of blacks as a people.

In the title essay of *The Psychopathic Racial Personality*, Wright wrote that the answer to blacks’ problems can be found in the works and lives of people like Chaka, Martin Delany, Marcus Garvey, H. Rap Brown, Malcolm X, Chancellor Williams, and others: “For they all looked at the matador or psychopath for what he was and is, and moved against him.”

— *Ivory Achebe Toldson*

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PUSH

PUSH is the acronym used first for People United to Save Humanity, and later for People United to Serve Humanity. As the founder and President of Operation: PUSH, Reverend Jesse Jackson began this national civil rights organization in Chicago on December 25, 1971. The main thrust of Operation PUSH was to enhance the living conditions of working and poor black people by helping them obtain economic power. In March of 1972, a regional office was opened in New York, and later offices were opened in other major cities.

The choice of December 25—with its religious symbolism—for the inception of Operation PUSH was intentional and is characteristic of Jackson’s leadership style, which is deeply rooted in his training as a Southern Baptist minister. It is impossible to separate Jackson’s charismatic and forceful personality from Operation PUSH, as the two are deeply intertwined. Operation PUSH was Jackson’s idea, and as a young ambitious activist with the oratorical skills of a preacher and a belief in autocratic leadership, he became the main decision maker within the organization. In the area of civil rights, he chose to change the administrative strategy from nonviolence to militancy for Operation PUSH. Less tolerant in his beliefs of equality, Jackson leaned more toward social justice and shared resources, in contrast to Martin Luther King Jr.’s philosophy of civil rights through nonviolent demonstrations. Jackson publicly stated that under his direction, Operation: PUSH would embrace a philosophy of nonviolence if possible, but violence if needed.

JESSE JACKSON’S LEADERSHIP

Jackson was gifted at organizing boycotts and gained national recognition as one of the top lieutenants within the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). He had become the director of Operation Breadbasket (1966–1971), an economic arm of the SCLC, and had worked closely with King. Effecting change through boycotts, demonstrations, and controlled consumer spending, Operation Breadbasket was an economic movement designed to lessen the grubstake and dominance that major corporations had on black and underserved communities. Ironically, the word *breadbasket* is slang for stomach, and this endeavor was aimed at restricting or tightening corporate profits.

However, Jackson's life changed on April 4, 1968, when Martin Luther King was assassinated in Memphis. The tragic death of the most recognized African American civil rights leader startled the world. The movement for racial equality needed a new leader and immediate supervision to safeguard the newly won rights in the areas of politics, social status, and economics. When Ralph D. Abernathy, Vice President of the SCLC and one of its founding members, as well as a close activist friend of King's, became King's successor, Jackson returned to Chicago and began to distance himself from the organization. Jackson's complete break from the SCLC came later, however, when Jackson worked with black businessmen in the Chicago area to organize the fourth annual Black Expo under the auspices of Operation PUSH instead of SCLC, its prior sponsor. In December of 1971 he was chastised by Abernathy with a 60-day suspension for "administrative impropriety" and "repeated violation of organizational discipline." He later resigned from SCLC to devote all of his attention to Operation PUSH.

Strongly committed to the picketing and demonstration strategies so successful in Operation Breadbasket, Jackson used the same model for Operation PUSH with added divisions for housing, welfare, politics, education, and youth affairs. He was aggressively persuasive at enlisting the support of major corporations to hire African Americans and invest in black communities by forewarning of possible boycotts and picketing demonstrations. Burger King, 7-Up, Coca Cola, Southland, Adolph Coors, Heublein, Avon, and Montgomery Ward were some of the many corporate sponsors convinced by Jackson to take their corporate responsibility within African American communities seriously. However, later some of the corporate heads complained that they had been coerced by Jackson for financial contributions. Yet, even with millions of dollars contributed to Operation PUSH in federal grants and corporate funding, there were still administrative problems that plagued the organization. The accusations of financial mismanagement and poor bookkeeping resulted in federal audits and civil claims being brought against the organization.

THE POLITICAL AGENDA

Jackson was well aware that keeping a vigil on program and policy development in the White House and Congress was important to the economic goals of

Operation PUSH. The importance of having political relationships directly with presidents or top ranking presidential aides to monitor national social and economic policy affecting the living conditions of poor and working people could not be underestimated. President Richard Nixon's administration was known to be callous and unsympathetic to African American issues. This served to galvanize black leaders to organize picketing demonstrations. Jackson put aside any philosophical and personal differences with Abernathy and other black leaders to contribute staff from Operation PUSH in many demonstrations against Nixon's programs on welfare, education, and children's rights. In March of 1972, there were over 25,000 people (many of whom were children) at the demonstration in Washington, D.C., against Nixon's proposed \$2,400 a year supplement for a needy family of four—instead of the \$6,500 recommended by the coalition of national black leaders. When President Gerald R. Ford took office, he immediately arranged a series of meetings with black leaders to improve the White House's communication with the black community. Jackson's Operation PUSH was just one of the civil rights groups encouraged by the optimism of the new president. However, as top man at Operation PUSH, Jackson's defiant public image often hindered his ability to be an effective political insider on a national scale. On one occasion, he stood alone in his charge of "callous neglect" against the administration of President Jimmy Carter in the area of full employment for all blacks. In direct contrast, other black leaders were more optimistic and agreed to be "moderate and reasonable" in their comments.

In 1985, Jackson broadened the scope of Operation PUSH and turned his attention to problems in public education by creating an affiliate group called Push for Excellence (commonly called PUSH-EXCEL). The goal was to upgrade the quality of education on a national scale, with an emphasis on building teenagers' self-esteem. Jackson was very active in visiting schools across the country and speaking to students to promote self-esteem and self-discipline. A campaign of getting signed pledges of parental involvement was one of the strategies employed by Jackson to increase students' commitment to learning. However, in spite of having the support of the media and the federal government, and of having been granted a 3-year funding grant from the National Institute of Education of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, PUSH-EXCEL did not sustain its luster. Racial tension,

neighborhood politics, mismanagement, and federal auditing problems rendered the program ineffective.

When Jackson made a bid for the presidency in 1984 and in 1988, without the endorsement of many black political leaders and without adequate financial resources, the political infrastructure of Operation PUSH became a vital component in his campaign. Voter registration drives gathered a large population of Jackson supporters. However, during the campaign, federal auditing of Operation PUSH and PUSH EXCEL yielded profound inconsistencies in the administrative structure of the organization, and in newspaper interviews, PUSH officials were critical of Jackson. There was some concern that Jackson's political aspirations could cripple the legitimacy of the organization.

In 1985, Jackson announced the formation of the National Rainbow Coalition, and in 1996, 25 years after the beginning of Operation PUSH, he announced

the merger of Operation PUSH and the National Rainbow Coalition into one organization called the Rainbow PUSH Action Network, or the Network. He vowed that the merger would strengthen the ability to effect change in the lives of working and poor people on a local and national level.

— Gloria Grant Roberson

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R

RASTAFARIANISM

Rastafarianism or Rastafari is an Africa-centered religion in which the Emperor Haile Selassie (1892–1975) is revered as the black messiah. The religion draws its name from the emperor’s pre-coronation name, Ras Tafari Makonnen. Ras literally means “head” in Amharic and is equivalent to the English title of duke, thus Ras Tafari Makonnen means Duke Tafari, the son of Makonnen. Followers of Rastafarianism are known as Rastafarians, Rastas, Sufferers, Locksmen, Dreads, or Dreadlocks, with the last three names referring to the unique braided hairstyle with which the group is associated.

REGGAE’S MESSAGE

Rastafarianism emerged in Jamaica in the 1930s. With the advent of reggae music, which was popularized by Rastafarians in the 1960s and 1970s, the movement became an international phenomenon, especially among disaffected youth and disenfranchised groups. The failure of mainstream church groups to address the fundamentals of modern-day racial and economic woes, the ever-increasing polarization of the world between the haves and the have-nots, the pervasive nature of Western neocolonialism, the violent urban backlash against third world immigrants, and finally, reggae musician Bob Marley’s simple but powerful lyrics on behalf of the voiceless, can be cited as some of the reasons for the transformation of Rastafari into a worldwide protest movement.

As avid readers of the Christian scriptures, Rastafarians have reinterpreted the Bible in light of present-day Caribbean reality. The bitter experience of the Israelites under Egyptian and later Babylonian captivity is, for example, understood as a metaphor for modern-day African slavery in the West. Babylon, in Rastafarian parlance, therefore refers to the capitalist West, while its opposite, the Promised Land or Zion, alludes to the ancient African nation of Ethiopia.

CUSTOMS

As a religion, Rastafari has its own rituals and customs, most of them derived from scripture, that govern the day-to-day life of its adherents. A strict dietary law, which is the basis of Ital cooking, prevents members from eating beef and pork and from using factory made preservatives, including salt. Alcohol is outlawed, while the consumption of tea and coffee is also discouraged since they are factory processed. On the other hand, Rastas invoke Psalm 104:14 to lend legitimacy to the practice of smoking marijuana or ganja: “He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man that he may bring forth food out of the earth.”

Because of the conventional perception of marijuana as a mind-altering drug, Rastafarians are maligned by mainstream media as indulgent cultists. According to defenders of the faith, however, Rastafarians use marijuana not as a recreational drug but only for religious purposes or as aid in their meditative rituals. They hasten to add, moreover, that the harm associated with ganja consumption is much less

than that of alcohol and cigarettes, both of which are multibillion dollar industries in the West despite their well-known side effects.

Rastafarians, many of whom are self-employed as artists, musicians, peddlers, and so on, are generally nonviolent and law abiding. But since most of them live in lower-class neighborhoods, and since the high rate of unemployment in such neighborhoods gives rise to a high level of crime and homicide, Rastafarians in their dreadlocks and green-gold-and-red tricolor often become ideal targets for police harassment and undue search and seizure. Such treatment has in turn reinforced Rastafarian suspicion of government authorities as well as bolstered their commitment to repatriation to Africa, especially Ethiopia.

COSMOLOGY

Ethiopia's importance in Rastafarian cosmology has its roots in the concept of Ethiopianism. *Ethiopianism* refers to ideas based on the reading of selected scriptural texts and Western classics from which were forged a sense of collective historical consciousness. Scriptural and Homeric positive presentations of Ethiopia, which sharply contrasted with the Euro-American perception of Africans as heathen and savage, provided the means for a celebratory self-identification. In literary texts such as the *King James Bible* and the Hellenic epics, Ethiopia is not just a generic name for Africa but conjures up a powerful mythology that became the basis of 19th-century black liberation discourse.

The Ethiopian Baptist Church in Jamaica was founded in 1783 by George Liele, a formerly enslaved preacher from Savannah, Georgia. The first independent black churches in the Americas also identified themselves with the Ethiopian tradition by using names that had direct reference to Africa. By the early 19th century, several independent churches, such as the Abyssinian Baptist Church of New York, were flourishing in the United States. By the second half of the 19th century, a separatist religious tradition, known as the Ethiopian Church movement, had sprung up in southern and western Africa, suggesting once again the universalist appeal of Ethiopianism as an expression of pan-African nationalism.

Emperor Menelik's victory over Italy at Adwa in 1896 further elevated the concept of Ethiopianism. The news of the Adwan victory came at a time when African and African American political fortunes were

at their lowest. Since the Berlin conference of 1884, Africa had been partitioned among European powers and, given the latter's superior military force, few expected colonialism to be a short-term affair. In the United States, likewise, the 1890s marked the worst setback in the postbellum struggle for racial equality. In 1896, the same year in which the Adwan legend was born, the Supreme Court used the infamous *Plessy v. Ferguson* case to defend the ideology of white supremacy, or de jure segregation, in the name of "separate but equal" philosophy.

Against these backdrops of colonialism and second-class citizenship, Ethiopia's military triumph over a European foe signified an imminent racial resurgence, and the far off country became henceforth an icon of freedom and a source of racial self-reassurance for Africans everywhere. Adwan mythology rendered East Africa a central place in modern black thought, and Ethiopianism in this regard became the direct harbinger of 20th-century nationalist expressions, among them Garveyism, pan-Africanism, and Rastafarianism.

JAMAICAN ROOTS

To understand why Rastafarianism first took root in Jamaica, it is necessary to take into account the history of Jamaica's defiant past. The maroon wars of the 1700s, the Christmas uprising of enslaved Africans in 1831, and the Morant Bay Rebellion of 1865 are but a few landmark examples of the island's heroic resistance to exploitation and second-class citizenship. In addition to this is Jamaica's rich history of revivalism, most of it associated with enslavement and African influences. Many 19th-century Jamaican revivalist groups synchronized Christianity with such African religious practices as spirit mounting and trance dancing, as well as with their beliefs in sorcery and the medicine man. Out of this fusion were born expressions of worship indigenous to Jamaica, including Myalism, Pokumina, and Kumina.

Some of the revivalist groups produced charismatic leaders of messianic proportions. In 1895, Alexander Bedward, a 36-year-old Jamaican Baptist preacher, gained wide notoriety for his outspoken denouncement of the white establishment. His incendiary racial rhetoric, which pitted him against the authorities, spread across the island, making Bedward a champion of the downtrodden. Allegedly imbued with prophetic and healing powers, during the next two decades

Bedward became the most popular Baptist minister in Jamaica. However, when his supernatural powers failed to materialize, Bedward's own growing ambition resulted in his final undoing in 1920. This, however, did not end the peasantry's hunger for a messianic hero. In the 1930s, many ex-Bedwardites would find refuge for their eschatological beliefs in the fledgling religion of Rastafarianism.

For Caribbean people in general, from 1910 into the early 1920s was a time of unprecedented population shift, sparked by the economic boom in the United States. A radical religious text that was introduced to Jamaica during this period, together with the mass flow of goods and ideas from North America, was the Holy Piby, a black supremacist version of the Bible. First appearing in the East Coast in the early 1920s, the Holy Piby reached the English Caribbean by 1925. A year later it was followed by the Jamaican publication of the "Royal Parchment Scrolls of Black Supremacy," much of whose millennial ethos would become the basis of Rastafarianism.

ETHIOPIA'S SIGNIFICANCE TO RASTAFARIANS

The first decades of the 20th century also saw the revival of the Back-to-Africa movement under the leadership of the legendary Marcus Garvey. Contrary to popular folklore, there is no record of Garvey having made a prophecy about the coming of a race liberator in the form of an African monarch. In the late 1930s, in fact, Garvey published a series of articles accusing Haile Selassie of cowardice for fleeing to England instead of fighting the Italians at home. In November of 1930, however, the UNIA (Universal Negro Improvement Association) leader hailed the coronation of Haile Selassie as a historic moment. In a tribute befitting the occasion, Garvey described Haile Selassie as a visionary and progressive king, and summoned all blacks to work with him for the betterment of Ethiopia and the African race.

Out of the synthesis of Bedwardism, Garveyism, the Holy Piby, and Ethiopian symbolism thus grew the interpretation of the 1930 coronation of Ras Tafari Makonnen—henceforth Emperor Haile Selassie, King of Kings, Select of God, the Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah—as the fulfillment of scriptural prophecy. To that effect, Rasta doctrinaires found in the Bible several verses that supposedly corroborated their perception of Haile Selassie as the messiah. Among them was what the Jamaican ideologues

claimed was a direct reference to Haile Selassie: "And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice: 'Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seven seals?' . . . Then one of the elders said unto me, 'Weep not, lo, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has conquered so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals'" (Rev. 2:2–5). These verses were juxtaposed with Psalm 87:4 as further proof that Ethiopia was the Holy Land and Haile Selassie the long-awaited redeemer: "I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me: behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia; this man was born there."

Italy's unprovoked aggression in Ethiopia in 1935, which instantly turned the far off country into a racial cause célèbre, provided the optimal environment for the spread of Rastafari in the nearby islands. Similarly, Jamaican migration to New York and England after World War II resulted in the group's expansion overseas. In the mid-1950s, the Ethiopian government allocated several hundred acres of land near the southern town of Shashemene for would-be black settlers from the West. News of the land grant on the one hand, and the continuous persecution of the Dreads by the Jamaican police on the other, revived the theme of repatriation as the movement's top priority. In 1961, a sympathetic publication on the Rastafarian plight by three university professors resulted in Prime Minister Norman Manley's decision to launch a fact-finding mission to five African countries. After visiting the countries in question, including Ethiopia, the mission produced its report, which showed the African governments' relative receptivity to a process of selective migration. Alexander Bustamante, Manley's successor, showed no similar social sensitivity, however, and the question of repatriation never received serious attention again.

Hoping the occasion would provide an opportunity to dispel the myth of Haile Selassie's divinity, Jamaican officials welcomed with enthusiasm his 1966 visit to their country. Little did they expect that circumstances, such as the extensive coverage in the media of the imperial pomp and circumstance, people's tumultuous outpouring of love and adulation, and incidents like the drastic weather change that accompanied Haile Selassie's entry into Kingston, would help re-entrench the monarch's divine aura and, in so doing, give the movement its greatest momentum since the 1930s. Inspired in part by the 1966 royal visit and in part by Bob Marley's rise to international

stardom, between the late 1960s and the mid-1970s, Rastafarianism experienced its fastest growth, making it a factor in the 1972 election of Michael Manley, the son of Norman Manley, into the office of prime minister in Jamaica.

Despite its unheralded cultural and artistic successes on the world stage, from the mid-1970s on, Rastafarianism found itself on the defensive regarding its belief in Haile Selassie's divinity and its commitment to repatriation. The ousting of Haile Selassie by a Marxist junta in the midst of a cataclysmic famine contradicted the Caribbean image of Ethiopia as the Promised Land or the new Zion. Following the death of the emperor while in prison, some Rastas concluded that Haile Selassie represented not the second coming of Christ but only his human manifestation. With this, they rejected the eschatological preoccupations of Rastafari and explained their loyalty to the movement in terms of its pan-African dimension.

Similarly, the rhetoric of repatriation notwithstanding, the number of those who have resettled in Ethiopia has remained negligible, a couple hundred at most. Sectarianism, personality differences, divisive politics, and logistical hurdles have prevented the land grant project from becoming what its founders had hoped for: a self-reliant model community. This setback has prompted the reexamination and redefinition of certain Rastafarian beliefs. The mottoes "repatriation is a must" and "Babylon is foreign" are no longer taken literally. Travels through the African world have made Rastas aware that African countries, including Ethiopia, are not immune to the types of social evils that have plagued the capitalist West. Moreover, since the Shashemene experiment where Rastafarians were repatriated to Ethiopia had shown the impracticality of wholesale migration, repatriation is now seen as a process of psychological transformation. Ethiopia is now as much a state of mind as it is a spot on the map; it symbolizes a cultural reorientation, a spiritual reconnectedness with ancient roots.

One means by which such psychological self-redefinition has been made possible for individuals is through conversion to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC). It has been a half century since this indigenous African Church established branches throughout the West Indies. The EOC is seen by the Sufferers as filling a cultural void created by centuries of slavery and forced separation from Africa and, as such, it provides a unique sociocultural and religious context for those trying to reconnect with their ancestral past. Even to

Rasta loyalists, for whom Haile Selassie's divinity is nonnegotiable, the church holds a positive meaning because of its image as a repository of ancient wisdom and history. The offering of Amharic classes, the issuance of Ethiopian baptismal names, and the celebration of Ethiopian holidays such as the new year and Epiphany, are but a few reasons why many Sufferers feel socially drawn to the apostolic church.

A CROSS-CULTURAL MOVEMENT

Despite the recent acceptance of whites into the movement, the centrality of racial themes remains in Rastafari, since most of its members are, after all, people of African stock. What this racial inclusion implies is the growing awareness among the younger generation of Rastafarians of the interconnectedness of the oppressed, whether their experience of oppression has been on account of race, class, or gender. A striking development in the recent history of Rastafarianism is therefore its ongoing transformation into a cross-cultural movement, in which reggae music has become one of the most eloquent voices of protest not just against white supremacy but also against the vices and excesses of the postindustrial world.

— *Fikru Gebrekidan*

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RECONSTRUCTION

Reconstruction is the term given to the period after the Civil War, from 1865 to 1877, when the U.S. government sought to reconstruct the lives and property of the people in the South. Africans who had served for 246 years in bondage came out of the enslavement with optimism. Whites who had fought against the Union came out of the struggle defeated and dejected. The aim of the reconstruction was to create a new Southern spirit, born out of patriotism and common goals.

Supporters of Reconstruction in Congress wanted the military to have stronger powers to govern the South. They wanted African Americans to have full citizenship rights. They were concerned with protecting the lives of blacks from Southern white vengeance. It was important to the progressive members of Congress that every newly freed African have all the assistance necessary to establish a reasonable life.

Of course, there was great resistance in Congress to this idea, and few of the more liberal proposals were passed. Those that did pass Congress often passed with slim majorities. President Andrew Johnson, who had been Abraham Lincoln's vice president, was not considered a friend of the African people. He proved to be a thorn in the side of Reconstruction. Johnson granted early pardons to some of the worst Confederate offenders of African American rights. The Reconstructionists in Congress sought to introduce bills that removed certain provisions favoring white Southerners, but Johnson vetoed all of the bills containing those changes.

Nevertheless, the Freedmen's Bureau was established and for 7 years was a very effective organization

serving the interest of blacks in the South. Also, there were a number of blacks who were elected to the state legislatures, several who were elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, and two who were senators. Much has been written about the so-called domination of African American politicians during Reconstruction. Even the film *The Birth of a Nation* promoted this myth. In reality, there were only two African Americans who served in the Senate, Hiram Revels and Blanche K. Bruce. Both men, quite interestingly, were from Mississippi. From 1868 to 1895, 23 African Americans served in the House of Representatives. But the resistance to their presence in the House from white Southerners was fierce, and while many of the representatives had their property stolen and their lives threatened, several were in fact killed.

The Reconstruction period lasted a shorter time than the civil rights era. It is heralded as a great moment in American history, but it is also a period that was ripe for harvesting a better future for the nation. It did not succeed in this. After the Union troops were pulled out of the South in 1877, there was wholesale terrorizing of blacks in the South. In addition, it was not until nearly a hundred years later, in the 1960s, that Congress revisited a law to protect the voting rights of African Americans. Indeed, the 1960s was the period that advanced the African American agenda toward reconstruction. Thus, reconstruction is an ongoing process.

— *Molefi Kete Asante*

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RED SUMMER

What became known as the *Red Summer* took place in the summer and fall of 1919 when race riots erupted

between African Americans and European Americans in over 25 U.S. cities. The word *red* in Red Summer refers to the blood shed throughout the United States during the riots. In every instance, the riots were the result of some form of violence inflicted on Africans by Europeans. The Red Summer epitomized blacks' resistance to white supremacist violence against them. Lynchings and mob violence against Africans had long been occurring (especially in the South). However, the Red Summer was different because Africans were fighting back in a more strong and organized fashion. Claude McKay captured the African perspective on the Red Summer in his poem *If We Must Die* when he wrote, "Like men we'll face the murderous, cowardly pack/Pressed to the wall, dying, but fighting back!"

There were several factors that prompted the explosion of race riots during the summer of 1919. First, the migration of large numbers of African people to Northern cities caused racial tensions. Thousands of black workers began to compete with white workers for factory jobs. Second, since 1915 there had been a sudden surge of lynchings (in both the North and South). Many attribute this to the influence of the movie *The Birth of a Nation*, which depicted Africans as uneducated savages and rapists of white women. After the movie opened, lynchings increased and Ku Klux Klan memberships quadrupled. With the surge in racial violence, the call for African resistance and self-defense increased. Third, as blacks began to organize themselves and establish their own independent communities, whites felt threatened and sought to suppress this growing power through mob violence.

The bloodiest incidents of the Red Summer occurred in Chicago, Illinois, and Elaine, Arkansas. The riot in Chicago began on July 27, 1919, when a black youth was drowned for mistakenly swimming on the white side of a local beach. Fighting broke out between whites and blacks after the police refused to arrest the men involved in the drowning. The Chicago race riot lasted for 5 days. In its aftermath, some 23 blacks and 15 whites were killed, more than 500 people were injured, and 1,000 black families were left homeless. The riot in Elaine, Arkansas, occurred that same year during the first 3 days of October. On September 30, a group of black men and women met at a local church to organize a farmer's union. Sometime during the meeting, two white police officers interrupted the meeting and gunshots were exchanged. As a result, one of the officers was killed. Word of this

incident quickly spread throughout the county and as far as Mississippi. Hundreds of whites armed with guns began a shooting rampage with the order to kill any black person in sight. By the end of the 3-day riot, the official count of the dead was 5 whites and 25 blacks; however, some reports say that as many as 200 blacks were killed during the riot. During the Red Summer, riots also occurred in Harlem, New York; Washington, D.C.; Cleveland, Ohio; Knoxville, Tennessee; Longview and Gregg counties in Texas; and several other Southern towns.

— Rico X

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REGGAE

Reggae is a unique, exceptional, and infectious musical expression that developed out of the creativity of African Jamaicans during the early 1970s. It is a distinctive artistic musical style centering on its captivating 2/4 downbeat syncopated rhythm pattern that is created by a passionately played electric base guitar, drums, and organ or electric piano. Also, the reggae rhythm stresses the offbeat, afterbeat, or back-to-front boogie, instead of the usual 1/3 in 4/4 time.

ORIGINS AND EARLY DAYS

Reggae, like other forms of innovative musical expression, was influenced and nurtured by earlier musical styles. The musical styles that directly influenced reggae were African American jazz of the 1940s and 1950s and the rhythm and blues (R&B) soul of the 1960s, developed by ingenious musicians

such as Dizzy Gillespie, Sarah Vaughan, Nat King Cole, Aretha Franklin, James Brown, Curtis Mayfield and the Impression, and the creators of the Motown sound. In addition, Jamaica's authentic musical sounds, in the Revival Zion Christianity, Mento, Ska, and Rocksteady musical genres of the early 1950s into the 1960s, gave reggae its offbeat 2/4 time, its swift and easy dancing pace, and the synchronized polyrhythms that expressed its African Jamaican cultural identity. Examples of Mento, Ska, and Rocksteady musicians are Laurel Aitken, Jolly Boys, Byron Lee, Don Drummond, Prince Buster, the Skatalites, Toots and the Maytals, the Heptones, Ethiopians, Upsetters, Ken Boothe, Derrick Morgan, Marcia Griffith, the Wailers, and others.

The word *reggae* was first mentioned in a 1968 recording by Toots and The Maytals in a song called "Do the Reggay." Initially, reggae lyrics concentrated on romantic themes that were a direct reflection of black Americans' R&B soul top 20 recordings. Eventually, reggae found its Jamaican creative music identity when Jamaican musicians started to write, arrange, and produce their music. After Jamaicans won their independence from the British on August 6, 1962, they needed to express their freedom in an art form. With the development of the reggae genre, they could listen to music on their outdoor sound systems and radios that spoke in their vernacular and to the beat of their peculiar African Jamaican rhythm. However, the increasingly difficult political conditions in Jamaica, and the developing black consciousness movement in America that was spreading throughout the African diaspora, spurred reggae musicians to sing fewer love songs and produce more gusty and socially conscious lyrics that mirrored what was going on in the nexus of their social and political environment.

Coxsone Dodd's Studio One and Lee "Scratch" Perry's Black Ark recording institutions allowed many of those progressive artists the freedom to have a political and spiritual voice that spoke to and for the downtrodden and voiceless in Jamaica as well as globally. Relatively speaking, Jamaica's small Studio One and Black Ark were equal in spirit to Berry Gordy's Motown in Detroit and Kenny Gamble and Leon Huff's Philly Soul Sound in Philadelphia, in terms of seeking, encouraging, and promoting young artists from the rough countryside and tough streets who enhanced the world with their creativity, passion, and talent for making exceptional music. Their creation of unique genres of black music is an outstanding

testament to their ingenuity and their will to survive and achieve—to bare the worst and make something good out of it. It has been said that some of the best musical and artistic expressions can come out of the worst suffering. Many Jamaicans who suffered and paid their dues were driven by their raw talent to become impressive reggae musicians. Some of those artists were Jimmy Cliff, Joe Gibbs, Dennis Brown, Abyssinians, U-Roy, Horace Andy, Bob Marley & the Wailers, Gregory Isaacs, Big Youth, Sly Dunbar and Robbie Shakespeare, Gladiators, and Beres Hammond.

ON THE INTERNATIONAL MUSIC SCENE

In the 1970s, a critical turn was made to cause reggae to expand outside the boundary of Jamaica and onto an influential and international scene, taking up a position in world music that it has maintained to this day. The increasing influence of the Rastafarian philosophy, culture, and way of life on reggae initiated this critical turn. Rastafarians believe in the divinity of Jah Ras Tafari (aka Haile Selassie), the philosophy of Marcus Mosiah Garvey, and their cultural connection to the motherland Africa, especially Ethiopia. Rastafarianism gave reggae music the spiritual energy to cover nearly every corner of the world. It is an African diaspora music phenomenon for the reason that it can activate the listeners' political awareness, enhance their spiritual consciousness, and enlighten their African cultural perspective. Some of the artists who have performed the phenomenal music of Roots Rasta Reggae are Ras Michael and the Sons of Negus, Jacob Miller, Burning Spear, Black Uhuru, Aswad, Steel Pulse, Third World, Culture, Augustus Pablo, Mighty Diamonds, Rita Marley, Judy Mowatt, Bob Marley & the Wailers & the I-Three.

REGGAE'S BRIGHTEST STARS

The brightest international reggae star was Bob Marley, with his fellow talented musical artists, the Wailers—Peter Tosh, Bunny Wailer, Aston "Family Man" Barrett, Carlton Barrett, Tyrone Downie, Julian "Junior" Marvin, and Alvin "Seeco" Patterson—and the I-Three—Marcia Griffith, Rita Marley, and Judy Mowatt. Marley's Roots and Conscious Reggae is made up of sweet songs of black love, protest songs of black rebellion, powerful songs of black liberation, and sorrowful songs of black redemption, which use African Jamaican double entendre, metaphors,

proverbs, parables, utterances, call-and-response, and biblical references to touch the spiritual and cultural ethos of people of African descent and others who can feel what is in the music.

In the 1980s, other branches of reggae came forward, including Dancehall, Lovers Rock, Dub, Smooth, and Contemporary. These styles were attractive to the new youth, but for many of the conscious black listeners, the new reggae styles lacked the spirituality, human depth, and the African centeredness of Roots Reggae. Rasta Renaissance artists and musicians—Ziggy Marley & the Melody Makers, Dean Frazier, Mutabaruka, Israel Vibration, Morgan Heritage Family, Luciano, Sizzla, Capleton, Anthony B., Buju Banton, Sister Carol, and others—answered the call for more political, cultural, and spiritual reggae. During the 1990s and into the 21st century, they have performed with a political and spiritual mindset similar to that of their mentors by singing thought-provoking and Rastafarian spirituality-inspired lyrics. Their music has a positive and uplifting message in critical times. The music of brilliant African reggae performers such as Lucky Dube from South Africa, Alpha Blondy from Cote d'Ivoire, Fela Kuti from Nigeria (with his reggae-style Juju Afro-Beat), and others reflects the fact that reggae has made a full circle by returning to the rhythms of the continent of Africa from its starting place of phenomenally creative Jamaicans in the African diaspora.

— Ibo Changa

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www.bobmarley.com This is a mesmerizing and classic concert by Bob Marley when he was at his creative apex internationally. The musical event confirms his artistic status as the brightest morning and evening star of reggae—and explains why he was crowned the king and a prophet of reggae music.

REPARATIONS

The issue of reparations, historically considered a fringe issue in the American black nationalist community, is now the inspiration of a firmly established movement among various constituencies in the United States as well as in African communities around the world. The ascendancy of the reparations movement as an important social movement—clearly the most important since the civil rights era—is confirmed by the amount of print space and airtime the media devote to it. Though the movement is picking up speed, compensatory measures for Africans have been hard to institute because of the entrenchment of white supremacy in world politics that provides legal sanction for the enslavement of Africans, even though it was clearly a crime against humanity. Africans around the world have watched groups such as the Japanese, Jews, and others receive reparations for government-sanctioned crimes against them, while eyebrows are raised and arguments dismissed as nonsensical when similar justice for Africans and their descendants is requested. It is clear that making reparations not only is a common occurrence but is firmly rooted in international law that the United States recognizes. It is also important to note that while many view reparations as a radical solution to addressing a historical wrong, conservative heads of state (e.g., former president Ronald Reagan) have endorsed reparations for victims of crimes against humanity.

THE STAGES OF THE REPARATIONS DISCOURSE

Many people are unaware that the discussion of reparations for African people has a long history in the United States, with four distinct stages. In Stage I, from 1865 to 1920, the U.S. government attempted to compensate the 3 million Africans who had just been

released from bondage by granting funds and thus some relief to destitute Africans who could not find work. This period also saw Callie House's heroic establishment of the Ex-slave Mutual Relief, Bounty and Pension Association, through which she organized hundreds of thousands of ex-slaves for payment from the government. In Stage II, from 1920 to 1968, Marcus Garvey, Queen Mother Audley Moore, and numerous black nationalists pressed for reparations by educating thousands of black people about the unpaid debt owed to Africans in America. This was the period in which the reparations movement was seen as a black nationalist endeavor, and civil rights organizations saw its goals as being unrealistic and extreme.

Stage III began in 1968 and continues today. The founding of several black nationalist groups—including the Republic of New Afrika in 1968 and the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America in 1987—and James Forman's 1969 *Black Manifesto*, which demanded \$5 billion from churches and synagogues, served as catalysts for launching what some have called the "modern reparations movement." Randall Robinson's 2000 book *The Debt* has aided in moving the discussion into even wider circles, as have the continuing attempts since 1989 by Congressman John Conyers, Jr. (D-MI) to appoint a committee to study the effects of slavery on the United States. Stage IV of the movement is the legal stage, which began in earnest in the 21st century, having been temporarily discouraged by the 1995 Cato decision in which a liberal federal court in California ruled that the suit for reparations was not valid because it was brought "too long" after the incident (i.e., slavery) had happened. In 2002, several lawsuits were filed first against corporations and ultimately against the U.S. government.

The convergence of four groups provides a conceptual framework for understanding the current discussion of reparations: (1) grassroots organizers, (2) legislators, (3) attorneys, and (4) academics. A similar convergence of cooperation occurred during the late 1940s that resulted in what we now call the civil rights movement. A. Phillip Randolph's Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (grassroots organizers) began conversations with Charles Hamilton Houston and Thurgood Marshall (legislators), who consulted with politicians such as Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota (a legislator), as well as with psychologists Kenneth and Mamie Clark (academics). Together they formed national networks that led to the birth of the civil rights movement. Pioneering black sociologist Charles S. Johnson of Fisk University

provided research facilities and a place to discuss strategies for all of these groups when he established the Race Relations Institute during the 1940s.

The reparations movement has a comparable history. Grassroots organizations such as the December 12th movement (D12), the National Council of Blacks for Reparations in America (N'COBRA), and the National Black United Front (NBUF) worked closely in the mid-1980s with legislators such as John Conyers (D-MI). These organizations also collaborated with the Reparations Coordinating Committee (RCC), consisting of attorneys such as Willie Gary, Randall Robinson, and Johnnie Cochran and academics such as Manning Marable and Ron Walters. The groups conversed long and hard with each other, and their discussions were often heated and difficult. What united them, however, was a common goal of pressing for reparations for African people on a global level.

A fertile ground for nourishing the movement was laid during the early 1990s by the December 12th movement and other grassroots organizations when they successfully lobbied the United Nations to hold a World Conference Against Racism (WCAR). This followed the tradition of Marcus Garvey during the 1920s, W.E.B. Du Bois during the 1940s and 1950s, and Malcolm X during the 1960s, who all encouraged bringing international attention to the struggle of Africans in America. The 2001 World Conference Against Racism (WCAR) presented an opportunity to press the issues of reparations at the global level. The three core issues adhered to consistently by the December 12th movement that helped unify the struggle in the late 1990s were as follows:

1. the declaration of the transatlantic slave trade and slavery as crimes against humanity
2. reparations for people on the African continent and in the *Maafa*, a term first used by Marimba Ani to mean "the great disaster of capture and enslavement"
3. acknowledgment of the economic base of racism

These issues were not arrived at haphazardly. Rather, the organizers had a steady eye on international law. Thus they added to this list the impact of colonialism on the transatlantic slave trade, which allowed for even wider litigation efforts involving the former European colonial powers that divided Africa up at the 1884 Berlin Conference.

AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN OPPOSITION TO REPARATIONS

In retrospect, it appears that both Europe and the United States, which opposed every discussion in the international arena on reparations, under-anticipated how the movement would coalesce during the late 1990s. Just as the governments targeted by the civil rights movement in the United States and the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa were taken by surprise, the governments responsible for slavery and exploitation were unaware that in the 21st century the first global dialogue on the past practices of slavery would be initiated by the reparations movement. The West, led by the United States, realized too late, in 2000, that the momentum of the discussion would accelerate at breakneck speed in 2001, as final plans for the WCAR began in earnest. A by-product of the meetings leading up to the WCAR was the extraordinary networking that took place among members of the global African community as they shared similar stories about patchwork programs provided as a panacea and to sidetrack discussion on the continuing impact of slavery and colonialism on Africans and their descendants around the world. Both the United States and Europe failed in their strong-armed attempts at removing reparations from the agenda in Geneva and Durban, and the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) participating in the conference were encouraged to press the issue in the world arena.

NEW ENERGY IN THE MOVEMENT

In 2002, there were several legal victories that aided reparations advocates in their struggle for justice for Africans. California passed a law that required all insurance companies to reveal their participation or lack of in the enslavement of Africans in America. Lawsuits were filed against over two dozen corporations in New York, Louisiana, New Jersey, California, and Illinois that argued that “unjust enrichment” had been experienced by these companies due to their enormous dependence on slave labor for the accumulation of their wealth. Although the tobacco, insurance, and railroad industries were the primary recipients of these suits, reparations advocates will surely expand their scope and target other corporations, as well as ultimately suing local, state, and federal government agencies for their complicity in the enslavement of Africans.

— Raymond A. Winbush

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REPUBLIC OF NEW AFRIKA

The Republic of New Afrika (RNA) was conceived to fulfill the long-cherished dream of many blacks to establish a black nation on American soil. Five Southern states—Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina—have been specified by the RNA as the future black homeland in North America. This RNA effort is part of the history of black people in North America, who since back before the Civil War have been working to gain their freedom from enslavement and discrimination in order to govern themselves. When the Spanish government ordered on April 12, 1731 that thereafter Africans escaping from slavery in the English colonies would no longer be either returned to the English or enslaved in Spanish Florida, the result was Africans' creation of the town near St. Augustine called Gracia Real de Santa Theresa de Mose, which was governed semiautonomously by Africans.

THE SPIRIT OF SELF-GOVERNMENT

The establishment of this town, though important, was only one of the many efforts of blacks to govern themselves, and there were and are many battles to be fought to achieve this independence. When Gabriel Prosser's army of 1,000 enslaved African men advanced on Richmond, Virginia, in 1800, the Haitians whose revolution had inspired Prosser were still in the midst of their battle for political control.

Although Prosser's determined strike was defeated by a violent storm that tore down bridges and swept away roads, the Haitians won their fight for independence 4 years later, burying 10,000 of Napoleon's best troops. Some time later, in 1816, free Africans in Florida joined with the Creeks to form the Afro-Indian Seminole state, fighting resourcefully against Andrew Jackson's army and, in 1835, defending their freedom against another U.S. army. In 1822, Denmark Vesey's brilliant plan to seize Charleston, South Carolina, by military might was undermined by a small but crucial intelligence leak.

Still, as the Civil War moved toward its close in January of 1865, the black men who met with General Sherman and Secretary of War Stanton responded to these officers' inquiry about what they wanted by asserting, "[We] would prefer to live by ourselves, for there is a prejudice against us in the South that will take years to get over." Sherman then issued his Special Field Order 15, allotting 40 acres and a boat to each black family so that people could travel from the mainland to the islands off the Georgia coast. Tunis Campbell, who would later become a Georgia state senator, then built an independent black community on Sapelo and St. Catherine Islands.

These events are early evidence of Africans enslaved in North America seeking independence and self-governance, which is one of the three major strategies for freedom followed by African people in the United States and its predecessor English colonies. Between the time of Gabriel Prosser and Denmark Vesey, another of the three major strategic goals—the "return" to Africa—was exemplified in the plan of wealthy merchant seaman Paul Cuffe. Cuffe wanted to bring talented black people to Sierra Leone in West Africa, and he had received Britain's approval to do so, but the war of 1812 interfered with his plans. The third major strategic goal, which was initiated by Reverend Richard Allen of Philadelphia at about the time of Gabriel Prosser, involves attempting to change the United States and make it a good place for everyone. This is the strategy pursued by Reverend Martin Luther King and by most people today.

LEADERS CHOSEN AT THE BLACK GOVERNMENT CONFERENCE

During the black revolution of the 1960s, in February of 1965, Malcolm X (also known as el-Hajj Malik el Shabazz and Brother Omowale) was assassinated.

Three years later, his followers in Detroit, in the Malcolm X Society and the civil rights organization known as GOAL (Group on Advanced Leadership), called a "Black Government Conference" in that city. It was led by attorney Milton R. Henry, accountant (and later, attorney) Raymond Willis, artist Umbaji Adefunmi (formerly Henri King), political activist Charles Enoch, and others. During deliberations at the conference, those assembled rejected the name "Songhay Republic" and settled on "Republic of New Afrika" for an independent country created by and for Africans in the United States. A "Provisional Government" was then formed to carry out the basic aim of the revolution to "Free the Land!" This was to be done by organizing independence plebiscites, votes of the oppressed people, in five states in the deep South—Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina—to create an independent country at least as free and powerful as Canada. The process of the plebiscite, to enable colonized people to achieve independence peacefully, had become part of the new international law regime with the 1960 passage by the United Nations' General Assembly of Resolution 1514, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

At the Black Government Conference, Robert Williams was named the first President of the Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika. Williams, a former U.S. Marine, had returned home to North Carolina as the picketing and sit-ins of the black liberation movement were taking place in his state. He had become president of the NAACP in Monroe, North Carolina, but when he armed men in his chapter, he was expelled by the NAACP national leadership. Escaping a U.S. government plot to arrest him for "kidnapping" a white couple he had assisted when they stumbled into a neighborhood in which many blacks carried weapons, Williams went into exile in Cuba. From there, by publications and radio, he encouraged black people who were waging the fight for freedom in the United States to arm themselves and strike back at whites who sought to kill them. At the time of the Black Government Conference, Williams had relocated to the People's Republic of China.

The participants in the Black Government Conference elected as vice president Milton Henry (also known as Brother Gaidi Obadele) of Detroit, and as second vice president Betty Shabazz, the widow of Malcolm X, who was then living in suburban New York. The Ministers of Defense elected at the

convention were “Rap” Brown, former chairman of “SNCC” (the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee), and John Taylor of Dayton, Ohio, who later became General Mwesi Chui. As Minister of Justice, the group elected Joan Franklin, an attorney who worked for the NAACP’s distinguished legal counsel Robert Carter and who assured those at the convention that they had no need to renounce U.S. citizenship. She explained that the United States ended slavery with the 1865 Thirteenth Amendment but for well over 2 years failed to offer U.S. citizenship to the freed people. Then the U.S. never asked these people or their descendants for their acceptance of the offer of U.S. citizenship made by the 1868 Fourteenth Amendment. Consequently, Franklin explained, black people had no U.S. citizenship to renounce.

The Black Government Conference elected Wilbur Gratton of Ohio as Minister of Foreign Relations; Obaboa Olowa of California as Treasurer; Imamu Baraka, Maulana Karenga, and Oserjeman Adefunmi as joint Ministers of Culture. Imari Obadele, author of the book *War In America: The Malcolm X Doctrine* was named Minister of Information. This book was the theoretical basis for the founding of the Provisional Government. Queen Mother Audley Moore, a grand and electrifying leader of the movement for independence and reparations, was the first to sign the Declaration of Independence of the Republic of New Afrika, and 100 of the 500 conferees followed her in signing the document.

At the first anniversary meeting of the Provisional Government of the RNA (PG-RNA), held in Detroit at New Bethel Church and pastored by Reverend C. L. Franklin, a spiritual and civil rights leader and the father of singer Aretha Franklin, Detroit police apparently attempted to kill Vice President Gaidi Obadele, the Provisional Government’s highest officer in the United States. The two policemen initially involved were out shot by the black legionnaires who were accompanying the vice president, and he was driven off to safety. Police on rooftops and in other locations then opened fire through the glass front doors of the church, wounding several people and forcing over 100 others to take shelter in the large basement. This was the last Saturday in March in 1969. And when Sunday morning dawned, the brilliant, defiant, black Judge George Crockett, who by rotation had become Chief Judge of Records Court, opened court in the police station and began one by one bringing the captives before him and releasing them.

HEADQUARTERS ESTABLISHED IN MISSISSIPPI

The first organized RNA cadre of six young men from Detroit and New Orleans arrived in Mississippi, in the small town of Edwards outside of Jackson, in the spring of 1971. Police descended on the young men there. Two escaped and traveled many miles through the woods to Jackson. There was no shooting, but there were brief arrests. The new RNA president, Imari Obadele, arrived in Jackson with other RNA officers and citizens shortly afterward and began the purchase of land for the RNA headquarters. At the RNA’s first Land Celebration, in March of 1971, on 20 acres being purchased from a black farmer near Edwards, Mississippi, the FBI and state and local police made a large armed showing but were met with a determined armed showing led by Alajo Adegbalola and Chokwe Lumumba (who became a celebrated Mississippi lawyer) and RNA Minister of Justice William Miller, a lawyer and Mississippian. The *Jackson Daily News* wrote that the RNA had declared independence and had established “a Black Nation.” (Actually, there had been no plebiscite, only the beginning of a headquarters location.)

RNA MEMBERS UNDER ATTACK

The Mississippi attorney general publicly accused RNA leaders of “treason,” and local and state officials promised to wipe out the Provisional Government of the RNA and its armed military. The FBI was conducting a secret campaign (known as the counterintelligence program or COINTELPRO) to destroy the Black Panthers, the organization Us, and other black extremists and organizations. The agency convinced the Jackson police department to attack the official residence of the PG-RNA on a quiet Jackson street. The attack came at 6:30 in the morning of Wednesday, August 18, 1971. A military force of about 60 police and FBI agents fired into the PG-RNA but lost the gun battle, with one police lieutenant suffering fatal wounds and a policeman and an FBI agent also being wounded. No RNA personnel were wounded. President Obadele and three others were arrested at the PG-RNA’s new office, blocks away, where there had been no shooting.

All 11 of those in the PG-RNA residence at the time of the armed attack were charged with state and federal “crimes” based on having defended themselves, not with working to create an independent

country. Interior Minister Offoga Quaddus and Vice President Hekima Ana (who was visiting the residence with his wife, Tamu) were sentenced to life by the state and to 12 consecutive years by the U.S. government. Karim Njabafudi, a 15-year-old boy, was sentenced to life by the state, and Addis Ababa served a 7-year state sentence. Obadele served almost 5 years in state and federal prisons, as did Chumaimari and Tawwab Nkrumah. The black community in Mississippi and nationwide, as well as several lawyers, worked diligently for the freedom of those who became known as the RNA-11. By early 1981, they had all been released from prison except Nkrumah, who had escaped.

THE SPIRIT LIVES ON

Imari Obadele served as president of the RNA for 20 years. Dara Abubakari (aka Virginia Collins) of New Orleans served as president while Imari was in federal prison. Mathematician Kwame Afoh of Washington, D.C., and Fort Lauderdale, Florida, served as president for 6 years; Mississippi physician Demetri Marshall of Port Gibson, Mississippi, served as president for 2 years; and Brother Ukali Mwendu began a 3-year term as president in December of 2002. The Provisional Government of the New Republic of Afrika declared in 2002 that the independence plebiscite would be held in portions of the five states by the year 2012.

— *Imari A. Obadele*

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REVOLUTIONARY ACTION MOVEMENT

The Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM), a black nationalist and pan-African organization, first appeared on the black political activist scene in Philadelphia in 1963, in the midst of the social and political revolution of the black power and civil rights movements. Its founder was Max Stanford, who was later known as A. Muhammad Ahmad. RAM adhered

to a Marxist philosophy of political and economic empowerment as a means of self-determination. It sought reparations for the descendants of enslaved Africans, as well as an end to imperialism.

RAM's initial purpose was to convert the civil rights movement into a nationwide black revolution. The influence of RAM in the early 1960s helped to intensify the existing wave of black nationalist organizations, which adhered to the tenets of self-determination and self-defense, as well as political and economic organization. RAM also intended to displace the assimilationist thrust of the civil rights movement. The cadres or individually operating cells of RAM had the following objectives:

1. to assist in local community organizing
2. to build civil momentum by achieving immediate victories in the community, such as solving people's day-to-day problems with issues that were not nationally recognized
3. to eventually build a base for a mass resistance to American imperialism

To advance its agenda, RAM incorporated the militant tactics of self-defense through the use of arms, civil disobedience, and community mass action. The tactics of urban guerrilla warfare, such as selected boycotts, sit-ins, work slow downs, and strikes were employed against companies, schools, institutions, and offices that used discriminatory hiring practices and committed civil rights abuses. Multiple marches and mass demonstrations by as many as 100,000 people occurred up and down the East Coast and in the Midwest as a result of the efforts of RAM and other black nationalist organizations. The police covertly attempted to take over by encouraging demonstrations by organizations not aligned with RAM that would turn their protests against RAM, thus degenerating the protests into street riots. These demonstrations, which often began peacefully, would also turn violent as clashes with local authorities occurred. Thus, agents provocateurs were used to destabilize the movement.

The dissemination of information to the masses of people within any city in which RAM operated was achieved through the distribution of literature, such as flyers and the biweekly newsletter *Black America*. This literature was generated and distributed by RAM's members to inform the masses about ongoing

and planned activities in other cities and around the world. RAM's members were primarily the dispossessed black youths of the inner cities, prisoners, and ex-convicts, but they were also intellectuals and individuals from various other walks of life. The structure of RAM was a collective of cells or cadres connected by a unifying revolutionary orientation and guided by the central planning committee directives. RAM was an underground movement that primarily dispersed initiatives to the various cadres by word of mouth at committee meetings among the leaders of the central planning committees.

In articulating his organization's Marxist ideology, as well as in expressing his demand for reparations from the U.S. government, Ahmad was influenced by Queen Mother Audley Moore. The militant and self-defense aspects of the organization came from the then-exiled Robert F. Williams, who advocated the use of force by way of arms and urban guerilla tactics as a method of ensuring black personal and collective security in America.

Malcolm X's self-determination orientation also deeply influenced the formulation of the goals of RAM, as Malcolm X had a close relationship with Ahmad prior to RAM's formation. Malcolm X would later join RAM as an officer, before his separation from the Nation of Islam and the formation of the Organization of Afro-American Unity.

It is also clear that RAM had a great impact on other organizations. For example, Huey P. Newton was influenced by the tenets of this organization when he cofounded the Black Panther Party in the San Francisco Bay area. When Malcolm X founded the Organization of Afro-American Unity, it is likely that it was supported and staffed by RAM members. Other national organizations such as the Students Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), headed by Kwame Toure, adopted some of RAM's tactics and ideologies. Organizations that were loosely affiliated with RAM, such as CORE and the NAACP, distanced themselves from RAM because their ideologies concerning separation and assimilation were at odds with RAM's.

However, RAM's efforts were seriously undermined by federal and local law enforcement agencies such as the FBI's counterintelligence program (COINTELPRO) and local police departments. In 1996, due to a series of imprisonments, assassinations, and exiles of the leaders of RAM, as well as the implication of members in cases involving

felonies, Ahmad ordered the members of RAM to shelve all activities. Governmental intervention had effectively suspended the activities of the organization.

— Imari A. Obadele

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RING SHOUT

The ring shout is a sacred group dance that originated in West Africa. When Africans from various ethnic backgrounds came to America, they found that they were not able to communicate immediately but shared a common ancestral dance that was performed during sacred ceremonies. Enslaved Africans, including the Ibo, Akan, Bakongo, and Asante, then took to performing the ring shout during their religious ceremonies and services. The ring shout became a synthesized version of African ancestral dance and a pan-African practice that predates the concept of pan-Africanism. The dance created a cultural oneness among the different groups, as it suggests a spirit of community and solidarity. The ring shout, which typically took place during sacred ceremonies and consisted of ancestor worship and "possession" (in which an individual receives a spirit), enabled enslaved Africans to retain an aspect of their traditional religious practice.

The ring shout is the oldest surviving dance from the European slave trade. It is considered the closest remnant of Africa belonging to the African American culture. The ring shout is a process in which the body is believed to communicate with the soul. African

people through their cosmological beliefs were always able to transmit feelings, ideas, and prayers through chants and rhythmic patterns associated with the soul. This concept was brought to the United States as one of this country's earliest forms of native African phenomena.

Call-and-response is part of the ring shout that took place in the United States. The leader of the shout is referred to as the songster. This person is responsible for calling out the leading lines of the shout. Within this group is also the person referred to as the sticker, who replaced the drummer when the Catholic faith outlawed the Africans' use of the drum. The sticker sits next to the songster and carries out a complex number of rhythms. The rhythms in the shout were created for the ancestors and are directed toward them as the dancers begin to move in a counterclockwise ring. The lyrics of the ring shout speak of escape from the trials and tribulations endured by many enslaved Africans. The singers in the background sing out the responses to the songster. The shouters (who were generally women) dance to the music in a counterclockwise circle while clapping their hands and intensely moving their bodies in synchrony with the rhythm. The spirituals, songs that were firmly rooted in African cultural tradition, eventually were added to and associated with the shout.

As the dance survived throughout three generations of enslavement, it took on different forms. There were also several rules established in an effort to keep the ring shout a part of African American culture. The ring shout could be danced in two forms—one form was performed in Georgia and South Carolina and the other in North Carolina and Virginia. The latter type was performed as a solo dance with onlookers doing verbal call-and-response, whereas the first form was performed as a group dance. Very early on the rules were established for the dance. One of the more important rules was the rule against the dancers' crossing their legs or feet. The enslaved Africans believed that slaveholders would not label the ring shout a dance and prohibit it, as they prohibited dancing in their own Catholic and Protestant faiths, if the feet or legs of those in motion never crossed.

Many slaveholders would hide in the woods and watch the ring shout performance. Since they were unfamiliar with the spirit of African culture, they distorted what they witnessed during these ceremonies. Typically during the ring shout the body is seized and

mounted. Many slaveholders would watch the dance from afar and misconstrue what they saw as a practice that was sexual and sinful in nature. White Christians depicted the sacred dance as barbaric and unholy according to their own limited beliefs.

The ring shout was later accompanied with spirituals and it was eventually looked upon with contempt and loathing by slaveholders. The Africans would dance despite possible punishment as a way to restore their body's spiritual strength and physical prowess. There were accounts where the slaveholders attempted to ban the ring shout, but African attacked them and the performance would continue. When a slaveholder brought a large posse to subdue the shout, it often took the congregation several minutes to quiet down and gain consciousness. The ring shout was common during the era of slavery, and it remained popular far into the 20th century. It served as a means of emotional and physical release during religious worship. Today the ring shout is performed as an art form and still used in the sacred realm of some Pentecostal churches, but it is not a part of black church services throughout the country. Still, many of the elements are still a part of the black church service. The actual ring dance is not performed, but the African tradition is still alive. You can go into any black Christian church in this country today and find subtle remnants of the shout such as the call-and-response between the pastor and congregation and the possession of the holy ghost. There is also a praise dance that is performed that resembles the solo shout. These are all African in nature and in practice.

— Kristy Holmes

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ROOT DOCTOR

Root doctors are herbalists who use various plants and animal parts to cure or create ailments. Root doctors are also called conjurers, herb doctors, root workers, healers, spiritualists, and two-headed doctors. Root work is an African American form of shamanism using herbs, stones, rocks, and other organic material to heal the body, heal the mind, or solve a problem. Plants and animal parts are rarely administered in raw forms but instead are ground into powders or liquids and combined with other plants to make concoctions. Root doctors believe that they can use unseen forces of nature to manipulate people and objects throughout the world.

In the southern part of the United States, root work is commonly known as Hoodoo. *Hoodoo* is the term used to refer to African-based systems of magical, spiritual, and medicinal healing, but within Hoodoo, there is a slight distinction made between the root doctors (i.e., medicine folk) and the conjurers. The word *hoodoo* is probably derived from the African word *juju*, meaning magic. Africans when taken from their homeland of Africa some 400 years ago brought with them more than their words. They also brought their experience working with herbs, and they transmitted their botanical knowledge to their children. Most of this information was passed down orally and used to cure the sick and ailing. Because of the terrible combination of slavery, discrimination, religious persecution, the inability to pass knowledge to successive generations, and the unavailability of some traditional African plants, African American folk remedies are a combination of some Native American and European folk remedies and the already extensive African knowledge of medicinal root use. However, the art and practice of conjuring has remained African in its philosophy, purpose, techniques, and lore.

The most common ailments treated by root doctors were smallpox and digestive disorders. The root doctors treated each ailment by boiling down specific herbs and making them into a tonic for the client to drink for the disorder. Almost all blacks in the South had to have some knowledge of traditional herbal remedies because as slaves they could not afford the expense of traditional health care. In fact, because many whites also could not afford or did not want the enslaved to see traditional doctors, they would often advise their slaves to see root doctors.

African American folk magic can be broken down into two types of practices, the “light roots” (good roots) and the “dark roots” (bad roots). The light roots practice often includes herbs or plant substances, gun powder, sulfur, salts, candles, and incense. Dark roots may include animal parts such as crow feathers and salamander feet. Those who practiced root work were viewed as medical doctors because roots were the primary ingredients for making medicines for physical as opposed to spiritual illness, whereas conjurers used the same ingredients for both “good” and “bad” magic or spirit work. In root work, nature is seen to play a role in the way the body operates: Illness can either be a natural event or an unnatural event. Natural illnesses can be treated by natural means; however, unnatural illnesses can only be treated by supernatural practices.

It is important to note that Hoodoo or root work is not a religion. Unlike Vodou (or Voodoo), to which it is sometimes compared, it has no pantheon or priesthood. There is no formal initiation or consecration to any divinity required to become a root worker. Practitioners may practice any religion they choose. Root work refers only to the set of healing and spell practices.

Root work served many purposes. Blacks in the South used conjuring for everything. The conjurers even created potions to help someone gain love. Root doctors would plant crops used to chart a person’s life by the phases of the moon. Conjurers helped Africans cope with their lives of servitude. They created roots that they believed prevented whippings. The conjurers designed powders that would give the enslaved control over their masters. Africans could even buy poisons that promised to sicken or kill their owners. Spells were provided to sway judges and juries. Root doctors acted in many roles in the black community, ranging from medical doctors to spiritual healers.

The practice of root work is both feared and respected in the black community. It is because of this that root doctors, spiritualists, and conjurers are not easy to find. They usually hide themselves and live apart from the “common folk” in remote areas. Root doctors, spiritualists, and conjurers live as an invisible culture. It is because of this invisible culture that many people believed that after the period of the enslavement the practice of root work disappeared, when in fact it did not. The select few who have had the opportunity to study the art of root work or its practitioners understand its African origin and its value in the black community.

— Natalie Lewis

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www.fouye.com This Web site contains information on the history of Hoodoo and Vodou.

S

SANKOFA

The film *Sankofa* is one of the most powerful films ever made on the enslavement of Africans. The word *Sankofa* is an Akan word that literally means “go back to fetch it.” It refers to the process of going back to the past in order to build for the future. Sankofa suggests that Africans must return to the source for inspiration and direction for the future. The term is used as a concept in many discourses in Black Studies and has come to represent much of the intellectual fervor for returning to classical civilizations for models in education and culture. A popular symbol of Sankofa is the image of a mythic bird that flies forward looking backward while holding an egg in its mouth. Sankofa may also be represented as a heartlike symbol.

The symbolic meanings of Sankofa appear throughout the film *Sankofa*, which opens in contemporary times then travels back to the era of African enslavement. The film shows Mona, a woman of African descent, returning to (or fetching) her past so that she can use it to make sense of her future. *Sankofa* illustrates the transformation of the consciousness and identity of its main character, Mona, who can be seen as a representation of the African world community. The film connects enslaved Africans with their African past and culture, and it empowers African people by showing how Africans’ aspiration for freedom made them resist their enslavers. *Sankofa* also shows the collective past and experiences of Africans through Mona when she is taken back to her ancestral experience and becomes Shola, a woman who works

on a plantation. Each character in *Sankofa* represents aspects of personalities that exist within the African community, and the film contains many symbolic representations of the African experience with slavery, exploitation, resistance, and victory.

THE ENSLAVEMENT BEGINS

Sankofa begins in Africa, in Cape Coast Castle in Ghana, where Mona, an African American model on a photo shoot, is being photographed by a white photographer. During the shoot, Mona is confronted by an African elder who claims to be the guardian of the Cape Coast Castle. He insists that the castle was sacred and that the lives of African people were stolen and sold at the castle. He tells Mona and the photographer to leave and shouts to Mona, “Sankofa!” The police come and order the old man out of the castle. After witnessing the elderly man being thrown out of the castle, Mona enters the castle dungeons and finds Africans shackled. She attempts to escape, but she is taken captive by Europeans in control of the castle. As she is taken to the dungeon, Mona cries out that she is not an African.

The film then begins to trace the process of Sankofa. Mona is taken back to the African experience of slavery: She is transformed into the character Shola, an enslaved African on the Lafayette sugarcane plantation in Louisiana who is assigned duties in the house. Shola is referred to as a house slave who does not involve herself in any forms of resistance. But she is in love with Shango, who resists being in bondage and argues that all Africans held captive should resist. Shango and

Nunu, an African woman who was born in Africa and brought directly into slavery on the plantation, teach Shola how to develop her African consciousness. These are the two people Shola looks to for strength to survive her condition. Shola has been sexually abused by the plantation owner, Mr. Lafayette, and recalls being raped and tortured. She wishes she had Nunu's strength.

The film then shows captured runaways being whipped by two headmen—Joe, a half-white headman who adopts the values and norms of whites, and Noble Ali, a headman who is in conflict over his responsibilities as a headman but still does the whipping he has been commanded to do. When Kutu, a pregnant runaway, dies as a result of being whipped, Nunu performs a caesarean to save Kutu's child.

THE RESISTANCE ENSUES

At this point, Shola begins to learn the importance of resisting. The horrible experience of being raped by Mr. Lafayette, followed by her receiving no relief from Providence in answer to her prayers, jolts her into beginning to recognize the value in her own resistance. After being severely beaten, Mona is consoled by Shango and is given a Sankofa bird. This act, she claims, turns her into a rebel. She is then transformed and becomes conscious of her responsibility to resist enslavement.

The story then shifts to Joe being poisoned by Shango. Joe's mother, Nunu, tries to save him, but Joe is convinced by a priest, Father Rafael, that Nunu is the devil, and he perceives her help as her carrying out the devil's work. In a rage, Joe kills his mother. Afterward, when Joe recognizes the value of his mother, he brings her corpse to the church. It is then that he realizes his betrayal of his people and of his own mother, who had given birth to him after being raped by a white man. From this event, Joe is transformed and sees the disorientation that caused him to follow white norms and values. He then kills Father Rafael, the priest who taught him that the ways of whites were the ways of God and that those who resisted were devils. Joe, confused by his feelings of betrayal, locks himself in the church. The whites then burn the church down in order to kill Joe.

AFRICANS ARE UNITED IN REBELLION

The final scene of the film shows a rebellion that unites all the Africans on the Lafayette plantation. In

this rebellion, a newly transformed Shola kills her rapist. The rebellion is successful in that many of the Africans realize the importance of resistance and several of the headmasters and headmen are killed. Although all of the rebels are captured and eventually killed, the victory of consciousness was won by the enslaved Africans. Shola articulates being free by describing herself being lifted up and carried by a buzzard that brings her spirit home, just like in the African American folktale of the "Flying Africans."

The story then shifts back to the present, where Shola as Mona is now conscious. She ignores the photographer who seeks to exploit her beauty and goes to participate in an African chant being performed by Sankofa. Mona is now able to appreciate this traditional chant due to her new awareness of her rich African history.

— Justin Gammage

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SANTERÍA

Santería (also known as *regla de ocha*, *orisha*, or *Lucumi*) is a transatlantic extension of Yoruba religion into the Caribbean. The homeland of the Yoruba people is in southwestern Nigeria, but they have also settled in Togo and the Republic of Benin and have spread to those areas an ancient religious system that now also has thousands of devotees in the Americas. Just as there are regional and doctrinal variants within the Christian, Buddhist, and Islamic religions, Santería is simply the Cuban variant of this older, more extensive Yoruba religious tradition.

ORIGINS

Before the eighteenth century, only a small number of Yorubas were enslaved and brought into Cuba. But during the eighteenth-century boom in sugar production and at the height of the slave trade, the number of Yorubas brought into Cuba increased dramatically. Between 1840 and 1870, the last period of Cuba's involvement in slave trading, more than one third of all the Africans brought there were Yorubas.

Because Cuba's Catholic church was closely allied with the national government and because Catholicism was the only religion that was legal while Cuba remained a Spanish colony, once Africans were in Cuba, they all—including the Yorubas—came under pressure to convert to Catholicism and abandon their traditional religions. The Catholic Church's strategy was to guide Africans gradually toward a complete conversion to Christianity but to tolerate some mixing of African and Catholic practices along the way. To this end, the Catholic Church founded Afro-Catholic fraternities in cities with sizable African populations. The fraternities, called *cabildos*, were mutual aid societies for people from the same African ethnic background. The Yoruba-based *cabildos* were an institutional basis for what would later become known as Santería (Spanish for *worship of the saints*).

At the same time as they preserved African traditions, the *cabildos* also promoted Catholic instruction and participation in the church's public festivals. In the late nineteenth century, however, when it became clear that the *cabildos'* African religious traditions—even in their mixed and modified forms—were not about to disappear, the Catholic Church and the colonial government joined hands to try and stamp them out. The Catholic Church cut its ties to the *cabildos*, the government passed oppressive legislation against them, and the police clamped down on them, too, treating involvement in the Afro-Cuban religions as a criminal activity. In response, the *cabildos* went underground, and Santería worship became clandestine.

During this era of suppression, Santería was influenced by the spiritist doctrines of Hippolyte Rivail. Rivail's books had begun appearing in Cuba as early as the 1850s, but between 1870 and 1880, his writings spread like a tidal wave throughout the French and Spanish Caribbean and into Central and South America. Writing under the pen name Allan Kardec, this French engineer proclaimed the revelation of an updated, scientific spiritualism. His books described

the results of positive investigations of the spirit world that others could also carry through mediumistic séances, and he preached an ethic emphasizing suffering, charity, and spiritual development. All this had been dictated to him by spirits.

Kardecian spiritism, or *Espiritismo* as it came to be called, first took hold among literate, highly placed Cuban Creoles who wanted independence from Spain and were alienated from the Spanish-dominated Catholic Church, but it eventually worked its way down to the urban masses and out into the countryside. Even though Santería had been transmitted primarily by oral tradition since at least the 18th century, and even though Rivail's books had to be smuggled into Cuba because they were illegal, his writings still had an impact on the development of Santería. Some Santería priests came to view apprenticeship as a spiritist medium as a necessary prerequisite for the practice of their religion. They became adept in both systems and adopted some of *Espiritismo's* healing techniques. By the twentieth century, Santería had spread beyond Yorubas and Yoruba descendants and was being practiced by Creoles and Whites as well.

Both Catholicism and *Espiritismo* have affected the development of Santería. Nonetheless, Santería's ritual system and cosmology remain essentially African in character with a strong fidelity to Yoruba traditions. Among the aspects of Yoruba religion faithfully preserved in Santería are the names and personalities of the deities, divination procedures, ceremonial spirit possession and trance, Yoruba liturgical music and musical instruments, dance as a medium of worship, Yoruba language prayers and incantations, beliefs in ancestor veneration and reincarnation, and sacrificial practices. Santería contains a vast compendium of herbal medicine and healing ritual, much of which also has African analogues.

BELIEFS

Santería theology recognizes a Supreme Being, called by various Yoruba names, such as Olodumare, Olorun, and Olofi, or simply Dios (God in Spanish). Olodumare created the universe and all things in it, including the orisha, who are the main focus of Santería worship. The orisha (also called *santos*) are powerful spiritual beings—at once forces of nature, guardians of particular facets of human life, and magnified human personality types—sent by Olodumare

to populate and civilize the earth and endow it with the powers essential for the harmonious existence of all living things. While there are innumerable orishas throughout the world and the number known among African Yorubas is very large, only a few have special prominence in Santería, and each of these corresponds to a saint also known and venerated in Cuba's Catholic churches.

The spirits of people who have died are also important. The ancestral Dead are closer to human beings than they are to Olodumare or the orisha, and deceased family members continue to have an intimate connection to their descendants. The ancestral Dead are capable of intervening in the affairs of their living relatives and can be called upon to intercede with the orisha. Although they are less powerful than the orisha (and less attention is given to them), ancestors still receive respect and veneration, and every devotee has a small altar dedicated to them.

An encompassing energy, *ashe*, flows through and envelops the entire hierarchy of beings from Olodumare: through the orisha, the ancestral Dead and other spirits, plants, animals and the entire natural world. This energy can be manipulated through rituals and can be made to manifest itself in different forms. Each orisha has its own divine power, or *ashe*, through which it is sustained, and through which it acts on the aspects of the world over which Olodumare gave it dominion. When the orisha first formed human beings, they also taught them how to access each orisha's power. This knowledge is the basis of the rituals and doctrines of the different priesthoods. Through these rituals, devotees expect to achieve an active harmony with the Supreme Being, a closer relationship with the orisha and the natural world, and increased control over the forces affecting their lives and personal fortunes.

Santería is neither a salvation religion that rejects the world nor a revealed religion with an authoritative founder or holy book. For Santería devotees, spiritual beings and religious truths do not exist in a world apart from the natural and social world known to our senses; instead, they reside within it. Santería has an intensely hierarchical, human-centered, and this-worldly cosmology that does not draw a hard-and-fast line between either the human and the divine or the living and the dead. Since Santería is primarily concerned with the self and with achieving ritual mastery of the natural, social, and spiritual forces affecting daily life, the religious attitude of priests and devotees

might best be described as instrumental, that is, "If it works for you, believe it." In spite of Santería's history of religious persecution, its priests and devotees are generally tolerant of other religions. Many regard themselves as Catholics, while others fluidly slip between the worlds of the Catholic mass, the spiritists' white table, and Santería drum-dance with little deliberation or anxiety.

WORSHIP

Santería is not congregational and so does not depend upon the existence of a temple or church building. Worship is both individual and communal. Devotees carry out a round of private offerings to the santos in their homes; priests and priestesses perform rituals and provide herbal medicine, counseling, and symbolic healing to devotees and the general public. There is also a cycle of annual festivals coordinated with the saints' feast days of Cuba's Catholic Church.

Most individual worship takes place in front of the altars that devotees keep in their homes or outside in natural settings such as a riverside, near the sea, or in a forest or park. Much individual worship consists of offerings to the orisha and the Dead. These offerings generally have two purposes: The first is to allow the devotee to influence the orisha and gain access to its *ashe* to help solve personal problems. The second purpose is to help the devotee develop a bond of reciprocity and mutual respect with the orisha, a bond thought to be beneficial, not only for the human devotee, but for the orisha as well. Offerings can take many forms including cooked or raw food, liquor, money, cloth, prayers, or entire ceremonies, as well as the blood of sacrificed animals.

Communal worship is highly participatory and features ritual dance; call-and-response chants performed in Yoruba and accompanied by drums; ceremonial spirit possession; ancestor veneration; and, on occasion, animal sacrifices. The most characteristic form of communal worship in Santería is the *bembe*. Bembes are great feasts and celebrations often correlated with the feast days of those Catholic saints who have orisha associated with them, or coincident with the initiation of a priest or priestess, the anniversary of priests' initiation, or the fulfillment of some other religious obligation to the orisha that a priestess may have.

Spirit mediumship is at the core of the *bembe*, so these ceremonies usually fall into two parts: invocation

of the ancestral Dead and the orisha, and, then, the presence of the orisha among their devotees. The invocations are libations and prayers made before an orisha altar in Lucumi (the Cuban variant of the Yoruba language and the liturgical tongue for all religious observances in Santería) followed by music directed at the altar by an ensemble of drummers who lead call-and-response chants sung with a motionless group of standing devotees. In the second part of the ceremony, devotees perform dances imitating the personalities, attributes, and attitudes of each of the orisha while singing their chants to attract the orisha, compel them to come take over the bodies of their priests and priestesses, and manifest themselves in visible human form. When possession occurs, the possessed priests and priestesses are garbed in the colors and clothing appropriate to the orisha who has mounted them, and they interact with the community of believers: talking to them, confronting them, consoling them, healing them, making prophecies, or recommending that they carry out certain rituals. Eventually the orisha return to their invisible realm, leaving behind a group of exhausted priests who have no memory of what their bodies did while the orisha possessed them. A purification rite ends this part of the ceremony, a communal meal follows, then a general distribution of the fruits and desserts that have surrounded the altar throughout the events.

THE SPREAD OF SANTERÍA OUTSIDE OF CUBA

Santería began to spread outside of Cuba after the Cuban Revolution of 1959. The Cuban exiles who brought it to Miami and New York at that time were followed by another major exodus from the port of Mariel in 1980. Santería began to spread to other Hispanic communities and then to African American, White, and Asian communities. From these contacts in the United States, Santería has made its way back into the Caribbean to Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. Cubans transplanted the religion to Mexico and also to Venezuela, where the santos/orishas have already begun to win new devotees and exert an influence on Venezuelan popular religions. A small number of exiled Cuban Santería priests made their way to Spain and, through them, Santería became established there and spread to other European countries.

—George Brandon

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SCHOMBURG CENTER FOR RESEARCH IN BLACK CULTURE

The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture is arguably the premier collection of Africana data in the world. This gem of the New York Public Library is the fruit of the lifelong toil of Arthur (formerly Arturo) Alfonso Schomburg (1874–1938), an Afro-Puerto Rican bibliophile, patron of the arts, law clerk, lecturer, writer, curator, exhibitor, translator, educator, activist, revolutionary, and pioneer in microfilm preservation. Schomburg dedicated his existence to the documentation and reclamation of African achievement and greatness after being told as a young child that the “Negro” has no history. Very early on, he began collecting historical literature and documents in the languages that he spoke and read: Spanish, French, and English, among others. He believed that history must restore what enslavement has stolen and that Africans must make history yield the same value that any people’s treasured past affords.

ORIGIN OF THE CENTER IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY

The origin of Schomburg’s far-reaching brainchild began in 1924 when the Citizens Committee of the 135th Street Branch Library in Harlem met to discuss the organization and location of Africana materials, which were then underrepresented in the branch. This little-known group, which was chaired by Arthur Schomburg, included Ernestine Rose, the Branch Librarian, James Weldon Johnson, Hubert Harrison, John E. Bruce, Louise Latimer, and John Nail. The committee’s stated mission, which would come to

be known as the “Schomburg Tradition” in library service, delineated two primary focuses: (1) the collection, exhibition, and accessibility to the general public and scholarly researchers of documents chronicling the global black experience, and (2) using research for educating the public through the use of lectures, forums, and publications.

The collection had its auspicious beginning when it opened for public viewing at the 135th Street Branch of the New York Public Library on January 14, 1927 at the height of the Harlem Renaissance. Arthur Schomburg’s personal collection, which included over 5,000 volumes, 3,000 manuscripts, 2,000 etchings and paintings, thousands of pamphlets, newspapers, prints, and other materials, had been purchased by the library with the proceeds of a grant from the Carnegie Corporation in May of 1926, becoming the major part of its Division of Negro Literature, History and Prints.

Schomburg was curator of his beloved collected works from 1932 until the time of his death in 1938. The collection, which has grown by historic proportions through the years, was renamed in his honor in 1939, becoming the Arthur A. Schomburg Collection, under the curatorship of the noted historian Lawrence D. Reddick.

With the independence movements that were occurring in Africa and the Caribbean during the 1950s, the Schomburg Collection soon became the epicenter of research conducted on people in the African diaspora who were writing new chapters in African history. Between 1960 and 1966, during the civil rights and black power movements, the number of annual users of the collection doubled and by 1972, the number had quadrupled.

THE SCHOMBURG COMPLEX: AN INTERNATIONAL RESOURCE

In spite of perennial funding problems, the Schomburg, as it is commonly known, has evolved and expanded with the passage of time and the growth of the collection. Perhaps the most comprehensive of its expansions was developed in 1969 with the Roger Glasgow architectural plan to replace the original structure, which had been built in 1905, with a modern multimillion-dollar facility to span 135th and 136th Streets and Lenox Avenue (now Malcolm X Boulevard). The new building was completed in 1980.

In 1972 it received its present name, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,

when it was set apart as one of the research libraries of the New York Public Library. Also in 1972, the Schomburg received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) that augmented the archival preservation program made possible by a 1967 Ford Foundation grant. In 1981, the old Schomburg building was named an official New York City landmark.

Currently, the center has a constituency that spans the globe, and it boasts a catalogue of well over 5,000,000 items. The ultramodern Schomburg complex includes the 350-seat Langston Hughes Auditorium, the refurbished American Negro Theatre, an exhibition hall, the Latimer/Edison Gallery, and a gift shop. Adjacent to the center and completing the complex is the Countee Cullen Regional Branch Library on West 136th Street. In addition to its General Research and Reference Division, it is comprised of four special collections, including the Manuscripts, Archives, and Rare Books Division; the Arts and Artifacts Collection; the Photograph and Prints Collection; and the Moving Image and Recorded Sound Collection.

Among the rare manuscripts and books housed in the collection are a book of poetry by Juan Latino, the full-blooded African who occupied the chair of poetry at the University of Granada during the sovereign rule of Philip V; the autobiography of Gustavus Vassa; the original manuscript of Richard Wright’s *Native Son*; the Harry A. Williamson Collection, which chronicles the history of blacks in Freemasonry; and records of the Civil Rights Congress, the National Negro Congress, and the Negro Writers Project. In 2003, the Shabazz family estate placed the Malcolm X papers on loan there for 75 years.

The Schomburg has also amassed considerable artistic holdings. The Blondiau-Theatre Arts Collection, with its Luba wooden artifacts, Fang brass work, Pende masks, and ivory, among other pieces, is the core of the Schomburg’s African art collection. There is also the Eric de Kolb Collection of African Arms, which includes spears, shields, axes, and knives from South and West African peoples, such as the Songhay, Kuba, Zande, Zulu, Maasai, and Fang. Yoruba artwork is also extensively displayed in the collection.

Several prominent painters of the Harlem Renaissance, such as Aaron Douglas and Palmer Hayden, are featured in the collection. Pieces by major painters such as Norman Lewis, Jacob Lawrence, and Romare Bearden. Augusta Savage, Meta Warrick

Fuller, Lois Mailou Jones, Richmond Barthe, Charles Alston, Henry O. Tanner, Edward Mitchell Bannister, and others are also represented. James VanDerZee, Gordon Parks, and Edward Steichen are some of the master photographers whose works are housed there. Among its recorded resources are early radio broadcasts and speeches of the likes of Marcus Garvey, Booker T. Washington, and George Washington Carver. The collection also holds over 5,000 hours of spoken arts recordings ranging from interviews and lectures to conference proceedings.

The Schomburg remains, to this day, strictly a noncirculating reference collection. It is accessible for walk-in use, in addition to being part of several on line bibliographic resources, including the New York Public Library's Research Libraries on line public catalog (CATNYP), the On-Line Computer Library Center (OCLC), the Research Libraries Information Network (RLIN), and the Internet. It is directed by the able Howard Dodson.

The center publishes the *Schomburg Center Journal*, which is a quarterly newsletter that is available to all donors who join the Schomburg Society for the Preservation of Black Culture. The *Schomburg Clipping File*, which includes newspaper and magazine clippings, pamphlets, and collectibles dating from 1925 to 1981, is published on microfiche by Chadwyck-Healey. Finally, the center maintains the Schomburg Tradition of public education, which takes the form of educational conferences, lectures, and exhibitions, ranging from the academic to the artistic.

— Pamela Yaa Asantewaa Reed

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- Dodson, Howard. (1986). Introduction. In *The Legacy of Arthur A. Schomburg: A Celebration of the Past, A Vision For the Future* [Publication for an Exhibition]. New York: Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. This publication provides a detailed history of the Schomburg from the time of its founding through 1986.
- Schomburg, Arthur. (1994). The Negro Digs Up His Past. In D. L. Lewis (Ed.), *The Portable Harlem Renaissance Reader* (pp. 61–67). New York: Penguin. In this essay, Schomburg states his philosophy regarding the study of preservation

of history, and he also documents many early Africana historical milestones.

The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture [Pamphlet]. New York: The New York Public Library. This pamphlet details the major holdings of each of the center's divisions and also provides a brief historical overview.

SCOTTSBORO CASE

The Scottsboro Case refers to the trials and appeals arising from the March 25, 1931 arrest of nine African American males for the gang rape of two white females in Alabama. The charges, later shown to be specious, divided the American political left and sparked the incipient civil rights movement in the American South. Organizations that first gained national and international prominence for their part in defending the accused became prime movers in the legal battles of the civil rights movement.

The accused—Olen Montgomery, Clarence Norris, Haywood Patterson, Ozzie Powell, Willie Roberson, Charles Weems, Eugene Williams, Andy Wright, and Roy Wright—who became known as the “Scottsboro Boys”—were arrested by an Alabama deputy sheriff's posse in Paint Rock and taken to the Jackson County Jail in Scottsboro. The Scottsboro Boys, who ranged in age from 12 to 20, had been traveling on a freight train with other migrants from Chattanooga, Tennessee. Two of the migrants, Victoria Price and Ruby Bates, told the deputies that they had been gang-raped by them. At the 1933 retrial, Ruby Bates admitted that she and Victoria Price had made up the charges because they feared that the posse would arrest them for violation of the Mann Act, which prohibited crossing state lines for “immoral” purposes. Bates said that she and Price had had sex on the train—with two white men.

A QUICK TRIAL AND SENTENCING

The women's allegations caused an immediate firestorm in Scottsboro. On the night of the arrests, 300 whites formed a mob outside the jail where the Scottsboro Boys were held, hoping to lynch them before a trial could take place. The governor of Alabama was forced to send in the National Guard to protect the defendants. Despite the presence of the National Guard, some 10,000 people descended on Scottsboro as the first of the trials in the case began.

The Scottsboro Boys were at first defended by Stephen Roddy, a Chattanooga attorney with little knowledge of Alabama law, and local attorney Milo Moody, a 70-year-old man who had last tried a case over a decade before. Roddy and Moody, who were given less than half an hour to meet with their clients before the trial, quickly put on a perfunctory defense. Key witnesses—including Price and Bates—were barely cross-examined by Moody and Roddy, and Roddy was drunk in court. The Scottsboro Boys were tried in small groups, with the authorities pitting the defendants against each other, making guilty verdicts all but inevitable. Ultimately three of the accused—who later said that they had been beaten and threatened into giving their testimony—blamed the others for the rapes. The defense rested without any closing arguments in the first trial—the all-white, all-male jury needed less than 2 hours to sentence the Scottsboro Boys to death. Only 12-year-old Roy Wright was spared, as a mistrial was declared for him after 11 jurors held out for the death penalty, even though the prosecution asked only for a life sentence for the boy.

NATIONAL RESPONSE TO THE CASE

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) initially refused to involve itself in the appeals of the case. The rape of white women, as seen by the gathering mobs in Scottsboro, was an inflammatory charge in the South. The NAACP feared that its involvement in the case would injure its ability to pursue the larger cause of gaining improved legal status for African Americans in the United States. It was the International Labor Defense (ILD), the legal arm of the U.S. Communist Party, that stepped into this legal vacuum. After gaining the trust of the defendants and their families, the ILD initiated a wide legal and political campaign for the Scottsboro Boys' release, opening itself up to accusations from the NAACP that its interest was less in getting justice for the accused than in gaining publicity for its cause. The NAACP then made an attempt to represent the defendants, but the defendants rebuffed the organization.

The ILD's media campaign was successful in bringing pressure to bear on Alabama's judicial system. Protests were held all over the United States and the world, including Paris, Moscow, and South Africa; violent protests erupted in Berlin in 1933 in front of a U.S. Consulate office. Throughout the subsequent trials and appeals, the judges in the cases and high

government officials, including the governor of Alabama and U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt, received seemingly endless telegrams and mail from across the world on behalf of the Scottsboro Boys.

Just 3 days before their death sentence was to be carried out in July of 1931, the defendants learned that the court had issued a stay of execution in the case. By January of 1932, the ILD had appealed their case to the Alabama Supreme Court, arguing that the Scottsboro Boys had received an unfair trial due to inadequate counsel and the constant presence of a mob outside the courthouse intimidating the jury. However, in a 6–1 vote, the Alabama Supreme Court rejected the appeal for most of the defendants, only reducing the sentence of Eugene Williams, who at 13 years old was deemed too young to have been tried as an adult. The ILD appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, which issued the first of its two landmark rulings relating to the Scottsboro case.

In *Powell v. Alabama*, the Supreme Court, in a 7–2 vote, threw out the convictions. The high court argued, in a momentous decision for both black and white defendants across the United States, that it is the responsibility of the state, under the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, to provide adequate counsel for defendants in capital cases. The Supreme Court noted that it was not until the morning of the trial that the defendants had been named counsel, providing little time, even if the defense attorneys wished to do so, for the provision of an adequate defense. “It is hardly necessary to say that the right to counsel being conceded, a defendant should be afforded a fair opportunity to secure counsel of his own choice,” the Court ruled. “The defendants . . . were thus put in peril of their lives” with no worthy defense to protect them. The first set of trials, the Court argued, went “forward with the haste of the mob.”

A NEW DEFENSE

With this victory in hand, the ILD hired New York attorney Samuel Leibowitz—a political moderate with no previous Communist Party affiliations—to defend the Scottsboro Boys in the retrials. These retrials were moved from Scottsboro to another city in Alabama, Decatur, and were presided over by Judge James Horton. From the beginning, Leibowitz laid the groundwork for subsequent appeals, arguing that jury selection in the cases was unconstitutional since

African American citizens were systematically excluded from the jury pool. Horton refused this and a number of other defense motions. Despite these setbacks, Leibowitz's defense cast doubt on much of the prosecution's case. When Victoria Price took the stand, Leibowitz introduced medical evidence suggesting that Price and Bates had spent the night before the alleged rapes with two men. (Lester Carter, one of the two men, later testified at the trial that this was indeed the case.) Leibowitz also introduced evidence that contradicted her account of where she had been on the days leading up to the alleged rapes. The defense attorney also sought to prove that Price was both a bootlegger and a prostitute.

The most startling moment in the retrials came with the appearance of Leibowitz's surprise witness, Ruby Bates, who had been missing for some months leading up to the retrials. Under direct examination from Leibowitz, Bates said that she and Price were never touched or even talked to by the defendants. When asked why she and Price had made up the story of the rapes, Bates said that Price had told her to go along with the story in order to avoid morals charges. Despite the new testimony and evidence, the jurors—after being told in closing arguments by the assistant prosecutor not to let Alabama justice “be bought with Jew money from New York” and after only a few minutes of deliberation—convicted and sentenced the defendants.

RETRIALS

There was one last surprise, however, in this set of retrials. On June 22, 1933, Judge Horton set aside the jury verdict, arguing that the evidence presented at trial made clear that Bates had not been raped by the Scottsboro Boys. A year later, Horton revealed that he had been told by one of the doctors who had examined the women that there were no signs of rape on the night of the arrests. Horton said that the doctor, who had a practice in Scottsboro, was afraid to testify to this on the stand.

With trials set to begin yet again, a wave of lynching spread across the South. The new judge in the cases, William Callahan, however, refused to grant the defendants the protection of the National Guard. In this atmosphere, Bates, who had attended pro-Scottsboro Boys rallies across the United States, declined to return to Alabama for the next set of trials, fearing for her life. Callahan refused a number of

defense motions—including another Leibowitz motion relating to the exclusion of African Americans from the jury pool—and had to be reminded by Leibowitz to give the jury the option of a “not guilty” verdict at the end of the trial. Unsurprisingly, another guilty verdict was returned.

As the defense prepared for its appeals, Nashville police arrested two ILD lawyers for allegedly having attempted to bribe Price to change her testimony. Angered by the allegations, Leibowitz parted with the ILD and formed a coalition, the Scottsboro Defense Committee (SDC), with the participation of the NAACP, the ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union), and the U.S. Communist Party. In January of 1935, the U.S. Supreme Court heard the SDC's appeal. In a rare unanimous decision for such a contentious case, the Court held that Alabama's system of jury selection was unconstitutional because of its systematic exclusion of African Americans from its jury rolls.

Despite its second win in the Supreme Court, the SDC failed to win the defendants' release in the subsequent retrials. African Americans were still excluded from sitting on the juries, though a number were now included in the jury pool. With appeals of these cases in the offing, and after an exhausting and costly 6 years of retrials and appeals, the SDC agreed to a series of plea bargains that led to the release of four of the defendants: Olen Montgomery, Willie Roberson, Eugene Williams, and Roy Wright. The prosecution dropped the rape charges against Ozzie Powell, instead convicting him for an assault on a sheriff's deputy that occurred during the lead-up to the last set of trials. He and the other Scottsboro Boys who remained in jail served lengthy sentences. Charles Weems was paroled in 1943, Ozzie Powell and Clarence Norris were paroled in 1946, and Andy Wright was finally paroled in 1950. In 1948, Haywood Patterson escaped from prison and was arrested 2 years later in Michigan after the publication of his memoir, *Scottsboro Boy*. Michigan, however, refused to extradite him to Alabama and Patterson remained free. Only Norris ever returned to Alabama. In 1976, he accepted a pardon on behalf of all nine of the Scottsboro Boys from Alabama governor George Wallace.

RUINED LIVES

Free of Alabama, the Scottsboro Boys were never free of their ordeals in the 1930s and 1940s. Sodomized in prisons deemed too miserable to house white prisoners,

and after their release, stigmatized as rapists by many whites, the Scottsboro Boys went on to lives of mixed success, with some marrying and otherwise coming to terms with the horrors of the trials and imprisonment and others succumbing to alcohol, disease, and suicide. The influence of the Scottsboro case on the civil rights movement had an equally mixed record. The South's oppressive Jim Crow laws remained in effect for some 30 years after the trials and, as the exclusion of African American jurors in the last set of retrials proved, civil rights victories in the judicial system often had little effect on the plight of African Americans.

Nevertheless, the Scottsboro case laid the groundwork for later gains by the civil rights movement, such as when the ILD's use of mass campaigning was copied in the 1950s and 1960s by Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Southern Christian Leadership Conference. The trials also called into question the strategy of accommodation by political liberals, given the obstinacy of the Alabama legal system, even in the face of higher court rulings. In the end, the legal lynch mob that convicted and reconvicted the innocent Scottsboro Boys came to represent the racism and injustice of a political and legal system inimical to the rights of African Americans; through the work of the U.S. Communist Party, the NAACP, and other groups, the case also came to symbolize the collective action needed to bring about this system's downfall.

— Peter Gratton

FURTHER READING

- Carter, Dan T. (1969). *Scottsboro: A Tragedy of the American South*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. This book is a good introduction to the Scottsboro case.
- Kinshasa, Kwando Mbiassi. (1997). *The Man from Scottsboro: Clarence Norris and the Infamous 1931 Alabama Rape Trial, in His Own Words*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland. This is one of the best works describing one of the central figures in the case.
- Patterson, Haywood, and Conrad, Earl. (1950). *Scottsboro Boy*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday. This book introduces the reader to the entire case by dealing with the example of one of the boys, Haywood Patterson.

SLAVE ROUTE

The Slave Route is an ambitious project that was launched by UNESCO (United Nations Educational,

Scientific, and Cultural Organization) based on a proposal made to the organization by Haiti. The project was adopted in 1993 (Resolution 27C/3.13) and officially started in September of 1994 in Ouidah, Republic of Benin. The choice of Ouidah, one of the most active West African ports during the European slave trade, is consistent with the purpose of the Slave Route. Indeed, the objective of the UNESCO project is twofold: on the one hand, it aims at breaking the silence that surrounds the transatlantic European slave trade and slavery in the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea; on the other hand, it seeks to objectively assess, through scientific studies, the interactions among all the people involved, as well as the consequences of the slave trade and slavery for each party, whether in Europe, Africa, or the Americas. UNESCO envisions that this should be done in three main ways: (1) through a survey and preservation of all national and religious archival resources on the issue of the European slave trade and the African diaspora, as well as a reliance on the African oral tradition; (2) through the constitution of a data bank; and (3) through a broad range of scientific research projects with the purpose of a better understanding from the perspectives of archaeology, history, linguistics, and other disciplines of the slave trade and slavery.

The findings of such research should lead to the development and implementation of educational programs on the European slave trade and the African diaspora. Thus the proceedings of the Ouidah conference were published in 1998 by UNESCO under the title *La chaîne et le lien: Une vision de la traite Nègrière*. The Ouidah conference was followed by a conference in Guadeloupe, Eastern Caribbean, in 1998, and by another in Lisbon, Portugal, in 1999. The proceedings from these conferences were also published by UNESCO. Furthermore, in 1998, August 23 was designated as the International Day for Commemoration of the Slave Trade. It was first observed in Haiti in 1998, and then in Gorée, Senegal, in 1999. The purpose of such a commemoration is to ensure that the tragedy experienced by African people, as a result of the slave trade and subsequent African enslavement, will not be forgotten. August 23 was selected because it was on that day in 1791 that the war Africans in Haiti waged and won against their French enslavers began.

The ultimate goal of the Slave Route project is through a scientific investigation and ethical questioning

of the past to shed light on all societies and facilitate the advent of genuine cultural pluralism, based on true respect for historical, geographical, and cultural diversity.

— *Ama Mazama*

FURTHER READING

Henriques, Castro Isabel (Ed.). (2003). *Déraison, Esclavage, et Droit: Les Fondements Idéologiques et Juridiques de la Traite Négrière et de L'esclavage*. Paris: Editions UNESCO.

These are the proceedings of the third Slave Route conference, held in Lisbon, Portugal. The volume provides a useful delineation of the scope of the project and of some of the findings of the researchers.

www.unesco.org/culture/dialogue/slave/html_fr/index.shtml

This is a resourceful site on the Slave Route project. It should be consulted for further and updated information.

SONGHAY EMPIRE

Songhay was the third great West African empire after Ghana and Mali. Between 641 C.E. and 1600 C.E., Songhay rose and declined in power. The Malian Empire ruled Songhay, once a small kingdom known as Gao, during the reign of Mansa Musa. By 1355, however, Songhay became a sovereign state, and under the leadership of Sunni Ali Ber (1464–1492) Songhay conquered key cities such as Timbuktu and Djenne. This established Songhay as a dominant power in West Africa.

Songhay and its rise to prominence were the result of effective leaders with great ingenuity, a respect for traditional customs, and strict governmental organization. The most noteworthy leaders during the reign of the Songhay Empire were Sunni Ali Ber and Askia Mohammed. Sunni Ali Ber ruled with a great respect for traditional customs and resisted the influence of Islam on African culture. He expanded the kingdom and promoted education, the arts, and commerce. During his reign, Songhay became home to the great universities of Timbuktu and Djenne, where traditional African scholarship was advanced.

The expansion of Songhay during the reign of Sunni Ali Ber was the result of his having built a naval fleet to control the Niger River. This fleet enabled Sunni Ali Ber to capture Timbuktu, Djenne, and Mali. Shrewd and keenly aware of the need to unite the people of the kingdom, many of whom had become

followers of Islam, Sunni Ali Ber took on a Muslim name. And while he was a proponent of traditional customs and religions, he did not exclude or marginalize followers of Islam. Sunni Ali Ber's ability to expand a once vassal state to a position of prominence, while maintaining peace among his diverse followers, was a great example of his political savvy. The Islamic expansion, however, was leaving an undeniable imprint on the region and, despite Sunni Ali Ber's astute leadership, an orthodox Muslim named Askia Mohammed overthrew him.

Askia Mohammed reigned from 1493 to 1529. Although Askia Mohammed's religious beliefs were different from Sunni Ali Ber's, his abilities as a leader were similar to those of his predecessor. Under the rule of Askia Mohammed, the Songhay Empire was expanded and became the largest empire in the history of West Africa. In addition, Askia Mohammed used his Islamic faith to converse with various nations on how to improve the administration of his government. Specifically, Askia Mohammed undertook a pilgrimage to Mecca, a religious obligation of all Muslims, but his pilgrimage was for more than a religious experience. He and his fleet conversed with scholars, mathematicians, and scientists. As a result of these contacts, Askia instituted various learned strategies to strengthen the empire.

John Hope Franklin and Alfred Moss wrote that as a ruler, Askia Mohammed "devoted his energies to strengthening his empire, making people prosperous and encouraging learning." Askia Mohammed achieved his goal of a strengthened empire through decentralization. He instituted a series of cabinet-level positions while also establishing local governmental control as a way to stay abreast of the happenings in the far regions of his empire. While the Songhay Empire predated the United States by over 200 years, the organization of the government of the two is very similar. In fact, in the book *Classical Africa*, Molefi Asante illustrates the comparison with a display of the cabinet positions. Commerce was also enhanced during Askia Mohammed's reign, with traders traveling from as far as Europe and Asia to trade with the Songhay Empire. A banking system was in place that provided credit and used a uniform system of weights and measures.

When Askia Mohammed overthrew Sunni Ali Ber, the empire boasted great intellectual centers such as Timbuktu, Djenne, and Gao. West African scholars were known to study at the universities. Askia

Mohammed continued this tradition of intellectual expansion, but from a strict Islamic perspective. Whereas Sunni Ali Ber held to traditional African culture, Askia Mohammed maintained his devotion to Islam. This was most prevalent in the educational system, where the universities were reorganized to emphasize an Islamic model and way of thinking.

Askia Mohammed, in declining health, was eventually overthrown by his two sons. His sons proved not to possess the political savvy and organization of the Songhay Empire's previous rulers. The empire became fragmented, with each son attempting to rule a part of the region. Eventually, Askia Mohammed's youngest son, Daoud Mohammed, took over and ruled from 1549 to 1582. Nevertheless, the period following Askia Mohammed's death marked the decline of the empire. Eventually the Moroccans took over the region and ruled for over 100 peaceless years. The people of Songhay resisted the Moroccans, and while they were ultimately defeated, they never revealed the location of the empire's vast gold mines to their conquerors.

The reigns of Sunni Ali Ber and Askia Mohammed encompassed the height of the Songhay Empire. Each ruler possessed the characteristics and desires of traditional African leaders: prosperity for the people, education, and peace. While Sunni Ali Ber and Askia Mohammed differed greatly over religion, their leadership catapulted the Songhay Empire to worldwide acclaim.

— Mario Root

FURTHER READING

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- Franklin, John Hope, and Moss, Alfred A., Jr. (1988). *From Slavery to Freedom*. New York: McGraw-Hill. This is an in-depth chronicle of the history of blacks in America, beginning with a discussion of the states in Africa where many blacks in America trace their ancestry.

SOUL

The idea of soul in African American culture is a quality of consciousness that puts people in direct contact with history, culture, and religion. *Soul* is an expressive consciousness that takes into consideration all aspects of oratory, music, dance, and art. When people are

attuned to the nuances and symbolism of a piece of music, they might say that the music has soul. People can also experience soul when they see and hear a public speaker: The listener or observer can quite easily tell if an orator has soul or not by paying attention to the gestures, linguistic slides, and mannerisms of the orator's voice and body, as well as to his or her general appearance. Soul is the experience of a performance rather than the experience of a text, as it engages more than the mind. Soul is the expression of all the most intimate secrets of a people.

In Black Studies, the idea of soul carries with it the idea of that which possesses meaning. Sometimes events, personalities, and situations conspire to create an atmosphere for soul to emerge. When soul emerges, everyone who has participated or participates in the historical reality of African people knows that it has come. To some degree, soul is a psychological fact—a feeling, a mood, and an attitude. How individuals mediate their lives when confronted with the power of the concept in music, art, dance, or a sermon is a separate arena for discussion. Soul is the evidence of an instantiation of African American culture, history, and experiences. People evoke soul through epic memories of ancestors' names, ritual performances that simulate victories over obstacles, and appeals to commonalities that are historically grounded, whether in a particular jazz riff or in a Martin Luther King-style sermon.

— Daryl Zizwe Poe

FURTHER READING

- Davis, Gerald. (1985). *I Got the Word in Me and I Can Sing It, You Know: A Study of the Performed African American Sermon*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. This study demonstrates how the African American preacher used the sermon to reach levels of communion with the audience that could not have been reached without performance, the essence of which is soul.
- Jones, Leroi (now Amiri Baraka). (1963). *Black Music*. New York: William Morrow. This book, by one of the most brilliant writers in African American history, demonstrates the role that music plays in developing the philosophical and ethical grounds of the African American culture. The book is based on the author's personal experiences and academic inquiry and is a penetrating and interpretative account of black music in America.
- Jones, Leroi (now Amiri Baraka). (1963). *Black People*. New York: William Morrow. Here the author explores the special qualities of soul that are based on the nature of African experience in America.

Walker, Sheila S. (1972). *Ceremonial Spirit Possession in Africa and Afro-American: Forms, Meanings, and Functional Significance for Individuals and Social Groups*. Leiden, The Netherlands: E. J. Brill. This is one of the earliest works on ceremonial spirit possession in both the African and the African American contexts.

THE SOULS OF BLACK FOLK

The Souls of Black Folk is a compilation of essays by W.E.B. (William Edward Burghardt) Du Bois that was published in 1903. Part social documentary, part history, part autobiography, part anthropological field report, *The Souls of Black Folk* remains unparalleled in its scope. In *The Souls of Black Folk*, Du Bois describes the effect that living in segregation has on the soul, spirit, and consciousness of black people being held in its grasp. He shows the creation and maintaining of the racial divide from slavery until after the Reconstruction period.

Du Bois opens *The Souls of Black Folk* with a description of life under “the veil.” The veil is described as the curtain that has been drawn between the black and white races, the curtain that keeps the two races separate and unequal. This curtain forced blacks into enslavement, which enabled the South to benefit from free and forced labor. This curtain also allowed the Northern part of the United States to go on with its daily routine, acting as if nothing was out of place. The veil, as Du Bois saw it, created the principle and practice of the system of the color line in the United States.

The veil Du Bois describes is said to force black people to have a double consciousness in which they see themselves as both black and American. This is one of the most important concepts Du Bois explores in *The Souls of Black Folk*. He admits in the book that he himself struggles with just such a double consciousness. There have been many discussions and debates about the double consciousness concept, with some people arguing that it reflects only Du Bois’s personal crisis with being rejected by the majority white society, and others contending that double consciousness is a universal state of blacks dwelling in the United States of America.

The Souls of Black Folk is an exemplary examination of the ontology of black people. In it, Du Bois discusses the struggle within blacks over time. First, this struggle came from their wanting to be free from

the bonds of enslavement. After the end of slavery, blacks in the United States believed that the key to their equality was having the right to vote. However, gaining the power of the ballot did not give blacks freedom, self-pride, and assurance, and Du Bois uses this as evidence of the constant struggle and trials that Africans in America must endure. What is most important about these struggles, however, is the resilience and resistance they show to exist in the African spirit. Du Bois says this resilience has been instrumental in creating the souls of black folk and is at their foundation.

W.E.B. Du Bois’s *The Souls of Black Folk* has had a significant impact on Black Studies. The fact that it is used at least once as a basic text in most Black Studies students’ careers is evidence of its importance and contribution to the discipline. Most work done on African people has not been written by or from the perspective of African people. *The Souls of Black Folk* was written by Du Bois in way that allows black people to speak for themselves and promotes an understanding of black ontology.

— Natalie Lewis

FURTHER READING

- Chinweizu. (1987). *Decolonizing the African Mind*. Lagos, Nigeria: Sundoor. This is an excellent book on the problems that confront African people because of racism, slavery, and discrimination. According to Chinweizu, what the African can do to eliminate the condition of colonization is to remove all the vestiges of colonization in the mind.
- Cruse, Harold. (1967). *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual*. New York: William Morrow. This is perhaps one of the most important works on the culture of the African American intellectual since Du Bois’s *The Souls of Black Folk*.
- Woodson, Carter G. (1977). *The Mis-Education of the Negro*. Washington, DC: Associated Publishers. (Original work published 1933). This is the classic work by a major historian, in which he discusses the educational situation of African Americans.

SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) was formed soon after the Montgomery Bus Boycott, which began on December 5, 1955 in

response to the arrest of a black woman named Rosa Parks for refusing to give up her seat to a white man on the bus. The boycott was maintained for 381 days, until December 21, 1956, when it ended with the desegregation of the Montgomery bus system. The leaders of the boycott were officers of the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA)—its president, Martin Luther King, Jr., and program director, Ralph David Abernathy. When the boycott was over, a new phase had begun in the civil rights movement—the phase of direct struggle to end segregation. Soon bus boycotts spread across the South, and it was important for the leaders of the MIA and other protest groups to meet in January of 1957 to form a regional organization and coordinate protest activities across the South.

Abernathy's home and church were bombed during that meeting, where 60 persons from 10 states assembled and announced the founding of the Southern Leadership Conference on Transportation and Nonviolent Integration. They issued a document declaring that civil rights are essential to democracy, that segregation must end, and that all black people should reject segregation absolutely and nonviolently. The group held a second meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, on February 14, 1957. The organization shortened its name to Southern Leadership Conference, established an executive board of directors, and elected officers, including Martin Luther King as president; Ralph David Abernathy as financial secretary-treasurer; C. K. Steele of Tallahassee, Florida, as vice president; T. J. Jemison of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, as secretary; and I. M. Augustine of New Orleans, Louisiana, as general counsel.

At its first convention, in Montgomery in August of 1957, the Southern Leadership Conference adopted the current name, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. The basic decisions made by the founders of the organization at this early meeting included the adoption of nonviolent mass action as the cornerstone of strategy, the affiliation of local community organizations with SCLC across the South, and a determination to make the SCLC movement open to all, regardless of race, religion, or background. Now, nearly 50 years later, the SCLC is a nationwide organization made up of chapters and affiliates with programs throughout the nation, and it has become international in its scope and activities.

— Mario Root

FURTHER READING

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SPIRITUALS

Spirituals are the musical expressions created by enslaved Africans to maintain their spiritual and cultural practices while Southern slaveowners were attempting to Christianize them. The songs demonstrate the human spirit in resistance to bondage with an overarching theme of freedom, both spiritual and physical. Enslaved Africans relied on their faith in the divine to help them endure the harsh and cruel conditions of slavery. Two vital elements of the cultural tradition of their ancestors express this faith and the resilience it inspired—the African oral tradition and African music. The sacred songs that came to be known as spirituals affirmed an African worldview and were a critical vehicle for group unity in which the enslaved Africans could all take part. The spirituals articulated directly and indirectly the enslaved Africans' collective discontent with the injustices and inhumanities of the slave system and their hope and assurance of liberation.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SONGS

By the late 18th century, the spiritual had begun, in a small way, to distinguish itself from other music performed by enslaved Africans primarily by the context in which it was performed. However, it was in the middle of the 19th century that the spiritual reached its full development. Although other forms of African American music were developing that were similar in style (e.g., the blues), the spiritual had its impetus and growth as a musical form in the clandestine gatherings of Africans in religious ceremonies and rituals. Plantation owners' effort to Christianize enslaved

Africans was a covert tactic to subjugate and control them, and enslaved Africans recognized the insincerity of the Christian proselytizers. Africans' predilection to spirituality, however, allowed them to transform the newly introduced religious concepts and ideas into their cosmology, which led to the formulation of religious practices based on their African past. It was in these religious practices that the spiritual was born.

The spirituals are a classic example of the creative and dynamic communicative possibilities of music in African cultures that continued to be explored by Africans in the Americas. The songs were used for multiple purposes: to teach, to inspire, to signal, to comment, to inform, and to tell stories. They not only were used for religious expressions but also covered the history, thoughts, and aspirations of enslaved Africans and contextualized their lives and affairs under the oppression and religious hypocrisy of the slave system. Most important, the spirituals were practical tools that served as coded communications for emotional and physical escape as well as rebellion.

The texts of the spirituals are full of allusion and imagery with hidden and double meanings. Many of the texts include biblical words like *Savior*, suggesting God, ancestor spirits, or Harriet Tubman and *Canaan* referring to heaven, a better life in a Northern state, or freedom after emancipation. The phrase *my home* indicated Africa and *steal away to Jesus* implied escape to the North. A few of the most well-known spirituals are "Go Down Moses," "O Mary Don't You Weep, Don't You Mourn," "Walk Together Children," "Wade in the Water," "Roll Jordan Roll," and "Deep River."

TYPES OF SPIRITUALS

Musically, the spiritual represents the persistence of African identity in the United States, with musical continuances in African rhythms, call-and-response, melody, and improvisation. The older spirituals were of three basic types: ring shouts, sorrow songs, and jubilees. The ring shout was derived from West African rituals and ceremonies and involved singing the spiritual, shouting, dancing, and drumming produced by hand clapping, foot stomping, and tapping with sticks. The rhythm of this type of spiritual is strongly influenced by the rhythms of the dance and percussion. The sorrow song has a slow tempo, is intensely poignant, and speaks directly to the conditions of slavery. The jubilee has a faster tempo and expresses the hopeful expectation and joys of freedom.

Call-and-response patterns are typical in all the types of spirituals, whether in the form of solo and group responses, variable solo calls and repeated refrains, or solo and solo alternating responses. Many of the melodies of the spirituals are replicas of African melodies extracted from cultural memory, while other melodies are the spontaneous creations of talented individuals who used African concepts in the arrangement of melodic tones and drew upon musical scales common in Africa. Improvisation takes place on several levels in the performance of spirituals: Songs are created spontaneously with the text improvised as the song progresses and melodic lines improvised with repetitions that vary slightly.

POPULAR RECOGNITION

The spirituals first became recognized nationally and internationally in the 1870s through the performances of the Fisk Jubilee Singers, a group of college musicians from Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee. Their concert-arranged versions of the spirituals helped preserve the orally transmitted songs of their ancestors. H. T. Burleigh, the first African American composer to gain national recognition as a composer, arranger, and singer, transcribed and arranged spirituals for solo voice. Internationally renowned African American musicians such as Marian Anderson, Roland Hayes, and Paul Robeson performed Burleigh's solo arrangements on the concert stage. James Weldon and J. Rosamond Johnson, John Work III, and Nathaniel Dett have provided other major collections of the spirituals.

The spiritual is of paramount significance because of its role as an authentic African American cultural artifact and for its widespread musical influence. It has been at the crux of all African American sacred music and has influenced every form of American popular music. The intensity and power of the spiritual is evidenced in its universality and enduring message of triumph.

— Mawusi Renee Simmons

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- Walker, Wyatt Tee. (1982). *Somebody's Calling My Name: Black Sacred Music and Social Change*. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press. Walker is a giant in the music, oratorical, and civil rights fields, and he has given us a great book.

STOLEN LEGACY

The author of *Stolen Legacy*, George Granville Monah James, was born in Guyana to Reverend Linch B. James and Margaret E. James. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from Durham University in England, then proceeded to earn his doctorate at Columbia University in New York. James served as a professor of Greek and Logic at Livingston College in Salisbury, North Carolina, and then taught at the University of Arkansas, Pine Bluff. Shortly after the publication of *Stolen Legacy*, which he completed while at the University of Arkansas, James died under mysterious circumstances. Popular rumors suggested he might have been killed because he exposed intimate knowledge related to the Masonic tradition. Others believe that James died because his work challenged the idea of white racial supremacy by contending that the Greeks got their information from Africans, especially ancient Egyptians.

James's seminal work, *Stolen Legacy*, was completed in 1954 and exposed the Greek philosophers Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle as fraudulent in their claim to have originated the philosophies and equations with which they are credited. The uncovering of this deception dissolves the myth of the primacy of ancient Greek intellectual, scientific, theological, and cosmological contributions to humanity. The notion of the absence of Africa's contribution to humanity is also dissolved in *Stolen Legacy*, which reveals where and how the Greek philosophers took their information from the Africans. In order to show the connections between the ancient Egyptians and Greeks, James delves into the philosophical development of the most important Greek philosophers and exposes their ideas as consistent with the earlier ideas of African philosophers.

According to *Stolen Legacy*, the perception of Aristotle as the wisest man ever to live, which is based

on the contents and expansiveness of his writings, is suspect. Pythagoras was expelled from Italy, Socrates was executed, Plato was sold into slavery, and Aristotle was indicted and exiled. If the knowledge and wisdom they were credited with was indigenous to the Greek paradigm, why then would they have been punished and ostracized by their societies? Furthermore, James asks, how could Plato, a philosopher, instruct Aristotle, a scientist? According to James, it is physically impossible for Aristotle to have researched and published the works he is credited with in a single lifetime.

Stolen Legacy has become one of the most frequently discussed books in Black Studies. It has captivated the minds of classicists like Mary Lefkowitz, been the topic of discussion for educators like Asa Hilliard and Tony Martin, and been used by scholars such as Martin Bernal and Molefi Kete Asante to make points about the valuable contributions of Africans to world culture. *Stolen Legacy* is undoubtedly one of the most fascinating books in the field of Black Studies.

— Gwinyai Muzorewa

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STONO REBELLION

The Stono Rebellion was the first large-scale uprising of enslaved Africans in North America during the colonial period. In the 17th and the early 18th centuries, because the white population was outnumbered by a massive number of Africans imported from the Congo-Angolan region, a series of laws was enacted to repress enslaved Africans in the Carolina colony.

The enslaved Africans took advantage of this situation to plan and organize a massive uprising. They were united in their determination for freedom, as well as in their similar kinship and linguistic ties, as the majority of enslaved Africans in South Carolina were newly imported from Angola. The Africans used drums and chants of “liberty” to recruit and unite other enslaved Africans to fight against the oppression of white planters, who were the minority in 18th-century South Carolina. Their goal was to flee to St. Augustine, Florida, where the Spanish had promised protection and freedom for all Africans enslaved by the British.

At daybreak on September 9, 1739, approximately 20 enslaved Africans, led by an educated enslaved Angolan or Congolese called Jemmy, assembled on the shore of the Stono River in St. Paul’s Parish, about 20 miles from Charleston, South Carolina. During church services, which most white planters attended, the group broke into a firearms store by Stono Bridge, plundered boxes of guns and ammunition, and killed the store’s two owners when they returned unexpectedly, leaving their heads on the porch. The group of Africans proceeded toward St. Augustine via Pon Pons Road, the road to Florida through Georgia. Along Pon Pons Road, the group swelled to more than 50, and subsequently killed the innkeepers of a tavern, their neighbors, overseers, and other white men, women, and children, and burnt their houses to the ground. Late in the afternoon, after traveling more than 10 miles from Stono, the white militia launched a surprise attack and fired on the group of enslaved Africans. The groups exchanged fire, killing approximately 44 Africans and 23 whites. At least 30 Africans escaped, though some were captured south of the incident and shot to death; most of the remainder of those who escaped were arrested and hanged over the following 6 months. Thus the

Stono Rebellion ultimately failed; however, it did demonstrate enslaved Africans’ robust cultural and armed resistance to the appalling slave system, as well as their strong commitment to the establishment of an independent African community such as the one they planned to create in Florida.

The Stono Rebellion induced white colonists in the South to establish strict legislation aimed at promptly controlling enslaved Africans. The Negro Act was enacted in 1740 to ensure total subordination of enslaved Africans in South Carolina. The act required all white men to carry guns, and prohibited enslaved Africans from beating African drums during slave gatherings, from assembling and working on Sundays, from earning money, from growing their own food, and from learning to read. The act also limited direct slave importation from Africa, which it was thought could encourage slave revolts.

The consequences of the rebellion were that whites were never able to eliminate their fear of revolts, and enslaved Africans’ commitment to freedom based on their African heritage thrived with the legacy of this large-scale revolt, as evidenced by successive conspiracies and revolts in later years.

— *Suzuko Morikawa*

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- www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part1/1p284.html This Web site is a useful source for information on the Stono Rebellion, see especially the article “Africans in America: Part 1. The Stono Rebellion.”

T

TALENTED TENTH

W.E.B. Du Bois's theory of "the talented tenth" registers right along with his concept of "double-consciousness" as among his most celebrated and controversial contributions to African American educational, social, and political thought traditions. However, unlike his concept of double consciousness, Du Bois returned to and revised his theory of the talented tenth. Many scholars and critics have interpreted Du Bois's theory of the most talented tenth of African Americans leading the rest as utterly elitist and thoroughly shot through with European ideals—from Enlightenment thought to European American aristocratic philosophy and political theory. But other scholars and critics have argued that Du Bois's much mangled theory of the talented tenth is actually not about the black bourgeoisie or African American aristocracy leading the black masses and working classes but, rather, about an assemblage of people of character who are actively dedicated to black liberation and democratic social transformation.

The confusion and contradictory interpretations of Du Bois's theory are partly the result of his vagueness and, in Du Bois's own words, his youth and idealism in his initial articulation of the talented tenth theory in 1903. It also did not help matters much that it took him 45 years to respond to criticisms and revise the theory, which he did in 1948. Taken together, Du Bois's 1903 and 1948 versions of the talented tenth theory are seminal and highly significant contributions to African American leadership and liberation thought; African American philosophy of education;

and African American social and political philosophy. What follows is a critical assessment of the contributions this theory has made and continues to make to the discourse and debates surrounding African American social development and cultural survival.

THE TALENTED TENTH THESIS: THE INITIAL ARTICULATION (1903)

Du Bois initially articulated the talented tenth in his essay by that name in the edited volume *The Negro Problem: A Series of Articles by Representative American Negroes of Today* (1903), which included pieces by Booker T. Washington, Charles W. Chesnutt, Paul Laurence Dunbar, and T. Thomas Fortune, among others. The talented tenth is divided into three parts: The first part provides a philosophy of history that highlights and accents African American achievements against all the odds that holocaust and enslavement entail. Du Bois's philosophy of history places female freedom fighters right alongside their male counterparts, invoking the names of Phillis Wheatley, David Walker, Sojourner Truth, Henry Highland Garnett, Harriet Tubman, Alexander Crummell, and Frederick Douglass. Though there has long been confusion among Du Bois's critics concerning the line that opens and closes the essay, which refers to race being saved by its exceptional men, he actually meant (as he made clear in his 1948 revision of the talented tenth thesis) that African American uplift rested squarely on the shoulders of both black men and black women of character. These black men and black women, like the freedom fighters just mentioned, constantly seek self-knowledge, self-realization, and self-control, and they

possess a serious and sincere spirit of service and sacrifice. The first and last line of Du Bois's essay has also been interpreted as an unmitigated endorsement of African American leadership and social development under the auspices of the black bourgeoisie or African American aristocracy. According to Du Bois and many of his more sympathetic interpreters, however, he was not calling for leadership by the African American upper class, but leadership via the African American educated class, which by his estimate of 1903 amounted to 10% of the African American population, thus comprising the talented tenth of African Americans. In the first part of this essay, then, Du Bois is at pains to predicate African American uplift on the African American intelligentsia using its knowledge of and access to crucial and critical resources in the best interest of the black masses, as opposed to merely its upper and/or middle classes.

The second part of the essay engages the issues surrounding African American education at the turn of the 20th century, issues at the heart of the debate between Du Bois and Booker T. Washington. Where Washington was firmly for industrial education and trade training, Du Bois declared that college education and culture training was a prerequisite for black leadership and black liberation. Du Bois did not deny that industrial education was extremely important to black life. He, however, believed that blacks needed broadly cultured men and women in leadership positions to guard against the manipulations and machinations of the white ruling race and class and the hundreds of half-trained black demagogues and opportunists. Without broadly cultured men and women, by which he meant men and women with an acute understanding of the historical and current life struggles of black people and an intense ethical obligation (almost fanatic devotion) to black liberation, Du Bois surmised that blacks were without a doubt surely doomed to a slow and painful sociocultural death at the hands of racism, capitalism, and colonialism.

The third part of the essay takes a headfirst and hardnosed look at the relationship and responsibility of black leaders and intellectuals to the black liberation struggle. From Du Bois's perspective, black leaders and intellectuals have an ethical obligation to use their training and knowledge to improve the conditions of the black masses and working classes. In 1903, Du Bois unwittingly "assumed," as he put it in 1948, that black leaders and intellectuals would make the sacrifices necessary to serve the black masses. He quickly

found out that the spirit of Jeffersonian individualism and simple-minded selfishness was not something plaguing whites alone, but that blacks were under its pernicious spell as well. It was with a sense of great disillusionment and deep depression that in 1948 Du Bois returned to and revised his theory of the talented tenth into "the doctrine of the guiding hundredth."

THE GUIDING HUNDREDTH THESIS: REVISITING AND REVISING THE TALENTED TENTH (1948)

In 1948, The Talented Tenth Memorial Address was delivered at the Nineteenth Grand Boulé Conclave of Sigma Pi Phi fraternity. From the outset of the address, Du Bois made it known that he had come to criticize not simply others' black leadership and liberation thought but, in a rare self-reflexive moment, his own black social development discourse. He was baffled and bemoaned the fact that so many black leaders and intellectuals aped the aristocratic attitudes of the white ruling race and class. He also chided himself for being naïve and not clearly laying out in 1903 the basic qualities and characteristics of the talented tenth—qualities and characteristics that ultimately revolved around the black intelligentsia's ethical obligations to the youth, the aged, and the infirm, as well as the poor and poverty stricken. It was no longer enough for the talented tenth to be talented, quipped Du Bois, they also had to be willing and able to struggle, sacrifice, and serve in the best interests of the black masses. Du Bois then charged the talented tenth with the task of providing self-sacrificing leadership through honesty of character and purity of motive. He criticized his 1903 articulation of the talented tenth thesis, observing that it allowed a few selfish, self-indulgent, well-to-do men to control the process of African American leadership. Du Bois was upset with himself for not clarifying the central elements of the talented tenth thesis and, therefore, leaving his thought open to charges of aristocratic and intellectual elitism. He declared that money and advanced education did not in the past and do not presently make people fit to lead, that only those who constantly couple wealth with character and a commitment to black people's highest ideals and interests are fit to lead.

In the final analysis, it all came down to a question of character. In the talented tenth thesis, Du Bois emphasized education and economics, but he neglected to connect them to personal character and

social ethics. The guiding hundredth thesis, however, was careful to couple black educational and economic needs with social ethics, democratic socialism, and a dash of black nationalism. The new black leaders, the guiding hundredth, had to be “moral leaders” as well as social and political leaders. What is more, they were charged with the task of sidestepping the conventional elitism and the vulgarities of vanguardism often associated with leadership cadres, Du Bois’s talented tenth included. Extending and expanding his talented tenth theory, Du Bois conceived of the guiding hundredth as a dedicated group of leaders from any and/or all classes of black people devoted to radical democratic group leadership and antiracist social change. This means, then, that his 1903 talented tenth thesis served more as a stepping-stone theory than a full-blown and finished social program. Du Bois developed the thesis to speak to the specific social and political problems confronting African Americans at the turn of the 20th century. The guiding hundredth theory was a mid-century update and expansion of the talented tenth thesis that, though often overlooked, symbolizes an important development in Du Bois’s social, political, and educational thought.

— *Reiland Rabaka*

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TEMPLE CIRCLE

The Temple Circle (TC) was a group of Afrocentric scholars gathered at Temple University in the late 1980s and early 1990s around the intellectual ideas articulated by Molefi Kete Asante. Among the leaders

of this group were scholars such as C. T. Keto, Ama Mazama, Aisha Blackshire-Belay, Kariamuw Welsh, Theophile Obenga, James Ravell, Charles Fuller, Nah Dove, Thelma Ravell, and several others.

There were three main ideas that motivated the Temple Circle. In the first place, the TC believe that it was possible to create a discipline of African American Studies based on theories and methods that were derived from the historical and lived experiences of African people. Second, the members of the Temple Circle felt that a school of thought originating in the intellectual works of an African scholar could seriously empower African people to believe in their own inherent capacity to define themselves. Third, the Temple Circle was an exercise in collective intellectual power, as the members accepted the idea that what they created out of group consciousness and discussion could be advanced as a common front in the Western academy. Thus, the implication of this idea, grounded in the concepts of *agency*, *location*, *centeredness*, and *orientation*, was enormous. Starting with the notion that Africans had been decentered by the enslaving and colonizing force of Europe, the Temple Circle chose to view the entirety of African history since the encounter with Europe as resistance to dislocation.

AFROCENTRIC CATEGORIZATION OF SOCIAL PRACTICE

In an attempt to establish categories for analysis, the Temple Circle argued that there were four classes of social practice in the historical relationship between those who held social and economic power and those who sought to free themselves from a position of powerlessness. They called these categories the “Afrocentric Categorization of Social Practice,” which then became a basis for the scientific interpretation of African behavior in the face of white racial domination. Seeking to reduce the level of analytical noise that existed in social relations, the Temple Circle suggested that the use of these categories would strengthen the conceptualization of the field of African American Studies. The four categories of social practice divide individuals into capitulationists, integrationists, separatists, and Afrocentrists.

According to the Temple Circle, *capitulationists* are those who willingly give up their claims to cultural, psychological, economic, and/or historical agency to a hostile culture for an illusory gain. Their aim is to

agree to the dominant society's perception that their culture is inferior and that there is no value to it. In effect, capitulationists are saying, "We can easily give this up and go either way. One day we can be black, the next day we can be white." *Integrationists* are those who seek to combine their social and political cultures with a dominant society to create an atmosphere for acceptance by the dominant society. Their aim is to allay any fears that they are threatening the established dominant society's right to dominate. *Integrationists* are saying, "We are the same, just different colors. We support your actions because we believe in your principles." *Separatists* are those who seek to isolate themselves politically, culturally, and economically from the dominant society to establish their own society. Their aim is to have no meaningful interaction with the dominant, often hostile, society. In effect, separatists are saying, "They do not have anything that we need. Involvement with them is a sure way of destruction for us." *Afrocentrists* are those who accept their own agency as a way of interacting with the world and are unwilling to relinquish their agency to the dominant, hostile society at any price. Their aim is to interact with others on the basis of mutual respect and equality. *Afrocentrists* are saying, "We are perfectly alright as we are, thank you. What can we do for you?"

THE AFROCENTRIC PARADIGM

By 2002, over a decade after it began, the original Temple Circle had dwindled to two members due to transfers, university politics, and promotions. The TC constituted a group of intellectuals who believed that it was possible to establish a school of thought that would transform the nature of education by promoting the idea of Afrocentricity as a paradigm. The book *The Afrocentric Paradigm* by Ama Mazama is considered the best statement of the ideas of the Temple Circle.

— Molefi Kete Asante

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Mazama, Ama. (Ed.). (2003). *The Afrocentric Paradigm*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press. This book is the best collection of works supporting the Temple Circle ideas.

Smith, Robert C. (1996). *We Have No Leaders: African Americans in the Post Civil Rights Era*. Albany: State University of New York Press. This is an outstanding scholarly examination of African American political culture.

THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING GOD

Folklorist, anthropologist, novelist, playwright, and "genius of the South" Zora Neale Hurston, wrote her third novel, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, in 7 weeks in 1937. Although the novel is a classic today, its early critics—Richard Wright, Langston Hughes, Alain Locke, and others—gave it a mixed reception. That Hurston failed to effectively deal with the black experience in the context of racism and oppression was a frequent criticism. Hurston's critics accused her of inscribing minstrelsy in her depictions of black life to appeal to a white audience. Close reading, however, reveals that Hurston inscribed oppression and race matters but chose not to place these issues at the center of her story. She instead chose to foreground a black woman's challenging experiences during her quest for freedom. Hurston chose to write not in response to but in spite of white benefactors and detractors. Nevertheless, the book was thrust into obscurity for nearly 30 years due to a mixed critical reception expressing an overall lack of appreciation for the contributions of Hurston, a black woman writer who used black cultural expressions. Fortunately, later critics excavated the book during the early 1970s and, in doing so, demonstrated an appreciation for Hurston's literary contributions, her use of black cultural expressions, and her authentic representations of black life. Alice Walker, in her efforts to memorialize Hurston, and Robert Hemenway, in his biographical work on Hurston, led this excavation effort.

A major theme of the novel is the protagonist's struggle to appropriate a voice that is alternately muffled, ignored, or silenced due to the cacophony of male voices that compete with her own. Janie's husbands, Logan Killicks, Joe Starks, and Vergible

“Tea Cake” Woods, constitute the male chorus. Because of the challenges, Janie’s voice becomes more distinct as she progresses toward the freedom to live and love on her own terms. Interestingly, her husbands frequently produce voices eclipsed by their own struggles to articulate inner thoughts. Each wrestles with internal thoughts that often results in silence or inarticulation. For example, Killicks camouflages his fears with the repetitive complaint of sleep deprivation when Janie invites him to contemplate the fact that she just might leave him. In his struggle to respond, Killicks turns away from Janie to create a barrier to dialogue rather than toward Janie to facilitate communication. He ultimately feigns exhaustion and silently agonizes over the suggestion that she might leave.

Similarly, at various periods in Janie’s later life, Joe Starks and Tea Cake physically abuse Janie; however, neither articulates the perceived transgression in his own voice. Instead, the narrative voice mediates the perceived transgressions. For example, Joe Starks slaps Janie, but it is the narrator who communicates Starks’s insult and departure. The reader knows that the slap is not in response to Janie’s poorly prepared meal but in response to Starks’s recognition that after the first 7 years of their marriage, Janie still does not wholly submit to his demands, nor does she cower under the weight of his mounting insults. The narrator, not Starks, confirms that Starks would continue the abuse and the barrage of insults until Janie yielded. Like Joe Starks, Tea Cake’s voice is mediated through the narrative during his turn at physical abuse. Rather than articulating his fear, the narrator explains that Tea Cake confesses his deed and purpose to his fellow workers in the muck. He slaps Janie in an effort to communicate his status of “boss.” He struggles to communicate not with Janie but with people in the community, specifically the Turners. Physical displacement and verbal indirection illustrate the struggle to articulate those ever-present, innermost thoughts and feelings. Each man, then, exhibits male dominance but lacks a consistent, authentic voice.

The generative power of Janie’s voice emerges even though the expected written conventions for direct dialogue often do not appear in the text. Rather than present the conventions of direct speech, the narrative demonstrates the strength of Janie’s voice. Numerous examples abound. For instance, Janie’s rhetorical prowess banishes Joe Starks, the town’s most powerful figure, from his porch throne to his sickbed. Further, Janie’s rhetorical skill releases her from the

indictment of murder, and ultimately broadens Pheoby’s horizon when Pheoby, as listener, grows 10 feet taller after figuratively consuming Janie’s voice. Janie strengthens her own internal resolve when she wins battles after exercising her rhetorical skill; however, she gains no power in her external world, as is evident in the community’s response to her insulting Starks and killing Tea Cake.

Throughout the novel, we witness the protagonist’s quest for the freedom that permits a woman to experience life to the fullest. We witness Janie’s desire for the freedom to love, and that freedom is impossible within the confines of her marriages to elder Logan Killicks and Mayor Joe Starks. Both men possess the weight of prosperity that demands restrictive behavior prescribed by the dominant society. Janie walks away from Killicks and his plan to extend her domestic duties to field exercises, all for the sake of profit. With no regard for the legal ties that bind, Janie walks away from Killicks and toward Starks, only to be banished from the porch and imprisoned on the pedestal. Janie does not walk away from Starks but pushes Starks away with the rhetorical power of her voice.

Voice, then, remains a textual matter, an authorial concern, and a critical issue in Zora Neale Hurston’s timeless and authentically black novel, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*.

— Jacqueline Imani Bryant

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Central to the discussion is Hurston's attempt to dismantle the traditional hierarchy of narrative forms, in which she loses something in order to realize gain.

THEY CAME BEFORE COLUMBUS

When *They Came Before Columbus* was published in 1976 by the anthropologist Ivan Van Sertima, few people had ever taken seriously the possibility that Africans made it to the Western Hemisphere earlier than Europeans. In fact, the African "discovery" of the Americas was thought to be impossible because Africans were being enslaved by Europeans, and the propaganda about Africans tended to discount the likelihood of Africans achieving anything of significance.

As a Guyanese scholar, Van Sertima was familiar with enough of the ancient record and the flora and fauna of Africa and South America to make an assessment of the information available to him. He had in fact amassed an array of information from previous attempts to demonstrate that Africans could have arrived in the Americas before Europeans. Such attempts were based on the work of the 14th-century historian Al-Omari, who claimed that Abubakari II, emperor of Mali, had sent 2,000 long fishing boats across the Atlantic in 1311 to 1312. On the strength of this statement, numerous modern historians and anthropologists have examined flora data, folklore and folktales, ocean currents, and language to determine the plausibility of Africans landing in Mexico or other parts of the Americas.

They Came Before Columbus was a major boost to those scholars and laypeople who claimed that Western scholars had hidden or suppressed information about Africans coming to America long before the Europeans. Van Sertima's work must be seen as a popular version of the thesis. Neither Van Sertima nor his supporters claimed that this was the authoritative work on the issue, but it was the most powerful intellectual statement of the thesis made before the 1980s. It meant that the author was in great demand as a speaker on college campuses and at conferences, where he described the evidence that made his theory plausible.

His theory has had detractors, however. Several authors wrote pieces critical of the thesis of African arrival in the Americas before the Europeans, and they went so far as to deride the possibility that the thesis could be true—without engaging in any objective

analysis. One mean-spirited critique of Van Sertima's work, "Robbing Native American Cultures: Van Sertima's Afrocentricity and the Olmecs" by Gabriel Haslip-Viera, Ortiz de Montellano, and Warren Barbour, was so venomous that it made the ignorant and unconscionable comment that the Indians would have eaten the Africans if they had come ashore. But Van Sertima's work has prevailed despite the opposition of its critics. Van Sertima's reliance on an earlier work, Leo Wiener's *Africa and the Discovery of America*, and the support his theory received in a later work, Michael Bradley's *Dawn Voyage: The Black African Discovery of America*, have served to reinforce the thesis he set out. Thus, *They Came Before Columbus* maintains its position in the historical and cultural communities of African people as one of the most referred to books on the subject.

— Molefi Kete Asante

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THIRD WORLD PRESS

Third World Press (TWP), the oldest and longest running black publishing house, celebrated its 35th anniversary in 2002. Haki R. Madhubuti (formerly Don L. Lee), with the assistance of Carolyn Rodgers and Johari Amini, founded Third World Press on September 20, 1967. In his small basement apartment near 63rd and Ada Streets on the South Side of Chicago, Madhubuti started TWP with a used mimeograph machine and \$400 earned from a poetry reading.

As an artist-activist, Madhubuti knew that he would compromise his artistry if he sought recognition and publication from white publishing houses. Before beginning TWP, he was already selling his work from

coast to coast and had established a substantial following. In fact, mainstream publishing companies approached him with offers, which he refused, deciding instead to enact the governing principle of the sixties—freedom—which demanded black autonomy. The other major influences on Madhubuti's decision to create TWP included Adam Clayton Powell, who said that black power is blacks building institutions of "splendid achievement," and Malcolm X, who encouraged his listeners to construct institutions for African Americans. At its founding, TWP institutionalized black power, the theme of 1960s activism and of Madhubuti's black arts poetry from *Think Black* (1966) to *Tough Notes* (2002).

In the early years, Third World Press solely published poetry such as Don L. Lee's *Think Black* (1967) and *Black Pride* (1968), Johari Amini's *Black Essence* (1968), and Sterling Plump's *Portable Souls* (1968). Through the 1970s and 1980s the press varied its genres, publishing autobiography, fiction, nonfiction, children's literature, psychology, history, inspiration, politics, and culture. Black intellectuals, such as Chancellor Williams, John Henrik Clarke, Amiri Baraka, Woody King, Hoyt W. Fuller, Ruby Dee, Mari Evans, Nathan Hare, and Frances Cress Welsing, found a home at TWP. In the 1990s and currently, TWP publishes Derrick Bell, Vivian Gordon, Lily Golden, Fred L. Hord, Kalamu ya Salaam, Useni E. Perkins, Diane D. Turner, George Kent, Keorapetse Kegositse, Geneva Smitherman, Asa G. Hilliard, and Acklyn Lynch. Haki Madhubuti has been continuously published by TWP since its inception, and to date he has authored 26 books. TWP's bestsellers include Frances Cress Welsing's *The Isis Papers: The Keys to the Colors*; Chancellor Williams's *The Destruction of Black Civilization: Great Issues of a Race from 4500 BC to 2000 AD*; Amiri Baraka's *Wise, Why's, Y's*; Gwendolyn Brooks's *Blacks*; Derrick Bell's *Afrolantic Legacies*; and Haki R. Madhubuti's *Black Men: Obsolete, Single, Dangerous?* Each of these books has sold at least 50,000 copies.

The press's 37 years have not been easy. Black banks have failed to support Madhubuti's efforts, placing him on the brink of failure at least five times. Investing everything back into the press, Madhubuti has never accepted royalty payments from his books. His teaching assignments at universities, including Howard University and Chicago State University, have assisted him in keeping TWP afloat. Another important contributor was poet laureate of Illinois

Gwendolyn Brooks (1917–2000), who, at the height of her fame, generously switched to TWP from a mainstream publishing house. When she got to know Madhubuti, she became his godmother in the tradition of black female culture and humanity, standing in for Madhubuti's mother, who had been brutally killed when he was 16 years old. As his relationship with Brooks developed, his poetry and ideology inspired her race consciousness when writing poetry, and she entered his dream and labored with him to build the Third World Press. In the 1950s, Brooks became the first black to receive the Pulitzer prize when she won it for *Annie Allen*. In 2003, her final contribution to the arts, *In Montgomery: New and Selected Poems*, was published by TWP.

Third World Press followed the model of the defunct Broadside Press founded by Dudley Randall in 1965. Because of TWP's longevity, its achievement now stands as a possibility for other similar publishing houses. According to Paul Coates, creator of Black Classic Press in Baltimore, TWP "is without precedent and one of the most significant things to emerge out of the Black Arts Movement. For him [Madhubuti] to provide an outlet for black thinkers and a center where those black writers could come together—that has to be as significant as Motown." Sixty percent of TWP's audience is African American. The books are used as textbooks all over the country and purchased worldwide. TWP sells to independent bookstores, booksellers, chains, superstores, educational institutions, academic bookstores, and libraries.

Today, Third World Press employs 11 people. It is still located on Chicago's South Side, in the middle of a working-class neighborhood, but now it is housed in a million-dollar facility, an impressive complex that was once a Catholic school and church. Wooden bookcases line the hallways and walls and fill the libraries. In large and welcoming rooms, African American art, including paintings, hand-carved sculptures, and framed prints, celebrate Paul Robeson, John Coltrane, W.E.B. Du Bois, Gwendolyn Brooks, and Malcolm X. In a separate wing, Haki and Safisha Madhubuti founded two schools, New Concept Preschool in 1969 and the Betty Shabazz International Charter School in 2002, to teach children from an African-centered curriculum.

In her foreword to Madhubuti's book *GroundWork* (1996), Gwendolyn Brooks wrote, "More than any other Black poet who became influential in the late Sixties, he remained actively loyal to the richness of

his faith in and love for Black people.” Madhubuti’s Third World Press is a hallmark of the spirit of the 1960s black power and black arts movements, as well as a fulfillment of one of Malcolm X’s major dreams—that black people would build and control institutions within their own geographic space.

— Regina Jennings

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TWO CRADLE THEORY

The Two Cradle Theory was advanced by the Senegalese scholar Cheikh Anta Diop to account for African and European cultural characteristics. Diop’s knowledge of indigenous culture played an essential role in shaping his analytical acumen and inspiring his untiring devotion to investigative scholarship. His academic training in Western sociology raised questions in Diop’s mind about common assumptions regarding human advancement and defining social structures like the family, society, and state. These questions, coupled with Diop’s inability to accept the inferiorization of African intellectual and institutional development, drove Diop to create new theories and concepts. For Diop, culture naturally became the source for defining human realities. His Two Cradle Theory traces the cultural characteristics of African and European concepts, behaviors, values, and beliefs to their origins. The theory thus provides a model that situates Africans in the context of their own cultural paradigm for human development rather than the Western paradigm.

Rectifying scholastic attempts to debase Africa and her people, in his 1959 book *The Cultural Unity of Black Africa*, Diop challenged European evolutionists who argued that the transition of the world from matriarchy to patriarchy marked the beginning of



Dr. John Henrik Clarke, one of the Elder Scholars, speaking on the Two Cradle Theory at City College, New York

civilization. Instead, he theorizes two distinct cradles of civilization existing side by side, one matriarchal, one patriarchal. The southern cradle, Africa, where humanity began, produced matriarchal societies. Over time, the migration of peoples to the colder climates of the northern cradle, Europe, produced patriarchal societies. Diop attributes matriarchy to an agrarian lifestyle in a climate of abundance, and patriarchy to nomadic traditions arising from a harsh environment.

The cultural distinctions Diop draws between these cradles is based on the arrangement of female-male power relations. A matriarchy is nonhierarchical and expresses the complementary rather than competitive aspect of the female-male relationship, as well as its manifestation in all forms of institutional, spiritual, and social life. The union of the female and male in the production of children represents the smallest unit of the family and therefore society. Within the matriarchal family, the females and males seek reciprocal and harmonious relationships. From this family matrix a “pacifistic morality” arose, underpinning societal notions of “justice” and “democracy.” Most distinctive in this family model is the critical significance of the mother around whom the family gravitates, for she carries inside her the greatest wealth—future generations.

In contrast, patriarchy involves the domination of male over female. The northern cradle family produces hierarchical personal relations as a result of this domination. Thus, as Nah Dove wrote in her 1998 essay “African Womanism,” hierarchical notions of inferiority and superiority rationalize woman’s subservience to man. This unjust relationship is the core of conflict and aggression and is reflected in the greater society in

beliefs about race and human inequality, characteristics of xenophobia. Diop considers the structure of the patriarchal family diametrically opposed to that of the matriarchal family.

Through comparative analysis and research, contemporary cultural distinctions and similitude among peoples can be traced historically. In this pursuit, Diop revealed the African origin of ancient Egypt. Thus, for those of African descent globally, Diop left a living legacy of continuous discovery about the achievements of Africa. In light of this, the Two Cradle Theory is and has been pivotal to the development of culturally centered scholarship in the Afrocentric movement.

— Nah Dove

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U

UMFUNDALAI

Umfundalai, which means “essence” in Ebonics, is a polyrhythmic, multicultural African dance technique. It was developed in 1970 by Kariamuwelsh Asante, a dance scholar and professor of dance at Temple University and Swarthmore College. *Umfundalai* came out of Welsh Asante’s quest to create a method that functionally and aesthetically mirrors certain aspects of African life and experiences. The dance technique synthesizes movements and aesthetic characteristics from continental Africans and Africans in the diaspora; it was shaped by and responds to the cultures of the various African ethnic groups. *Umfundalai* is considered a pan-African dance technique because it draws from the various styles and movements from diasporic ethnic groups, including dance elements of African Americans. The pedagogy of the technique is twofold. First, it is centered on the belief that students of the dance must study the culture the dance comes from in order to fully understand and appreciate the dance. For example, when students learn the Nigerian Stomp within *Umfundalai*, they are also given the social, political, and historic background of the Nigerian people and their culture. Second, *Umfundalai* draws from the African cosmology the idea that universal perception should be the harmonious interaction between the seen and unseen. Thus the student receives a holistic, personal text for the movement.

Umfundalai functions as an African cultural village. Before the start of the class, the dancers must pay respect to the drummer and the instructor, as these

ideals have been incorporated into the dance. Thus *Umfundalai* resembles the traditional dances found on the African continent and in the Caribbean, but the movements within *Umfundalai* are not found in these areas. Welsh Asante developed the technique while traveling on the continent and in the islands, but *Umfundalai* is a synthesis of traditional dances with a contemporary flare. At the height of developing the dance technique, Welsh Asante was one of the leading members of the Afrocentric movement. *Umfundalai* was a way for her to create a pan-African technique that added to the body of knowledge within the Afrocentric paradigm. Through intense study of each ethnic group, Welsh Asante has ensured that each dance movement represents the historical, mythical, and cultural context of the group from which it was derived.

Umfundalai is performed in educational, recreational, and professional venues. The dance technique provides an introduction to African and African American culture and has enhanced the relevance of African dance techniques to other forms of dance, such as jazz, modern, and ballet. Students who are knowledgeable about African and African American culture have one advantage in studying *Umfundalai*; experienced dance students have a different advantage. However, *Umfundalai* is a dance technique that allows dancers to enter at their own level, and it can be taught to dancers at all levels at the same time. All students of *Umfundalai* learn to understand and appreciate its context of African values, spirituality, and philosophical reflection while using their bodies as vehicles of expression.

— Kristy Holmes

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UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

The Underground Railroad was a secret order of people, homes, and strategic routes, formed by a continuous network of sympathizers that ushered runaway slaves north toward Canada. This tunnel-like system was operated by three classes of people (both black and white) who vehemently opposed slavery for social, religious, and humanitarian reasons; they were the Presbyterians, Quakers (most of whom were abolitionists), and free people of color. These courageous men and women, with dissimilar incomes, educational backgrounds, and occupational means, worked in concert within the Underground Railroad to aid the fugitive slaves. United in purpose, they shared a profound commitment to the goals of the Underground Railroad and provided the resources necessary to ensure runaway slaves safe passage from slaveholder states to free northern territories. Compassionate but realistic, they knew that their antislavery sentiments and meeting attendance were not enough to help the slaves, and that there had to be a distinct plan of action requiring networks of secrecy and extreme caution. Ironically, it was the valor and commitment of those graced with freedom that gave hope and opportunity to those oppressed by slavery.

CONFRONTING THE DIFFICULTY

However, to comprehend the mission to aid fugitive slaves that was shared by participants in the Underground Railroad, as well as the true impact of their efforts, it is necessary to first know something of the realities of slavery. In slavery, the enslaved experience how degrading it is for one race to be bound in servitude to another. For enslaved Africans, there were

daily reminders that as property without legal rights, all the decisions about their lives were made by the slaveholders who owned them. Being auctioned away from family and friends at a human market for the master's profit was a constant threat. There was also the harsh reality that any act perceived by the slaveholder as disobedience brought physical abuse, public humiliation, and savage beatings. However, although the bodies of Africans were enslaved, their minds longed for freedom. The mission of the Underground Railroad was to help enslaved Africans escape the horrors of slavery into northern, free territories.

Below the Mason-Dixon line, enslavement of black men, women, and children for whites' social and economic comfort was a way of life, and any haphazard attempts to alter or restrict the slaveholders' system of labor was dangerous. All phases of the Underground Railroad were carefully planned, because it had to be a well concealed and protected network of people, codes, and places—without flaws. All messaging within the Underground Railroad had to be of a serious nature, whereby the escapees could travel north through a tunnel of trust and charity. Failure to follow instructions or any misinterpretation of directives along the way could mean hanging or some other harsh punishment for the recaptured as well as for those dedicated to helping.

In the colonies, land was plentiful and cheap, but labor was scarce. Consequently, slave labor was a vital element in agricultural development in Southern states, and the slaveholders spared no expense in the employment of bounty hunters, bloodhounds, and printed notices to hunt down runaways to maintain their economic development. However, the tenacious and inhumane treatment of the slaves by these slaveholders fueled the commitment of those sympathetic to the plight of enslaved Africans. Ironically, in the folklore of the time, the first use of the term *underground railroad* is attributed to a frustrated and embarrassed slaveholder whose slave, Tice Davids, vanished into thin air right under his master's nose; to save face, his master told everyone that Tice had escaped on a mysterious "underground railroad."

THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW

The enactment of the Fugitive Slave Law in 1793 gave slaveholders more authority to cross the Mason-Dixon line, into Northern states where slavery was illegal, to capture their runaway slaves. However, at about the

same time, the legislature in the Upper Province of Canada, Ontario, enacted laws to abolish slavery. The Lower Province, Quebec, followed suit in 1803. Before the Underground Railroad came into being, escape was likely to end in capture for those who dared to run away from the horrors of human bondage. After 1793, there was a destination called Canada where Africans would be free, outside of the United States. The awareness of Canada as a safe haven was knowledge that came to enslaved Africans as a direct result of communication from within the Underground Railroad.

The Ohio River was very important to the movement of runaway Africans, as it runs through Michigan to Detroit, where there were many Underground Railroad stations. Brave people of both races, often members of antislavery societies, were members of a secret society that provided information on checkpoints, signals, and confidants who responded to the phrase “friend of a friend” as they invited desperate and frightened people of color into their homes for shelter. Denied schooling, most of the enslaved Africans were unable to read or decipher written language, thus they traveled north blindly and had to be safeguarded within a system of coded signals (compatible with their way of life, social consciousness, and spirituality) and with maps marking natural elements such as trees, swamps, hills, and rivers as guides.

RIDING THE UNDERGROUND TRAIN

The word *railroad* in Underground Railroad refers not to masses of steel with locomotive power but to the courage and commitment of the tough-minded freedom fighters who helped the Africans escape. Gripped by fear and traveling under the cloak of darkness, the Africans who dared to risk their lives in search of freedom were hidden “underground” (i.e., away from danger) in everything from secret rooms to handmade coffins. The word *underground* in Underground Railroad thus referred to the secretive manner of travel as well as the coded communication in language, songs, and signals necessary for the survival of runaway slaves being chased by ruthless bounty hunters with bloodhounds. Railroad terminology was transformed into code words to encourage and relay messages to runaway travelers. A “station-master” was a keeper of safe house, “freedom train” and “gospel train” were code words for the Underground Railroad, and escaping slaves were called “baggage.”

Slaveholders were stymied by the system of coded places and people that shielded the Africans in secrecy from station to station. Runaway Africans often traveled on foot in waist-high swamps, over mountains, and through forests toward “the promised land.” Within the Underground Railroad, Africans’ survival en route to freedom came only through trust; the fugitives put their lives in the hands of complete strangers and complete strangers opened their homes to runaway Africans. The slaveholder or slave catcher in pursuit of runaway Africans became a common enemy of everyone connected to the Underground Railroad.

Providing aid to runaway Africans was morally but not politically correct in the South and in some areas of the North. The strong religious doctrine of the Quaker movement yielded many abolitionists who defied laws by opening their homes to runaway Africans. As early as the late 1700s, committed and strong-willed people opposed to the legal exploitation of one race by another worked diligently to aid the fugitive Africans. Levi Coffin, a Quaker from Cincinnati, was proud to be known as the “President of the Underground Railroad.”

However, the strengthening and refinement of the Underground Railroad and the migration north into Canada was accelerated by President Millard Fillmore’s signing of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, which meant that any African escaping slavery could be recaptured and taken back into slavery even if he or she had crossed into a nonslave territory. In documenting the hopelessness of the enslaved, the restrictive legislation increased the sympathy of the abolitionists. Slaves had always attempted to escape, but now the influx of those wanting freedom required a systematic approach, and the Underground Railroad was further developed to accommodate the thousands of Africans fleeing northward. Abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison used his newspaper, the *Liberator*, to denounce slavery and report on the effectiveness of the Underground Railroad after the passing of the Fugitive Slave Law. Canada was flooded with black people escaping lives of entrapment; the fugitive slaves often had left the South with only the clothes on their backs and without family or friends. Many Northern newspapers directly linked the enactment of the Fugitive Slave Act to the success of the Underground Railroad. In a *Liberator* report in October of 1852, Garrison boldly bragged about the competence of the Underground Railroad conductors.

As news of the Underground Railroad spread throughout the plantations, slaves became optimistic

about their chances of gaining freedom in Northern cities. Harriet Tubman, who was affectionately called “Moses,” was an escaped slave from Maryland who returned to the South to be a conductor and aid many others to cross the Mason-Dixon Line on the Underground Railroad.

— Gloria Grant Roberson

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UNIVERSAL NEGRO IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

The Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) was the largest pan-African mass movement of all time. It was founded in 1914 by Marcus Mosiah Garvey (1887–1940) in Kingston, Jamaica. Garvey, a printer, journalist, and political activist, had returned from 4 years of travel in Latin America and Europe determined to do something about the suffering he saw being endured by African people everywhere. Garvey saw the power of organization as the key to African advancement, so for the betterment of

Africans the world over he began the organization that he initially named the Universal Negro Improvement and Conservation Association and African Communities (Imperial) League and later became the UNIA.

PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the organization were subdivided by region into Jamaican and international sections. The objectives for Jamaica included providing educational facilities, rehabilitating “the fallen and the degraded (especially the criminal class),” stimulating industry and commerce, encouraging the “bonds of brotherhood” among all people, and giving assistance to the needy. In addition to aiding the needy and the “fallen” and encouraging education and commerce, the international objectives sought to “establish a Universal Confraternity among the race” and to “promote the spirit of race pride and love.” The organization hoped in this way to strengthen the existing independent African states (Ethiopia, Liberia, and Haiti).

The new organization busied itself feeding the hungry, visiting hospitals, and recruiting members. It also functioned much like a literary and debating society, with poetry and dramatic readings and elocution contests. Garvey was greatly influenced by Booker T. Washington, founder of the Tuskegee Institute (now Tuskegee University) in Alabama. He hoped in this early period to build an industrial school in Jamaica modeled after Tuskegee. In a letter of early 1916 to Robert R. Moton, principal of Tuskegee after Washington’s death, Garvey confided his plans to strengthen the organization by creating its own media.

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

Garvey journeyed to Harlem, New York, in March of 1916 in what was initially to be a fund-raising tour of a few months. He toured the United States and Canada, then returned to Harlem, where he began to attract a following to his street meetings. He soon rented a hall and moved indoors, and as his popularity grew, his followers prevailed upon him to remain in the United States. In 1918, the UNIA was incorporated in the United States. It developed with lightning speed thereafter. Its official organ, *The Negro World*, appeared later in 1918. A series of auxiliaries and subsidiary ventures followed it in quick succession, including the Negro Factories Corporation (1918) and

the Black Star Line Shipping Corporation (1919). The Negro Factories Corporation ran restaurants, laundries, a printing press, a hotel, and other businesses, and by the early 1920s it employed over 1,000 people in New York. The Black Star Line provided a hostel for seamen and a place where African international travelers could escape the Jim Crow restrictions that were considered normal on carriers run by whites. The auxiliaries included the Universal African Legions, a paramilitary group, and the Juveniles for young members of the organization. The Black Cross Nurses and the paramilitary Universal African Motor Corps were for women only.

The UNIA purchased its own meeting place, Liberty Hall, in Harlem in 1918. By 1919 its meetings were attracting crowds of as many as 5,000 people. It was now a major force to be reckoned with. The UNIA sent a delegate to the 1919 post-World War I Peace Conference in Paris. It began to expand overseas. By the time that Garvey convened his First International Convention of the Negro Peoples of the World in New York in August 1920, the UNIA was already the most talked about African organization in the world. It was reported that 25,000 people attended the opening ceremonies of the convention at Madison Square Garden. The convention parade was 10 miles long and serviced by several brass bands. The conclave opened on August 1 (Emancipation Day in the British empire) and continued in Liberty Hall for the rest of the month. Delegates attended from all over the African world, including South Africa, Nigeria, England, Panama, and many Caribbean territories. The major conference document, the Declaration of Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World, cataloged the racist practices facing Africans everywhere and demanded redress. It claimed for residents of the African diaspora a right to African citizenship. It demanded black history in schools, stipulated that an uppercase *N* be used in the word *Negro*, and swore to protect African womanhood. It declared red, black, and green the colors of the African race.

Requests to purchase shares in the Black Star Line and for UNIA charters around the globe initially came in faster than the fledgling UNIA civil service could process them. By the mid-1920s, the organization had peaked at a claimed 6 to 11 million members in over 40 countries. The UNIA had become the largest African American movement, the largest pan-Caribbean movement, and the largest pan-African movement on the African continent. There were over

700 branches in the United States alone, in 37 states and the District of Columbia. Of the 13 states with the largest number of branches, 10 were in the South, though New York City had the largest single membership, estimated at between 35,000 and 40,000. Louisiana had 74 branches, more than any other state and more than any country outside of the United States. Cuba, Panama, Trinidad, and Costa Rica, respectively, led the rest of the world in terms of number of branches. South Africa had more branches than any other country in Africa. There were branches in Australia, England, Venezuela, and Brazil. This spread was mostly the result of a mixture of paid organizers, word of mouth, *The Negro World* (which became the African world's most widely distributed newspaper), and Garvey's powerful oratory and writing.

The UNIA operated within a formal constitution. Branches (called "divisions") each had a full slate of officers, including a "lady president." More than one division in the same city or district was discouraged. Where more than one branch was allowed, however, the original was called a division and the second was referred to as a chapter. During the movement's heyday, the headquarters division was located in Harlem, New York. The UNIA attracted the broad masses of African people like no other organization. It simultaneously attracted a good number of professional people, including lawyers, preachers, social workers, writers, and academics. Its circle of influence was far wider than its own paid-up membership. In some countries, such as Dominica in the Caribbean, *The Negro World* was the largest newspaper in circulation.

The UNIA's popularity was facilitated by its ideology of African nationalism, built around the ideas of race first, self-reliance, and nationhood. *Race first* projected the beauty of African features. It also urged African people to write their own history, critique their own literature, control their own propaganda, and see their God in their own image and likeness. This prompted a significant UNIA encouragement of the arts, resulting in a major Garveyite input into the Harlem Renaissance. *Self-reliance* urged African people to "do for self" and was made manifest in the Black Star Line and the Negro Factories Corporation. *Nationhood* spoke to the need for political power at all levels.

The many major pan-African personalities who were influenced by the UNIA in their formative years include President Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana,

Governor General Nnamdi Azikiwe of Nigeria, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, and the 1920s leadership of the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa. The parents of Malcolm X were UNIA organizers. The Honorable Elijah Muhammad of the Nation of Islam was a member of the Detroit division. Practically the whole cohort of political and labor leaders in the Anglophone Caribbean of the 1930s had some association with the UNIA. Garvey sent three delegations to Liberia between 1920 and 1924, hoping to relocate his headquarters there. However, while the Liberian government initially encouraged the idea, in the end they reneged on their promises. This was motivated partly by fear of a potential political challenge from Garvey and by pressure from the imperialist governments of the United States, Great Britain, and France.

CHALLENGES

Garvey's success was viewed with alarm by the U.S. and European governments. The UNIA's core message of race first, self-reliance, and nationhood was seen as a threat to continued Euro-American subjugation of the African world. The movement was accordingly subjected to elaborate surveillance, infiltration, and repression. J. Edgar Hoover, later legendary head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, directed anti-UNIA activities from 1919 on. The U.S. authorities brought several court charges against Garvey, the most important being for alleged mail fraud in connection with the promotion and failure of the Black Star Line. In an effort to present his ideas to a wider public, Garvey published the seminal two volumes of *Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey* in 1923 and 1925. He was nevertheless convicted on the mail fraud charge in 1923 and spent 3 months in jail without bail. In 1925 Garvey lost his appeal and was imprisoned in Atlanta Penitentiary. He spent almost 3 years of his 5-year sentence there before President Calvin Coolidge, bowing to international pressure, commuted his sentence in 1927. He was deported to Jamaica immediately thereafter and arrived home to a hero's welcome in December of that year.

Several other important entities mobilized against the UNIA. The world communist movement fought the UNIA on ideological grounds (class first versus race first) and resented the UNIA's grip on African workers and peasants worldwide. The integrationist establishment also opposed the UNIA. In this effort,

they were led by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the flagship civil rights organization for black people that was led by Jewish and other white liberals. The NAACP resented Garvey's black nationalism and ability to mobilize larger financial resources than they could, and without recourse to the liberals' money. Judge Julian Mack, who imposed the maximum jail sentence and fine as well as court costs on Garvey, was a member of the NAACP. Garvey's organization also had internal problems, as it was discovered that several employees and agents of the UNIA opportunistically stole from the organization and helped sink the Black Star Line. In addition, private individuals and organizations were supplementing the government's anti-UNIA surveillance operations.

In 1929, after Garvey's deportation, the UNIA held a massive Sixth International Convention of the Negro Peoples of the World in Jamaica. Garvey's forced absence from his U.S. base led, however, to schisms within the movement. A UNIA Inc. operated out of the United States, and Garvey's faction, the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League of the World, which he founded in August of 1929, had its headquarters in Jamaica. The split was not an African American versus Caribbean rupture as it is usually depicted, since many of the U.S. based schismatics were themselves from the Caribbean. Garvey's faction maintained the allegiance of many U.S.-based Garveyites and it controlled *The Negro World*, which continued to carry Garvey's pronouncements.

A NEW BEGINNING FOR THE MOVEMENT

A seventh international convention was held in 1934 in Jamaica, and an eighth convention, the last in Garvey's lifetime, took place in 1938 in Toronto, Canada. Meanwhile, Garvey had relocated to London in 1935 in an attempt to return the movement to its former preeminence. His death in London in 1940 brought further disintegration to the association. The base of the movement shifted once again to the United States, where there were further splits. Groups loyal to Garvey often changed their names to Garvey Clubs and the like. The organization nevertheless remained an important factor in African American communities, though not the all-powerful force it once was. In 1945, the UNIA presented an important memorandum, drafted by Garvey's widow, Amy Jacques Garvey, to

the founding conference of the United Nations in San Francisco. In that year, the Jamaica UNIA was represented at the Fifth Pan-African Congress organized by George Padmore and Kwame Nkrumah in Manchester, England. By the 1950s, the African Nationalist Pioneer Movement of Carlos Cooks and the Universal African Nationalist Movement of Benjamin Gibbon were the most prominent of the UNIA offshoots. Both were based in Harlem. In 1971, surviving units of the UNIA had a unifying conference in Youngstown, Ohio, to return the various factions into one fold.

Several important new organizations were founded by former Garveyites after Garvey's death. Those in the United States include the Peace Movement of Ethiopia, the National Movement for the Establishment of a 49th State, and the Nation of Islam. In Jamaica, the Rastafarian movement was started by former Garveyites. Garveyites and the children of Garveyites have continued to lead political movements all over the pan-African world. These include Congresspeople Shirley Chisholm and Charles Diggs in the United States; Jomo Kenyatta, Kwame Nkrumah, and Nnamdi Azikiwe in Nigeria; and leaders of the African National Congress Youth Movement in South Africa.

The UNIA still enjoys a modest existence, with divisions in several North American cities and a few in Central America, Africa, and the Caribbean. Garvey's son, Marcus Garvey, Jr., became president general in 1992 at a convention in Washington, D.C.. He was re-elected for 4-year terms in Philadelphia in 1996 and Montreal in 2000. The success of the UNIA in its heyday in the 1920s is still unmatched in pan-African history.

— Tony Martin

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US

Since the 1960s, the organization Us has played a significant role in black political and intellectual culture. Founded in Los Angeles in 1965 by Maulana Karenga and a group of fellow activists, Us defined itself as a cultural and social change organization. Its name—Us, which simply means us African people—was chosen to stress its communitarian character and collective focus on African people. The organization emerged out of the flurry of community activities that followed the Watts revolt and participated in the general thrust of the times to mobilize, organize, and politically educate the black community.

THE NATURE OF THE ORGANIZATION

From the start, Us has seen itself as a revolutionary vanguard party striving to be not a mass organization but a highly disciplined, tightly organized, and philosophically grounded organization able to programmatically influence the black masses and the black liberation movement. Thus, it defined the three pillars of the group as the leadership, doctrine, and organization. The leadership is above all its founder and chair, Maulana Karenga, who at that time had left UCLA, where he had been a doctoral student, to participate in the movement, returning to school later to earn two doctorates. Its doctrine or philosophy, developed by Karenga, is *Kawaida*. Its organization is expressed

in the tight-knit, disciplined, and philosophically grounded relations and practice of its advocates or members. Kawaida is the ongoing synthesis of the best of African thought and practice, and thus has drawn on concepts and ideas from several major diasporic and continental African thinkers—Sekou Toure, Julius Nyerere, Malcolm X, Kwame Nkrumah, Marcus Garvey, Amilcar Cabral, Frantz Fanon, and others. These intensely studied and reshaped ideas include concepts of re-Africanization, self-defense, Ujamaa (cooperative economics and African socialism), cultural revolution, political education and organization of the masses, a vanguard revolutionary party, cultural nationalism, and pan-Africanism.

AN ORGANIC RELATIONSHIP TO COMMUNITY

Focusing first on the Los Angeles community, Us soon established a national agenda and practice that stressed cultural revolution, institution building, organization, service, and struggles. Thus, Us held political education classes, initiated several organizing projects, and worked with various educational, welfare, economic and political groups in black united-front efforts to improve education, end police abuse, build cooperative economic projects, increase political participation, build affordable housing, and provide quality health care.

The group's first national initiative was coplanning and cohosting the three National Black Power Conferences in 1966, 1967, and 1968. Karenga became the Black Power Conference movement's chief theorist, introducing his philosophy Kawaida in the process. Us, at its inception, had seen itself as heir to the legacy of Malcolm X and had early on incorporated his thinking in Kawaida. This is reflected in the Kawaida definition of the black power movement as a collective struggle of black people to achieve and affirm three things: self-determination, self-respect, and self-defense. Moreover, Karenga introduced at the first conference the concept of *operational unity*—that is, unity in diversity, unity without conformity—which he understood as an essential idea and call in Malcolm's classic speech "Message to the Grassroots."

OPERATIONAL UNITY

Based on this principle of operational unity, Us established black united fronts in several cities—Los

Angeles, San Diego, Newark, and Dayton. Embracing Malcolm X's Bandung model, with its stress on the unity and common struggles of people of color, Us began to build "third world" (i.e., people of color) alliances and to work with groups such as the Brown Berets, the Crusade for Justice, and Alianza Federal de Pueblos Libres, as well as to support the organizing efforts and strikes of the United Farm Workers. In 1967 in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Us—along with the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee and the Black Panther Party of Northern California—signed a peace treaty titled Treaty of Peace, Harmony and Mutual Assistance with the Alianza Federal de Pueblos Libres led by Reies Tijerina, the Crusade for Justice led by Rudolfo Corky Gonzales, and the Hopi Nation represented by the spiritual leader Thomas Banyaca. Us also trained black and brown organizers at the Social Action Training Center in Los Angeles, taught Spanish classes, and established an Olmec Club dedicated to researching and building on African and Mexican links using Olmec civilization as a point of departure.

Us also organized one of the most important youth organizations in the 1960s, the *Simba Wachanga* (Swahili for the "young lions"), which became a model for youth groups and rites of passage programs across the country. Active on campuses and in the community, the Simba organized black student unions in high schools and colleges, provided community service, and served as a defense organization for the community. Following Malcolm X, and also influenced by Robert Williams and Frantz Fanon, Us affirmed the right to self-defense and trained in self-defense measures. Us also helped form the Community Alert Patrol, which monitored police activity as early as 1965. Although Us asserted the right to self-defense, like other radical and progressive organizations of the time, it resisted the Vietnam War and the draft. Like Malcolm X, Us argued that blacks should not participate in colonial and imperialist wars, especially against other people of color who had done no injury to black people, and that it was irrational and unethical to fight in the interest of one's oppressor.

THE SINGULARITY OF CULTURE

Building on the stress on culture, cultural struggle, and cultural revolution—advocated by Toure in *Toward Full Reafricanization*, Fanon in *Wretched of the Earth*, and later Cabral in *Return to the Source*—and the

indispensability of the education of the masses, Us defined itself as a cultural nationalist organization and began a series of educational projects. Thus, in addition to its own educational projects, Us played an important role in the founding and building of the Black Studies movement, the black student movement, and the black independent school movement. Also in 1965, Us established its own model of an independent school, the School of Afro-American Culture, which is still operative as the Kawaida School of African American Culture. Us also established the African American Cultural Center in 1965, to hold political and cultural education classes, seminars, institutes, and other forums and training sessions, as well as to provide creative performances. Furthermore, Us significantly influenced the black arts movement by providing it with a philosophical grounding in Kawaida, participating in the defining of the black aesthetic of the 1960s and influencing major figures in the black arts movement such as Amiri Baraka, Larry Neal, Haki Madhubuti, Val Gray Ward, and others.

Like many other organizations of the time, including the Nation of Islam, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Black Panther Party, the Republic of New Africa, and the Revolutionary Action Movement, Us experienced government harassment and suppression from the FBI's Covert Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO) in collaboration with local police. The COINTELPRO was designed to disrupt, discredit, destroy, and otherwise neutralize all real and potential black nationalist and activist leadership and leadership groups. This led to many of Us's members being imprisoned on trumped up charges and driven underground and into exile in other countries. These activities also fostered group rivalry and antagonism among the groups, especially between Us and the Black Panther Party. As part of the COINTELPRO, agents penetrated both groups and provoked deadly confrontation between the two groups, as reported in the Church Senate Report and major articles on the subject in the *Los Angeles Times*.

As the men of Us were imprisoned and forced underground and into exile, an increased number of women of Us emerged in leadership roles and, like other organizations, Us engaged in a sustained dialogue and transformation concerning male-female relations. Women created a self-defense unit (the Matamba) as a counterpart and ally of the Simba, and increased their roles as administrators and organizational representatives. This dialogue and transformation were first

chronicled in Us's newspaper, *Harambee*, in an article by the women of Us titled "View from the Woman's Side of the Circle." It established the concept and practice of equal partnership in love, work, and struggle, using the principles of *Ujima* (collective work and responsibility) and complementarity (a necessary interrelationship of mutual completion and fulfillment) as grounds for this. This internal dialogue is further developed and appears in the writings of Maulana Karenga in the *Black Scholar* in the early 1970s, especially in his article "Towards a Greater Togetherness in Love and Struggle." In these articles, Karenga sums up the conclusions and lessons of this exchange between men and women of Us and reaffirms the indispensability of equality, mutual respect, and shared responsibility in love and struggle. In the early 1970s, Us went underground, and in the mid-1970s, it emerged publicly first as the New African American Movement (NAAM) and then as the Kawaida Groundwork Committee. It reinstated its forum series, worked with other groups in political projects, and published literature reflecting its reassessment and development. It also made international trips to Nigeria to the pan-African gathering the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC) and to Peoples Republic of China, building relationships and further defining and developing its positions in critical issues. Karenga served as chair of the African American delegation to FESTAC and as spokesman for the Independent Black Schools Education Tour to China. His book *Essays on Struggle: Position and analysis* and his articles in the nationalist periodicals *Black News*, *Nkombo*, *Black Books Bulletin*, and the *Black Scholar* and the left periodical *In These Times* presented and developed new positions, as well as reaffirming the fundamental principles and positions of Kawaida philosophy.

POLITICAL EDUCATION

In the 1980s, Us began to use its name again and returned fully to its mobilizing, organizing, and political education projects. Especially important is its crucial role on the national level in the founding of the National Black United Front, the Association for the Study of Classical African Civilizations, and the Black Leadership Retreat group. Internationally, Karenga has led an Us delegation to Cuba in an educational exchange on race relations, African American life and struggle, and Us's role in the black liberation

movement; to the International Festival of Pan-African Arts in Dakar, Senegal; and to London to give an inaugural lecture to initiate Black History Month in England. In the 1990s, Us played a key role on the Million Man March/Day of Absence Organizing Committee, and Maulana Karenga wrote the *Million Man March/Day of Absence Mission Statement*, which reflected the collective thinking of the committee as well as Kawaida philosophy.

Also important was Us's founding of its Kawaida Institute of Pan-African Studies (KIPAS) in the late 1970s. KIPAS does research, publishes literature, and holds forums and conferences. Moreover, it holds a summer institute in leadership, social theory, and practice that draws a wide range of participants such as teachers, college students, community activists, and various kinds of professionals from around the country who come to learn Kawaida philosophy and Afrocentric ways of engaging their studies and practice. In addition to teaching Kawaida philosophy, the institute also provides African-centered analysis of selected current and past literature on black people, current event analysis, issue analysis, and leadership training.

Maulana Karenga and Us are most well known for their work in cultural revolution and cultural recovery, as expressed in the development of Kawaida philosophy, the pan-African holiday *Kwanzaa*, and the *Nguzo Saba* (Seven Principles). Created by Karenga in 1966, *Kwanzaa* is a pan-African celebration of family, community, and culture and seeks to introduce and reinforce communitarian African views and values that represent the best of what it means to be African and human in the fullest sense. At the heart of the celebration of this 7-day holiday (December 26–January 1) are the *Nguzo Saba* (Seven Principles). These principles in Swahili are *Umoja* (Unity), *Kujichagulia* (Self-Determination), *Ujima* (Collective Work and Responsibility), *Ujamaa* (Cooperative Economics), *Nia* (Purpose), *Kuumba* (Creativity), and *Imani* (Faith). Put forth by Us as a communitarian African value system necessary to build and strengthen community and aid in the black freedom struggle, the *Nguzo Saba* have become a central pillar in numerous organizations and families throughout the world African community. Since their introduction in 1965, the *Nguzo Saba* have been used as essential cultural grounding and value orientation in many independent schools, rites of passage programs, economic cooperatives, black student unions, school retention

programs, and other community and professional organizations and projects. And as the core values of *Kwanzaa*, they are celebrated with *Kwanzaa* throughout the world African community.

Us currently continues its organizing efforts in building the National Association of Kawaida Organizations (NAKO) and the *Nguzo Saba* Association out of numerous organizations, institutions, and groups that use Kawaida and the *Nguzo Saba* in their value orientation, philosophy, and practice. Us is also working in alliances and coalitions with other progressive groups within the community and larger society, such as the International Black Coalition for Peace and Justice (IBCPJ), of which Us is a founding organization. Moreover, Us continues its pan-African activities by developing a support committee for Haiti and the Committee for Equitable and Sustainable Development in Africa, holding an annual African Liberation Day rally, and participating in other joint activities with continental and diasporic groups. Us also works in the reparations movement as a member of the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (N'COBRA), provides literature and assistance to prisoners, and maintains the African American Cultural Center and the Kawaida School of African American Culture, *Majando* (rites of passage programs for boys and girls), the *Timbuktu Book Circle*, the *Taifa Dance Troupe*, the *Senut Sisterhood of African Women*, and the *Senu Brotherhood of African Men*.

— Maulana Karenga

See also Kawaida; *Nguzo Saba*

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U.S. CONSTITUTION, THIRTEENTH AMENDMENT

Ratified December 18, 1865, the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolished slavery in all areas of the United States, freeing 4 million Africans from hundreds of years of bondage. The amendment had initially failed to receive the two-thirds vote necessary in the House of Representatives, but it finally passed in February of 1865, 2 months before the official end of the Civil War in April.

The passage of the amendment put to rest debates within the Union over the validity of President Abraham Lincoln's 1863 Emancipation Proclamation. Lincoln's proclamation had made ending slavery an explicit aim of the Union's fight in the Civil War, though it left slavery in place in a number of loyalist states and territories fighting on the Union's side, as well as in parts of the South under Union control. Some questioned whether such a declaration could be made by the president or even the Congress, if either chose to do so. Thus abolitionists sought a constitutional amendment. Many backers of the amendment, however, were less concerned with the savagery of the "peculiar institution" of slavery than with removing it from the political discussion in the country.

After the ratification of the amendment, most newly freed Africans worked under conditions not unlike those that existed before the Civil War. Andrew Johnson, who took over as president after Lincoln's assassination, gave priority to the Union's political unification with the South over the plight of African Americans. Assuaging Southern whites, Johnson appointed proslavery governors to a number of Southern states. These governors oversaw the passage of *black codes*, which were laws meant to ensure the de facto enslavement of African Americans. One such law passed in Louisiana, for example, stipulated that adult men and women failing to "furnish themselves with a comfortable home and visible means of support"—an unlikely prospect for recently freed Africans—were subject to arrest. These prisoners were then hired out to work on plantations in order to pay their fines. Other laws forbade the owning or renting of property by African Americans, and many codes sanctioned the whipping of African American workers by their white employers. Had pioneers like Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, and Frederick



Sojourner Truth, abolitionist and philosopher

Douglass been asked to comment on this situation, they could only have expressed dismay at the new situation of blacks.

Over time, many of the more egregious aspects of the black codes were repealed under pressure from the Congress. Nevertheless, legal discrimination continued. When the Supreme Court first visited the issue of the Thirteenth Amendment and the black codes in 1883, it refused to intervene. As the Court noted, "it would be running the slavery argument into the ground to make it apply to every act of discrimination which a person may see fit to make."

— *Peter Gratton*

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U.S. CONSTITUTION, FOURTEENTH AMENDMENT

CONTEXT

The Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution was one of the most contested pieces of legislation ever passed by the United States Congress. It represented a challenge to the philosophy responsible for the idea that Africans were not human. The amendment eventually passed by both houses on June 13, 1866.

What should have been a simple idea became one of the most fractious in the legislative chambers. Africans were to be accepted as citizens inasmuch as they were born in the United States. The amendment sought to grant citizenship and protection to the Africans who had been freed from bondage. States were prohibited from denying or abridging the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States. There had been discussion about giving Africans limited rights, certainly not the same rights as whites. The southern whites sought every opportunity to deprive the African of all privileges of life, liberty, and property, often without due process of law. Now the law would dictate that the African had to have the same rights as anyone else within the jurisdiction of the state.

The majority of the southern states refused to ratify the law. It took the intervention of men such as Thaddeus Stevens, Charles Sumner, Benjamin Wade, Henry Winter Davies, and Benjamin Butler, called Radical Republicans, to force the passing of additional legislation that would impose the measures on the states in the former Confederacy. The result was the 1867 Reconstruction Act that divided the South into five military districts controlled by martial law from Washington. Thus universal manhood suffrage was established, and the new constitutions in the old Confederacy had to honor the rights of Africans to be citizens.

Because many whites refused to accept this law, the federal government had to step in and protect the African's right to citizenship and to due process.

Ratification of the document was in doubt for a considerable period of time, but the Amendment was eventually ratified by the states July 28, 1868. Old Confederate states were required to ratify it in order to be readmitted into the Union. The Supreme Court's ruling in the 1873 Slaughterhouse cases weakened the amendment, taking federal control away from state

police and giving states the right to control their own police. This was to be a major blow to the equal protection clause.

The Five Sections of the Amendment are as follows:

Section 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

Section 2. Representatives shall be apportioned among the several states according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each state, excluding Indians not taxed. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of electors for President and Vice President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the executive and judicial officers of a state, or the members of the legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such state, being twenty-one years of age, and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion, or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such state.

Section 3. No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any state, who, having previously taken an oath, as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any state legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any state, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof. But Congress may by a vote of two-thirds of each House, remove such disability.

Section 4. The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts

incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned. But neither the United States nor any state shall assume or pay any debt or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or any claim for the loss or emancipation of any slave; but all such debts, obligations and claims shall be held illegal and void.

Section 5. The Congress shall have power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

— *Molefi Kete Asante*

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U.S. CONSTITUTION, FIFTEENTH AMENDMENT

Section 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

Section 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

The Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified in 1870. This amendment prohibits federal or state governments from infringing on a

citizen's right to vote based on "race, color, or previous condition of servitude." This amendment symbolized the beginning of a new era for Africans in America through suffrage for every African American male. However, this was the last of three so-called Reconstruction amendments that were ratified during the post-Civil War era.

The Fifteenth Amendment was ratified by the federal government to legislate qualifications for voting, a right formerly left up to each state. However, for almost a century this amendment had a small impact in the country as a whole, and its most limited effect in the South, where a number of racist methods—terrorism, the poll tax, and the grandfather clause—were still employed to keep blacks from voting.

In the era after the Civil War (1866–1891), many blacks were still treated as less than human. Where the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments failed to assure equal protection under the law, federal legislation was ratified to assure this protection. However, the Fifteenth Amendment was used by some politicians as a Trojan horse in order to win favoritism from soon-to-be black voters. Maryland is a good example of a state where this was the case, where there were heated party tensions over whether or not to ratify or deny the application of the Fifteenth Amendment in the state.

The political machines of the Democratic and Republican parties dominated the agenda for the Fifteenth Amendment in the state of Maryland. These parties' political motivations obscured the goals and aims of the Fifteenth Amendment. Power-hungry Republicans worked against Democrats in the state to assure the successful ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment, so that almost 40,000 blacks in the state would be able to vote for them. The offer for black voter suffrage did not come without a price. In return for black suffrage, blacks were lured into voting for the Maryland state political machine, which still seemed to support old Southern unionist hegemony.

African American men in Maryland celebrated their new civil rights and the opportunity to vote for the first time. Blacks celebrated from Boston to Chicago, but it was recorded in the May 19, 1870 issue of the *Baltimore Sun* newspaper that the celebration in Baltimore was by far the largest, with over 22,000 people participating. Baltimore was chosen as the site of this celebration for several reasons, the most important being that it was the home state of

some of the most popular activists and political figures of that time. Hugh Lennox Bond, Senator John Creswell, and Governor Oden Bowie were a few of Maryland's most outspoken political figures during this Reconstruction and post-Civil War era. Frederick Douglass, Martin Delany, and Hiram Revels were all prominent blacks who established a legacy in Baltimore following the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment in the state of Maryland.

— York Williams

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V

VESEY'S CONSPIRACY

In 1822, Denmark Vesey led an insurrection against the slaveholders of Charleston, South Carolina. Vesey was an educated man from Saint Domingue, and one of the advantages that he had over other Africans was that he spoke two European languages, French and English.

When Vesey came to Charleston with his owner, he came with ideas of freedom. He did not believe that he could remain a slave, and in 1800 he purchased himself from his owner with money that he had won in a lottery. He became a carpenter, and in the process of establishing a place for himself in society, he amassed a fortune that included property worth more than \$8,000.

Having purchased his own freedom, Vesey wanted to also free his brothers and sisters from bondage. So in the rarefied and free air of the African community of Charleston, Vesey met with other free Africans to plot an assault on racism and slavery. They met in a church at Hampstead, a suburb of Charleston, to talk and to strategize.

They were committed to debating the Missouri Compromise and any other issue in the national discussion dealing with Africans. At the meetings, they passed information about fighting for liberty, talked openly about liberation in Saint Domingue, and shared their anger at the system of enslavement in the South. Then, in December of 1821, they began to recruit blacks from areas as far as 80 miles from Charleston. Vesey's people drew up a list of thousands of recruits who were willing to oppose the institution of slavery. This was a massive movement in the heart

of the slaving South. What was as amazing about Vesey's group was that they collected money to purchase guns, recruited blacksmiths and a priest who was deeply involved in the African traditions, and schemed to take over the arsenal in the city. The uprising was planned for July of 1822, when most of the whites would be taking their vacations.

Vesey's plot is considered the best planned rebellion and attack on enslavement in the history of the United States. But an enslaved African heard about the plot and went and told his owner. The whites were stunned that blacks had made such extensive plans to attack them and immediately went and arrested the leaders, including Denmark Vesey, Peter Poyas, Ned Bennett, Rolla Bennett, Balleau Bennett, Gullah Jack, the priest, and 35 others. They were all hanged, and 43 others were banished. In the end, Denmark Vesey and his cohorts had demonstrated that the system of enslavement could be challenged by Africans. Unfortunately for the strategists, their plot had been reported to the whites by an enslaved African whose freedom they would have claimed.

— *Molefi Kete Asante*

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VODU

Vodu (also spelled vodoun, voodoo, voodoo, vodou, vodun, vaudoo, vaudou) is a powerful religion and, more important, a way of life driven by a quest for cosmic harmony and oneness with God.

ORIGINS OF VODU

Vodu originated in Africa, where it is still practiced, and in particular in Benin, where it is practiced in its original form. Vodu, however, crossed the African (Atlantic) Ocean during the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, at the time of the European-organized deportation of millions of Africans to different parts of the Americas as part of the Triangular Trade.

Vodu is commonly associated with Haiti, where it is the religion of the vast majority of the people. While it is primarily indebted to the Fon belief system, Vodu in Haiti also integrated elements from other African people, such as the Yoruba (Nago), Ibo, Congo, Hausa, Caplaou, Mandigo, Mondong, and many others. It also includes some aspects of the religion of the Arawaks (the indigenous inhabitants of Haiti), of Freemasonry, and of Catholicism. The influence of the latter primarily takes the form of dates of celebration, pictures of saints, prayers, and so on. However, it must be recognized that those saints and prayers are made to participate in a liturgy which is, at its core, African, not Catholic. The presence of Catholic symbols in Vodu in Haiti is attributable to the harassment to which African people were subjected by Europeans during (and even after) slavery while practicing religion; hence, the need to hide Vodu behind European (i.e., “acceptable”) symbols.

VODU PHILOSOPHY

Vodu is a manifestation of the African spiritual system. As such, it rests on the very ancient African assumption that the whole cosmos is animated by a vital force of divine origin that permeates all that exists—human beings, animals, plants, minerals, and objects, as well as phenomena. As a result, Africans in general, and Vodouists in particular, think of themselves not as separated or distinct from the cosmos but as an intricate part of a whole that is greater than themselves. Similarly, Vodou metaphysics does not

make any strict distinction between life and death: Indeed, life is infinite by virtue of the supreme cosmic force, and death is simply another mode of life. Thus, and quite consistently, there is also no waterproof separation between the world of the spirits and the world of the living. The two worlds are easily accessible to each other via the manipulation of the cosmic energy.

The Loas

Voduists believe that the spiritual world is densely populated. In addition to restless and purely malevolent spirits, one finds two major categories of spirits: the living-dead and, above them, the Loas. Although the living-dead play an important role in the lives of Vodouists, the Loas are nonetheless the most important spiritual entities in the world of Vodou. Although some of them may be of human origin, the Loas, it is said, were created by the supreme God, Gran-Mèt, in order to manage human affairs. Each Loa is associated with a particular aspect of life, for which it has become a metaphor. As such, Loas are neither good nor bad. However, they can be called upon by human beings for good deeds, such as restoring balance and harmony in one’s life; or bad deeds, such as hurting another unprotected human being. Vodouists associate the latter not with Vodou but with sorcery, the two being distinct. There is a strong ethical dimension to Vodou that is antithetical to doing evil. Those who engage in reprehensible actions must live with their “konsyans” (i.e., conscience) and face the consequences of their immoral choices. There are literally hundreds of Loas, usually distributed among three major pantheons: the Rada (Fon) pantheon, the Petro (Creole) pantheon, and the Congo pantheon. What distinguishes those pantheons, in addition to their geographical origin, is the nature of the energy they summon, the Rada energy being “cool,” and the Petro and Congo energy being “hot.” Thus, depending on the nature of the call that was placed, the same Loa may come as a Rada Loa (i.e., as a rather cool type of energy) or as a Petro Loa (i.e., as a rather hot type of energy). This is the distinction, for example, between Ezili Freda and her Petro correspondence, Ezili Zyéwouj (Red Eyes). On the other hand, some Loas are not so versatile and belong exclusively to the hot energy category. These are the Loas usually called upon by those involved in mischief. Loas respond by mounting or possessing particular people, through

whom they communicate with the living. While being mounted by a Loa, one may find oneself capable of acts that defy common physical laws, such as climbing a tree feet up or walking on fire or glass without incurring any injury. Generally speaking, the Rada pantheon is the one most closely associated with Vodou. Its main actors are Loas such as Papa Legba, the one who opens the doors to the spiritual world, and without whose permission no ceremony can take place; Papa Loko, the “Father” of the Loas, guardian of the trees; the Marassa, the sacred twins; Papa Dambala, the sacred snake, symbol of life; Metrès Ezili, the Loa of reproduction and sexuality; Papa Ogu, the Loa of fire, thunder, and war; Papa Agwe and La Sirène, masters of the ocean; and others. The words Papa (“Father”) and Metrès (“Mistress”) are terms of respect and endearment.

VODU PRIESTS AND PRIESTESSES: HOUNGANS AND MAMBOS ASSONGWE

Houngans and Mambos Assongwe are also called Papa and Manman (“Mother”), for they occupy the highest level in the Vodou religious hierarchy (as far as human beings are concerned) and, as such, enjoy the greatest respect among Vodou followers. Indeed, only they have gone before Papa Loko to be consecrated by him as dignitaries of the Vodou religion. From Papa Loko, Mambos and Houngans Assongwe received their *asson*, a calabash covered with special beads, and to which a bell has been tied. However, more important, the *asson* has been charged with a particular energy and power, the power to summon and direct the Loas. Only to Houngans and Mambos Assongwe have certain secrets been revealed. They also each received a spiritual name, which allows them to be identified by other priests and priestesses. There are two common ways through which one becomes a Houngan or Mambo Assongwe. One may be called by the Loas themselves to serve them, or one may inherit from one’s family line, especially from one’s mother or father, the charge of the priesthood. It is often after a period of great difficulty, such as a recurrent illness, a series of misfortunes, loss of loved ones, that one becomes aware of having been chosen by the Loas. To be a Houngan or Mambo Assongwe means that one has accepted the responsibility of serving the Loas in order to serve the people. While one may refuse to respond to the calling, such a decision always entails

serious personal risks, such as sickness, repeated misfortunes, and even death.

The main functions and responsibilities of a Mambo and Houngan Assongwe are therefore primarily (but not exclusively) spiritual. Mambos and Houngans Assongwe are expected to be capable of performing operations that will meet the spiritual needs of the people, such as the diagnosis of the precise nature of an ill condition and the prescription of a cure. The diagnosis usually takes place through divination, with the priestess or priest making contact with the Loa with whom she or he “works” and asking for information about the condition of the person who came for consultation. If the problem is spiritual, then a remedy will also be suggested at that time. It could take the form of a sacrifice, a bath, a protection with a talisman, prayers, observation of certain taboos, or something else. A person may also be recommended to “marry” a particular Loa for protection; this marriage takes place in an elaborate ceremony similar to a wedding between two human beings. In any case, the performance of rituals will then be necessary.

VODU RITUALS

Vodou rituals, whose main goal is to restore or keep in balance the web of energies around a person, are very numerous and often quite complex. However, they seem always to be based on the principle of the existence of cosmic correspondences between the physical and the spiritual worlds. Thus, each form of spiritual energy (in this case, the Loas) is associated with specific aspects of the physical realm, such as foods, drinks, music, drawings (also called *vèvè*), colors, days, trees, scents, and dances. The activation of those physical aspects, the Vodouists believe, will greatly facilitate the coming forth of a particular spiritual energy and its response to their call for help and protection. Papa Ogu’s day, for example, is Wednesday; his favorite drink is rum, his color is red, his favorite food is pork, and he likes to have certain songs sung to him. Papa Dambala’s day, on the other hand, is Thursday and his color white; he likes white *siròp d’orgeat* and enjoys raw eggs. He too has songs that he particularly likes. Similarly, each Loa has his or her own *vèvè*, a drawing, often a very complex one, that is made on the ground, usually with cornmeal or flour. The *vèvè* always include symbols associated

with the Loa in question. Thus, the main element of Ezili Fréda's vèvè is a heart, while in Dambala's vèvè, the main element is a snake. Drumming also plays a role of paramount importance in Vodou ceremonies. Indeed, drums are held sacred since they are believed to host spirits. Rada ceremonies involve three drums—the largest one is called *Manman*; the medium one is *Segon*; and the smallest one is *Boula*. Petro and Congo ceremonies, on the other hand, require two drums.

Another critical set of rituals performed by Houngan and Mambo Assongwe are those associated with the initiation into Vodou. In fact, so important and complex are those rituals that they require the presence of several Houngans and Mambos Assongwe. The Vodou initiation is a very stringent process referred to as *kouche kanzo*. This process follows closely the African pattern of separation, location in a sacred place, symbolic death, testing, revelation, resurrection, and reincorporation of the initiate into the larger community after several days of strict isolation from impure persons, that is, noninitiates. Aside from Houngans and Mambos, *Hounsis* make up the largest portion of Vodou initiates. They have undergone the first level of the *kouche kanzo* initiation and thus may assist a Houngan or Mambo during ceremonies and diverse rituals.

THE VODU TEMPLE

Rituals usually take place within the confines of a Vodou temple, a *houmfort*. A *houmfort* is made up of several parts. The first one, the *péristyle*, is located at the entrance of the *houmfort*. Its size may vary from *houmfort* to *houmfort*, but it is usually a rather large, semi-open space where ceremonies take place. It is typically decorated with mystic paintings on the walls and colorful decorations hanging from the ceiling. The most important part of the *péristyle*, however, is the *potomitan*, a pillar located in the center, usually decorated with a beautiful snake, and connecting the ground to the ceiling. The Loas are believed to ascend or descend through the *potomitan*, which is therefore seen as a magical passage. Given this, the *potomitan* plays a critical role during Vodou ceremonies. In addition to the *péristyle*, the *houmfort* also includes a number of small rooms, which are sanctuaries dedicated to the Loas honored in that particular *houmfort*. One of the rooms, the *djèvo*, which represents symbolic death, is where new initiates are secluded for

several days. It is also where the *pé*, the Vodou shrine, is located. Important items of the Vodou cult are placed on the *pé*, such as the *colliers* (sacred necklaces), flags, *govi* (jars that contain spiritual elements), books, and so on.

In addition to being places where spiritual ceremonies are held, *houmforts* also function as communes. Indeed, attached to the Mambo or Houngan are a number of persons, called *Hounsis*, who were initiated by her or him. They owe respect and devotion to their Papa or Manman. They usually spend a significant amount of time at the *houmfort*, may even sleep there at times, and certainly must come when called for help, especially during ceremonies when dancers and singers are needed. In return for the loyalty of their initiates, the Mambo or Houngan is ultimately responsible for the needs of the *Hounsis* and must feed them and help pay their hospital bills or children's school tuition if necessary. In other words, the *houmfort* is an important place of comfort and support for all attached to it.

VODU IN HAITIAN HISTORY

Since the very beginning of the French occupation of Haiti, Vodou was seen with great suspicion and therefore vilified by the French. Thus the French made every attempt to eradicate Vodou by subjecting Vodou practitioners to the harshest treatments, such as hanging, flogging, imprisonment, and live skinning, and by destroying Vodou-related objects, particularly drums. This harassment went on for 300 years. However, it failed to suppress Vodou, which remained very much alive. In fact, it is Vodou, it is said, that successfully protected and guided the African struggle for freedom and independence. The most prestigious leaders of the Haitian War, Boukman, Dessalines, Makandal, Christophe, and Toussaint L'Ouverture, to cite only a few, were all involved in Vodou. Makandal and Boukman were Houngans, while Dessalines and Toussaint served Papa Ogu-Fè. However, while what the Europeans feared—that Vodou had the power to undermine their authority in Haiti—had come true, this did not necessarily mean an end to the war against Vodou. Indeed, several successive Haitian presidents, often highly encouraged and assisted by the Vatican, attempted to annihilate Vodou, thus causing the systematic destruction of many important items associated with Vodou, such as drums, clothes, *assons*, flags,

and so on. Today, however, Vodou is still widely practiced by a great number of Haitians. In addition, efforts are underway, on the part of several Houngans and Mambos throughout the country, to codify Vodou and make it the official religion of Haiti.

— *Ama Mazama*

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W

WATTS PROPHETS

The Watts Prophets were a group of inspired poets who were products of the accumulated economic, social, and political conditions of a community in South Central Los Angeles. Otis O'Solomon, Anthony "Amde" Hamilton, and Richard Dedeaux, long-time area residents and community activists, were the original soul of the Watts Prophets. The poetic works of these men, and of other cultural activist-artists across the nation in the 1960s, were the roots of many expressions that are now part of our spoken language and, more important, the precursor of much of the intellectual expansion of African thought within the academy around African agency. *African agency*, as it is expressed in the framework of Africology, is the study of African phenomena through the eyes of Africans, who are living the experience with specific ideas regarding the interpretation of that experience.

Prior to the 1960s, many African Americans did not see themselves as the center of their artistic and cultural experience. They were still performing for white audiences and for white interests, although they would write about African American conditions. The Watts Prophets changed this reality: Their words, music, and performances engaged audiences in a new aesthetic of expression. The Watts Prophets presented poetry as an expression of African call-and-response. The call was in the deliberate gestures, poses, eye contact, and rhythmic movement that characterized the performances, and the response was the audience's engagement in those performances. This multidimensional

construction of a social dynamic aimed at creating understanding through words and rhythms inspires an African method of observing data and methodology for interpreting the data. This particular kind of data relocates the African personality at the center of shaping the discourse around African agency.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RELEVANCE

The pro-black stance expressed by the trio in the 1960s articulated the connection between the pressing macrosocial realities of racism, poverty, and oppression that the poor and working-class black community in South Central Los Angeles experienced in their everyday lives and the global context of that reality. This articulation is apparent in the title and substance of their first album, *Rappin' Black in a White World*. Today that expression, though not encased in the symbolic ideals of the black power movement, still reveals the pressing issues for the poor and working-class black community. The focus today is more often at the microsocal levels, speaking to such issues as illiteracy, child abuse, neglect, rejection, HIV/AIDS, and suicide. The challenges facing the black community are the subject of the Watts Prophets' 1997 CD, *When the 90's Came*, in which their words reflect the fire, love, and hope that drove them in the 1990s and continues to punctuate their messages today. In a poignant analysis of the global economic and political co-optation of cultural icons and power agendas in their title track, they highlight how "Malcolm had been reduced to a commercial X, the Panthers to a movie, the world psyched into an ethnic fight, while gun

runners grow in economic might.” The exploitation of black people by a powerful white majority—out of greed, for economic and political gain—is what drove the revolutionary fervor of the 1960s and resulted in many rebellions across the United States. This long-term exploitative relationship with the black community was a catalyst for the Watts Rebellion of 1965.

The rebellion in Watts focused attention on the inhumane living conditions in South Central Los Angeles, which brought millions of dollars of funding for housing, hospitals, and youth programs to the area. Not only did it bring in government funding, but private liberal philanthropists also added their own gestures to assuage their guilt for neglecting the black community. One such outpouring resulted in the creation of the Watts Writers Workshop, started by Budd Schulberg, screenwriter of *On the Waterfront*. This workshop became an outlet for a community of creative people to express the myriad experiences nestled on the margins of European discourse.

Hamilton, O’Solomon, and Dedeaux, then in their twenties, were all participants in the Watts Writers Workshop. Cassius Weatherby recommended that they come together because of the possible synergy of their works. When they won second place in a talent show at the legendary Maverick’s Flat, they caught the attention of the public as well as of other popular performers of the time. They subsequently appeared between concert sets of Earth, Wind and Fire, George Clinton, and Richard Pryor. In the 1970s the Watts Prophets recorded two legendary albums, *Black in a White World* and *In the Streets of Watts*. They were also guest artists on Stevie Wonder’s *Songs in the Key of Life* and Quincy Jones’s *Mellow Madness*.

The Watts Writers Workshop became a prestigious forum for people from all over the world to come and find a safe space for expression. The Watts Prophets and other poets of the people knew long before the discourse of postmodernism that the word was the source for deconstruction of the realities established by oppressive powers and conditions. As Dedeaux expressed it, in the beginning, “there was nothing but a workshop, some railroad tracks, and a tree across the street, which we called the Freedom Tree.” In the end, with funding from area celebrities, film studios, and philanthropists, the workshop had grown to include a main building, a piano donated by Sammy Davis, Jr., and a 350-seat, \$250,000 theater. These were all burned to the ground in 1975 when the power of the

workshop to give people hope and freedom to express a growing global culture of power became a target of the federal government. The resident videographer admitted that he had worked as an FBI informant, which confirmed the artists’ suspicions of a government conspiracy in the destruction of the project.

POLITICAL IMPACT

But it was the formation of African American cultural expression through the lived experiences of artists like the Watts Prophets, with the Watts Writers Workshop as their lab, that made possible the African ideological stance that continues to grow in the academy. The Watts Prophets’ music and message in the sixties and seventies was, in addition to being rhythmic and inspiring, also critical, political, and cultural, even though they were not aligned with any particular cause or group. They considered themselves “the community’s poets”; they became the prescient voice of the scholars investigating the subjective voice of Africans as agents. The expressions of cultural and artistic workers often become the forerunners to social consciousness and change. O’Solomon’s poetic work *Hey World* was ahead of the curve in voicing for earth sustainability before Greenpeace’s environmental messages or a concept called *ecology* became prevalent. The Watts Prophets represent the integrity of a transgenerational interpretation of African experiences in South Central Los Angeles that are similar to many other African experiences in the continental United States.

— Fatima Hafiz

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WATTS REBELLION OF 1965

The Watts Rebellion of 1965 was the first of a series of violent confrontations between African Americans and the white power structure that took place in the 1960s in the United States. The decade of the 1960s, as a whole, on one level saw the failure of the American dream vis-à-vis integration; on another level, it witnessed the insurgence of black nationalist fervor and agency that was sweeping America's inner cities.

Watts, a section of South Central Los Angeles that was named after land developer Charles A. Watts, initially was a multicultural community inhabited by European, Asian, and Latino immigrants. Then, in the mid 1800s, African peoples began to move west to California in search of better employment and, by 1950, African Americans were entrenched in Watts. Like many urban areas with large African American populations during this time, Watts represented the growing disparities between African Americans and others. In the 1950s and 1960s, African Americans suffered from disproportionate unemployment rates, dilapidated housing, police brutality, and substandard education. They were largely excluded from the economic prosperity of America. Furthermore, many of the political gains made by the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s were lost.

THE REBELLION

The Watts Rebellion began on August 11, 1965, when Marquette Frye, a young African American male, along with his stepbrother Ronald, was stopped on a "routine" traffic stop on Avalon Blvd. in South Central Los Angeles. Ironically, it turned out that Frye was pulled over because an African American truck driver had flagged down California Highway Patrol officer Lee Minikus to describe a vehicle he had just observed being driven erratically.

When officer Minikus finally caught up to the vehicle Marquette was driving, Marquette told Officer Minikus that he had lost his driver's license not long ago, which was true. Nevertheless, Minikus became skeptical of Marquette's story and asked Marquette to step out of his vehicle. Though he had in fact been drinking, as he readily admitted, Marquette stated that he was not drunk. With this information, Officer Minikus asked Marquette to take a sobriety test.

As this was taking place, community residents and pedestrians began to observe the ensuing situation.

Initially, Marquette remained calm and jovial; however, when it became clear that he was being arrested and his vehicle was being impounded, he became combative. When Officer Minikus, and several other officers who came onto the scene for backup, attempted to handcuff Marquette, he resisted. Meanwhile, a throng of people had begun to form. A neighbor of the Fries ran to the Frye residence to alert Rena Frye, Marquette's mother, that her son was having some trouble with the police. When she arrived on the scene, it aggravated Marquette even more. Rena Frye attempted to calm her son, but to no avail. As the situation escalated and police backup arrived, Joyce Anne Gaines, a student at Compton Junior College, was mistakenly identified as someone who had spit on one of the police officers on the scene. In their attempt to quell an already tense situation, a few officers restrained and handcuffed Joyce and placed her into a police vehicle. Rena Frye was also assaulted by police as she tried to intervene when her son Ronald was being jabbed with a police nightstick. Naturally, this added fuel to an already tense situation.

The violence and mayhem that is now known as the Watts Rebellion lasted 6 days.

Though just a catalyst, the stopping and subsequent arrest of Marquette Frye ignited the underlying vitriolic sentiments that had been simmering in the African American community in Watts.

In the end, 34 people died, 1,032 were injured, and 3,952 were arrested. There was over \$100 million in property damage. When the smoke cleared, many African Americans were targeted for the various crimes, primarily theft, committed during the rebellion. Local citizens were encouraged to provide tips to aid in the process of convicting the guilty parties (which led to a plethora of bogus tips). Citizens were also told that they could place stolen goods on their lawns and, by doing so, would avoid prosecution.

THE AFTERMATH

Many factors led to what has been labeled the Watts Rebellion of 1965. Although identifying all these factors is very complex, some of the more obvious factors can be identified as follows: (1) the radical posturing and rhetoric of many black nationalist organizations such as the Black Panther Party, Us, the

Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and the Nation of Islam; (2) Malcolm X's assassination in 1965; and (3) the substandard living conditions of African Americans in Watts (including but not limited to unemployment and police brutality).

After the rebellion, politicians, including President Lyndon B. Johnson, scrambled to address the conditions that led to the Watts rebellion. President Johnson offered a "25 year plan," which sought—at least superficially—to alter living conditions in Watts. Moreover, California governor Pat Brown nominated John McCone to head a commission to study the rebellion. The findings of the McCone Commission revealed what was already painfully obvious to African Americans in Watts: The rebellion was not incited by a small group of rogue African Americans, or riffraff; to the contrary, the causes of the rebellion were directly related to living conditions in Watts—the high jobless rates, poor housing, and substandard schools.

Though the study was considered useful from a theoretical perspective, no serious attempt was made to use the information it contained to remedy the deep, underlying problems in Watts and similar areas. Thus the Watts Rebellion was a precursor to rebellions that took place in the subsequent years in numerous cities throughout America, most notably in Detroit, Michigan, and Newark, New Jersey, in the summer of 1967. Nonetheless, the Watts Rebellion of 1965 marked a turning point in American history. It could no longer be assumed that integration was a success and that African Americans were content with their place in American society.

— William Boone

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- Governor's Commission on the Los Angeles Riots. (1965). *Violence in the City: An End or a Beginning?* Los Angeles: Author. This is the official report by the Governor's Commission.

WESTERNIZATION

Westernization refers to the spread of the culture of Western Europe to other parts of the world, such as (but not limited to) Africa. Westernization is closely associated with Western modernity, as it emerged during the European Enlightenment period. Succinctly defined, European modernity rests on an elevation of rationalism and empiricism; the assertion of the epistemological superiority of science; the adoption and holding of individualistic and materialistic values; and a hostile stance toward nature as a supreme value. This resulted in the understanding and promotion of capitalism, bureaucracy, and science as existential ideals.

However, these ideals were believed by many Europeans to be not simply valid but, in fact, the best possible cultural norms. They were therefore to be shared by all human beings, that is, made universal through their adoption by people around the world, hence Westernization. Thus, as a process, Westernization entails that the targeted culture take on deep cultural changes; the acquisition of new skills; the acceptance of new ideas about the nature of the world and human relationships; new values; new attitudes; and the redirecting of their human energies. The ultimate goal of Westernization is the establishment of a single standard of value based on the Western model.

Typically, three main mechanisms have been used to facilitate Westernization: the construction of Western European culture as universal, violence, and misrepresentation. One method consistently used by Western Europeans to spread their culture has been an implicit refusal to relate their culture to its own historical, social, and physical base, thus creating the illusion of cultural neutrality and normalcy, in other words, of Western European cultural universality. New names, such as *international* and *classical*, have become misnomers when applied, as they are apt to be, to cultural realities that are in fact specifically Western European. Violence, the second technique employed, has manifested itself in different manners, often as the exercise of physical brutality, but also as the denial of the existence of indigenous cultures, which then became invisible. For example, it was assumed that Africans had never developed any concept of God or any philosophy, and that only Western Europeans had. Finally, the misrepresentation of

indigenous cultures came about as a result of their being branded inferior, invalid, primitive, archaic, limited, and so on, while Western European culture was supposed to be just the opposite.

It is therefore clear that Westernization, when it occurred, was based not on genuine cultural exchanges and respect, but on domination, submission, injustice, and destruction. Western culture must be correctly perceived as a local tradition that has been spread by force. The first push toward Westernization was arguably the 12th-century Christian Crusades, shortly followed by colonialism and imperialism, which marked the beginning of the reign of Western European military, merchants, and missionaries. Westernization is rooted in the concept of the “white man’s burden” or the “civilizing mission” of Western Europeans.

The extent to which the world has been Westernized remains a matter of debate. Some believe that Westernization has been extensive, while others see it as a rather superficial and already receding phenomenon. However, most agree that Westernization has had a negative impact on the world in general, and on Africans in particular, by undermining the fabric of many communities as it created an increasing impoverishment and homogenization of life and a sterile aping of the West. In addition, many have questioned the validity of the Western model by pointing out its failure, as eloquently demonstrated by the massive social decay experienced by many Western societies, as well as the unprecedented ecological disaster created by the adoption of Western cultural norms and practices. The Westernization enterprise therefore must be questioned and critiqued on both moral and practical grounds.

— *Ama Mazama*

FURTHER READING

Asante, Molefi Kete. (1992). *Kemet, Afrocentricity and Knowledge*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press. This book probes deeply into the issue of the African cultural dislocation brought about by Westernization.

Huntington, Samuel. (1996). *The Clash of Civilizations: Remaking of World Order*. New York: Simon and Schuster. This book must be read for further understanding of the Western hegemonic project. Huntington is one of those who believe that Westernization has been only relatively superficial.

Mudimbe, Valentin. (1988). *The Invention of Africa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. Mudimbe’s book remains a classic study of the cultural conversion that

was attempted during the period of colonialism in Africa, especially as it relates to religion.

Sachs, Wolfgang. (Ed.). (1991). *The Development Dictionary. A Guide to Knowledge as Power*. London: Zed Books. This is an excellent study of most of the concepts imposed on people of the world as part of the Westernization enterprise. The book locates those concepts within their own cultural matrix.

THE WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST RACISM, RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, XENOPHOBIA AND RELATED INTOLERANCE

The World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR) was convened by the United Nations (UN) in Durban, South Africa, from August 31 through September 8, 2001. Reportedly, approximately 12,000 people, representing over 153 countries of the world, were in attendance. In the weeks leading up to the gathering, three highly charged issues were expected to top the conference agenda: (1) the fight to recognize the Holocaust of African Enslavement (HAE) as a crime against humanity; (2) the reparations due to be paid to the descendants of the Africans against whom the said criminal acts were perpetrated, and (3) the push to denounce the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian homeland in the Middle East as racism.

A new nongovernmental organization (NGO), the Africa and African Descendants Caucus, composed of over 500 continental and diasporan Africans, emerged during the preparatory meetings, with the goal of bringing to the WCAR the matter of reparations for the descendants of Africans enslaved during the “Trans-Atlantic slave trade.” In so doing, the caucus, led by Adjoa Artis Aiyetoro, a founding member of the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (N’COBRA), and Umberto Brown, sought to raise not only the material aspects of the reparations question but also the issue of spiritual and political restitution. The caucus held daily strategy sessions, during one of which Cuban president Fidel Castro made a surprise appearance and spoke of the racism directed at his country, which is overwhelmingly populated by the descendants of enslaved Africans.

A 50-member contingent representing Black Leadership Forum (BLF)/Africa African American Renaissance was hailed as the “official” U.S. delegation by the South African government. Among their many preconference activities was a “Climate Justice Summit” that dealt with the question of environmental racism. Two days later, they hosted a town hall meeting to present the case of American racism within the international context and to lobby for continued attention to the problems post-WCAR and to call for concrete action. In attendance, among others, were Dr. Dorothy Height, National Council on Negro Women; Elaine Jones, Esq., NAACP Legal Defense Fund; and Jesse Jackson, Rainbow/PUSH. In addition, several members of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) participated: CBC Chair Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX), John Conyers (D-MI), Cynthia McKinney (D-GA), Shelia Jackson Lee (D-TX), Barbara Lee (D-CA), Diane Watson (D-CA), and Donna Christian-Christiansen (D-VI).

Even so, the issue that was most contentious, and that certainly garnered the lion’s share of press coverage at the WCAR, was that of the Israel-Palestinian conflict. The matter of the Holocaust of African Enslavement received scant attention. In the days preceding the conference, however, several African nations offered apologies for the enslavement of fellow Africans. Unconscionably, the overwhelming role of Western Europeans—including their practice of enslaving Africans like chattel in the Americas, not to mention colonialism—was ignored. The text of the final resolution called on those who participated in the enslavement of Africans to “take appropriate and effective measures to halt and reverse the lasting consequences of those practices.” Any language declaring the so-called slave trade a crime against humanity was effectively blocked. As a concession of sorts, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson announced the formation of an antidiscrimination unit to address the final WCAR recommendations.

Although the WCAR did not quite live up to its billing, in the estimate of many, it was successful in bringing to the fore matters of centuries-old racial oppression that are far too often swept under the rug. For instance, over 200 Dalits, the so-called untouchables of India, were present to protest the exclusion of the oppressive caste system employed in their country from the WCAR agenda. A deceptively simple statement by a member of the Dalit delegation aptly summarizes the overriding message of the thousands of

peoples gathered at the WCAR to shine a light on racism and oppression around the world: “We just want the right to be human.”

— Pamela Yaa Asantewaa Reed

FURTHER READING

Burkes, Betty. (2001, October). *The World Conference on Racism, Without Us*. Retrieved September 1, 2004, from <http://www.afsc.org/pwork/0110/011018.htm> Burkes represented the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom at the WCAR.

Report of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, Durban, South Africa, 31 August–8 September 2001. Retrieved June 21, 2004, from <http://www.un.org/WCAR/coverage.htm>. This document is the official report of the United Nations.

Slavery Row Stalls Racism. (2001, May 22). Retrieved June 21, 2004, from <http://www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/Africa> This is a summary of the difference in the views of African and European nations over the question of reparations.

UN Racism Conference Ends in Compromise. (2001, September 9). Retrieved June 21, 2004, from http://www.abc.net.au/news/2001/09/item20010909100531_1.htm This story on the conference ran on both the *ABC Evening News* and *ABC News Online*.

THE WRETCHED OF THE EARTH

The Wretched of the Earth is arguably the most famous of the many books written by Frantz Fanon (1926–1961). It was originally published in Paris in 1961 under the title *Les Damnés de la Terre*. In this book, the wretched of the earth are precisely those who have been unfortunate enough to experience Western European colonization. At the time of its writing and publication, Africans were still for the most part under the European colonial yoke, although there were clear signs of major changes to come. Fanon, a psychiatrist born in Martinique, did not live to witness the total end of European colonial rule in Africa; however, in many ways, his book can be read as both a prophecy and a warning.

In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon is indeed most concerned about the conditions required for an authentic decolonization and the true regaining of agency by African people. Colonization, as Fanon sees it, is foremost a violent process of dehumanization and economic exploitation. It is in the *Wretched*

of the Earth that Fanon made his most famous, and often misunderstood, claim about the necessity for the colonized to engage in violence themselves. This, Fanon argued, was psychologically necessary for the colonized, so that they would be empowered to destroy the colonizers physically and, at least as important, eradicate the image of the colonizers as supermen or demigods.

Indeed, colonization created discursive categories through which the European colonizers presented themselves as intrinsically superior beings, and colonization as a burden, a civilizing mission assigned to white people by God. The internalization of such discourse led many colonized people to believe in their own inferiority, thus accepting the legitimacy of the colonial social order. By dictating the existential conditions of the colonized, and thus attempting to confine them to particular roles while denying them others and exploiting them, the colonizers imposed their own will on the colonized, depriving the latter of their ability to make their own choices and determine their own destiny. This was a most serious crime in Fanon's eyes. Having been heavily influenced by Sartre's existentialism, Fanon asserts that it is the human's defining characteristic to be free through the making of choices. Therefore, the killing of the European colonizers by the African colonized was to serve not only as a necessary therapy but also to redeem the Africans' humanity by giving them the ability to make choices again, that is, to realize their own humanity. Fanon's message did not go unheard, especially in the United States, where it had a great influence on the black power movement and, more particularly, on the Black Panthers. Many hailed *The Wretched of the Earth* as "the handbook for the black revolution."

However, Fanon addressed other important issues, such as the role that the African bourgeoisie could not

play in a liberated Africa. Obviously inspired by a Marxist perspective, Fanon denied this class, created by the European colonizers, any positive function in a new Africa. Much to the contrary, he saw those in the African middle class as parasites incapable of fulfilling their class function (i.e., to amass and invest wealth in their country) and believed it to be in the best interest of Africa to do away with the African bourgeoisie.

Fanon also made a poignant analysis of the cultural alienation experienced by many African intellectuals, due to their prolonged exposure to Western culture during the colonial period. Fanon describes their many attempts to revive African traditions that had, however, been fossilized by colonization. All this, in Fanon's eyes, is in vain and ultimately unnecessary, since it is through struggle that one forges one's culture, and not, as he would put it, through the singing of old songs.

— Ama Mazama

FURTHER READING

- Fanon, Frantz. (1965). *The Wretched of the Earth, A Dying Colonialism*. New York: Grove Press. This is the original "handbook for the black revolution."
- Fanon, Frantz. (1967). *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York: Grove Press. This is Fanon's famous analysis of the psychological impact of racism on the colonized and the colonizers. Fanon argues in particular that blackness and whiteness are colonial categories that must be discarded in order to bring racism and colonialism to an end.
- Fanon, Frantz. (1967). *Toward the African Revolution*. New York: Penguin. In this book, Fanon announces the African revolution and outlines the requirements necessary for its success.
- Hansen, William W. (1996). *A Frantz Fanon Study Guide*. New York: Grove Press. This useful book contains an extensive list of the countless books and articles on Fanon's philosophy, as well as an insightful overview of his ideas.

Y

YORUBA TRADITION

It is interesting that those who claim to be Yoruba do not, strictly speaking, have a generally accepted meaning for the name. The Yoruba country lies roughly between latitudes 6° and 9° north and longitudes 2°30' and 6°30' east, with a total land area of about 181,300 square kilometers in what is now southwestern Nigeria. The Yoruba culture area, however, is not coterminous with this geographical delimitation, as it spreads from the present Edo State in Nigeria, over the whole of the southwest and across, to the Republics of Benin and Togo on the West African coast.

Significant aspects of Yoruba culture are also found in such places as Sierra Leone, the Gambia, Brazil, Cuba, Trinidad, Puerto Rico, and the United States of America. It is precisely this open expression of Yoruba culture in the Americas that has generated great interest in the Yoruba tradition, especially its religious and spiritual dimension, among Black Studies scholars. Indeed, large segments of the Yoruba religious pantheon have been preserved, with Yoruba deities called *orishas*—like Shango, Yemoja, Ogun, and others—still guiding the lives of many diasporic Africans. Worldwide, it is estimated that the Yorubas number over 40 million. The major subethnic groups include the Oyo, Ibarapa, Ife, Ijesa, Igbomina, Egba, Egbado, Owu, Awori, Egun, Ijebu, Ekiti, Ilaje, Ikale, Owo, Akoko, Ondo, Yagba, Owe, Bunu, Idaisa, Ajase, Ketu, and Sabe. In Brazil and Cuba the major Yoruba subgroups are known as Nago and Lucumi, respectively.

The Yoruba speak a standard Yoruba language that is intelligible to all in spite of the dialectal variations noticeable among the subgroups. The historical consciousness of the Yoruba started at Ile Ife, the cradle of the Yoruba race and civilization. The Yoruba claim descent from Oduduwa, who according to traditions is the eponymous father and cultural hero of all Yoruba. Two major factors are important in the crystallization of the salient aspects of Yoruba civilization. The first is the language, in that virtually all the indigenous inhabitants of Yorubaland belonged to the same linguistic stock. It is generally agreed that language is the first basic element of Yoruba civilization. The second factor is the environment, which, to a large extent, influenced the historical development of Yoruba civilization. The geographical features of the Yoruba country made it well suited for agriculture, metal technology, industry, and commerce. Each of these factors is essential for urbanization and, unsurprisingly, the Yoruba became one of the most urbanized ethnic groups in Africa.

The emergence of Oduduwa as prime cultural hero and the process of state formation in Yorubaland constitute the central themes of Yoruba tradition, and two major explanations have historically tried to account for these traditional themes. The first one speaks of Ile Ife as the original birthplace of the prehistoric human and the center of all creation. According to this explanation, Oludamare appeared with the first 16 human elders and their followers. One major conclusion from this is the claim that Ile Ife was not just the source for the Yoruba people but also the cradle of all humankind through the process of creation. Indeed, in

a common fashion, the Yoruba people believe that they were the first human beings created on earth.

According to the second explanation, following a political crisis, Oduduwa led the Yoruba in their migration to Yorubaland from somewhere in the Nile Valley, presumably from the area that came to be known as Arabia. It is said that Oduduwa was the son of Lamurudu, a king in Mecca, and was forced to leave his homeland because of his idolatrous practices. He eventually came to Yorubaland, where the original inhabitants accepted him as the purveyor of a new and better culture. Recent studies have exposed the many weaknesses in this explanation. First, there is not a shred of evidence in the history of the Nile Valley that supports these wild claims. Second, linguistic studies have not discovered any link between the Yoruba language and any language in the Nile Valley. If there was any relationship between the peoples as recent as after the rise of Islam, such a link would not be obscure. The proponents of this explanation probably relied on dubious historical evidence, derived from sources outside Yorubaland, with the intent of providing what was perceived by some as a prestigious ancestry for the Yoruba.

The emergence of Ile Ife as a focus of power and civic authority could, perhaps, be regarded as the most notable event in pre-1500 Yorubaland. Recent studies propose that a trenchant reconstruction of what is known suggests a new direction in the search for an explanation of the major themes of Yoruba tradition. Oduduwa probably migrated to Ile Ife as the leader of a powerful group that subdued the aboriginal inhabitants of this fertile lowland. The preexisting semiautonomous settlements of Omoloogun, Parakin, Iwinrin, Oke-Awo, Ijugbe, Iraye, Imojubi, Oke-oja, Odin, Ideta, Oloromu, Ido, and Iloran submitted to the exclusive and widespread political leadership of the Oduduwa group.

The process of state formation has also been reconstructed recently. It is said that Oduduwa was the architect of a representative system of government that emphasized the primacy of the monarch. Divine

kingship eventually became the most significant attribute of Yoruba monarchy. Oduduwa was assisted in state administration by a council of elders called the *Iwarefa*, who constituted the cabinet. The dispersal from Ile Ife into the Yoruba forest took place in three major waves, as indicated in the conferences of Ijero, Ijamo, and Marun. The founders of Oyo, Owu, Igbomina (Ila), Sabe, Popo, Benin, and Ketu all belonged to the same and possibly the first wave.

The beaded crown with fringes became the symbol of divine kingship as instituted by Oduduwa at Ile Ife. It is the crowning of an Oba that transforms him, giving him the status of an orisha and giving ritual validation to his authority. When and where the Oba puts on the crown, he incarnates divine power. The enduring legacy or success of the Oduduwa experiment is best illustrated by the fact that the chieftaincy institution based on divine kingship, in spite of debilitating external influences, is the most characteristic and most developed feature of Yoruba civilization.

— Akin Alao

FURTHER READING

- Akinjogbin, I. A. (Ed.). (1992). *The Cradle of a Race: Ile-Ife From the Beginning to 1980*. Port Harcourt: Sunray. This book examines the place of Ile Ife in the crystallization of Yoruba civilization from divergent viewpoints.
- Ayandele, E. A., and Akinjogbin, I. A. (1980). Yorubaland up to 1800. In O. Ikime (Ed.), *Groundwork of Nigerian History*. London: Heinemann. This essay presents a detailed description of Yorubaland up to the 19th century.
- Johnson, Samuel. (1921). *History of the Yorubas*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. Johnson's book is the most authoritative anthology of Yoruba traditions and thus provides a reference point of agreement or disagreement for contemporary writings on the Yoruba past.
- Ogunremi, Deji, and Adediran, Biodun. (1998). *Culture and Society in Yorubaland*. Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria: Rex Charles Publications in association with Connel Publications. The authors examine the various aspects of Yoruba culture from a critical and multidisciplinary perspective.

Appendix I

Chronology of the Most Notable Books, Scholars, and Events in Black Studies

1967

Students at San Francisco State demand Black Studies

Nathan Hare organizes the first Black Studies department at San Francisco State University

1968

University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), creates the Institutes for American Cultures, which includes the Center for Afro American Studies

Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* is published in the United States

Eldridge Cleaver's *Soul on Ice* is published

Two young men are killed in the struggle for Black Studies at UCLA

The Black Scholar is started by Robert Chrisman and Nathan Hare

Martin Luther King is slain

Shirley Chisholm is elected to the House of Representatives

1969

The *Journal of Black Studies* is founded by Robert Singleton and Molefi Kete Asante

Clarence Majors edits the *New Black Poetry*

Molefi Kete Asante's *The Rhetoric of Black Revolution* is published

Amy Jacques Garvey's *Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey* is reissued

Molefi Kete Asante heads UCLA Center for Afro American Studies and publishes his essay "The Black Perspective"

1970

John Jackson's *Introduction to African Civilization* is published

Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* is published

Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* is published

1971

Shirley Graham Du Bois publishes a memoir of W.E.B. Du Bois, *His Day is Marching On*

Addison Gayle, Jr.'s *The Black Aesthetic* is published

1972

Yosef Ben-Jochannon's *Black Man of the Nile* is published

Richard Barksdale and Kenneth Kinnamon's *Black Writers of America* is published

Gil Scott-Heron records "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised"

Paul Carter Harrison's *The Drama of Nommo* is published

The National Black Political Convention takes place in Gary, Indiana

1973

Stephen Henderson's *Understanding the New Black Poetry* is published

Nathan Huggins's *Harlem Renaissance* is published

1974

Chancellor Williams's *The Destruction of Black Civilization* is published

Cheikh Anta Diop's *The African Origin of Civilization* is published in English

1975

Quincy Troupe's *Giant Talk: An Anthology of Third World Writing* is published

The National Council of Black Studies is founded

1976

Asa Hilliard gets George James's *Stolen Legacy* republished

Callaloo magazine is founded in Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Alex Haley receives the Pulitzer Prize for *Roots*

Ivan Van Sertima's *They Came Before Columbus* is published

1977

Geneva Smitherman's *Talkin' and Testifyin': The Language of Black America* is published

1978

Cheikh Anta Diop's *Cultural Unity of Black Africa* is published

Abdias do Nascimento's *Mixture or Massacre: The Genocide of a People* is published

James Alan McPherson receives the Pulitzer Prize for *Elbow Room*

Maulana Karenga's *Essays in Struggle* is published

Haki Madhubuti's *Enemies: The Clash of Races* is published

Kariamun Welsh's *Textured Women, Beetle Sticks, Cow Bells, and Cowrie Shells* is published

1979

The African American Studies program becomes a department at the State University of New York at Buffalo

1980

Molefi Kete Asante's *Afrocentricity* is published

Theophile Obenga's *Pour une Nouvelle Histoire* is published

1981

Vincent Harding's *There is a River* is published
Death of Larry Neal, a major black arts movement figure

1982

Charles Fuller receives the Pulitzer Prize for *A Soldier's Play*

1983

John Henrik Clarke gives a major speech at City College, "The Black Man's History in a White Man's World"

Alice Walker wins the Pulitzer Prize for *The Color Purple*

President Ronald Reagan signs the Martin Luther King Day bill, making King's birthday a federal holiday to be celebrated on the third Monday of each January

1984

Maulana Karenga's *Selections from the Husia: Sacred Wisdom of Ancient Egypt* is published

Wallace Terry's *Blood* is published

Mari Evans's edited volume *Black Women Writers 1950-1980: A Critical Evaluation* is published

1986

Wole Soyinka wins the Nobel Prize for literature

Molefi Kete Asante begins the campaign to create the first Ph.D. program in African American Studies at Temple University

1987

August Wilson wins the Pulitzer Prize for *Fences*

Rita Dove receives the Pulitzer Prize for *Thomas and Beulah*

Winston van Horne of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee proposes the term *Africology*

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee African American Studies department changes its name to Department of Africology

Molefi Kete Asante's *The Afrocentric Idea* is published

Horace Campbell's *Rasta and Resistance* is published

1988

Toni Morrison receives the Pulitzer Prize for *Beloved*

Temple University accepts the first class of doctoral students in African American Studies

Wade Nobles's *African and African American Cultural Blueprint/Framework for Black Family Pilot* is published

Linda James Myers's *Understanding the Afrocentric Worldview* is published

The Cheikh Anta Diop International Conference is founded in Philadelphia

1989

C. Tsehloane Keto's *The Africa Centered Perspective of History* is published

Darlene Clark Hine's *Black Women in White: Racial Conflict and Cooperation in the Nursing Profession 1890–1950* is published

1990

Maulana Karenga's *Introduction to Black Studies* is published

Adeniyi Coker, a Nigerian student at Temple University, becomes the first person to receive a Ph.D. from an African American Studies department

Mark Hyman is the first African American graduate with a Ph.D. in African American Studies

Molefi Kete Asante's *Kemet, Afrocentricity and Knowledge* is published as a signature for the first Ph.D. program in African American Studies

1991

Clarence Thomas is confirmed for the Supreme Court in the closest vote in the Court's history and despite the objections of many African American scholars

Henry Louis Gates begins to assemble the "Dream Team" of scholars at Harvard University

J. E. Holloway's *Africanisms in American Culture* is published

1993

Toni Morrison wins the Nobel Prize for literature

Yusef Komunyakaa wins the Pulitzer Prize for poetry

Maya Angelou reads poetry at Bill Clinton's presidential inauguration

Cornel West's *Race Matters* is published

John Gwaltney's *Drylongso* is published

1994

Marimba Ani's major analysis of European thought and behavior, *Yurugu*, is published

Tricia Rose's *Black Noise* is published

1995

Theophile Obenga's *A Lost Tradition: African Philosophy in World History* is published

Herb Boyd and Robert Allen's edited volume *Brotherman* is published

More than a million black men march on Washington, D.C., to raise awareness about the plight of black men and foster black men's consciousness of and commitment to self

Na'im Akbar's *Natural Psychology and Human Transformation* is published

Henry Louis Gates's *Colored People* is published

Clenora Hudson-Weems's *Africana Womanism: Reclaiming Ourselves* is published

1996

Molefi Kete Asante and Abu Abarry's edited volume *The African Intellectual Heritage* is published

Theophile Obenga's *Icons of Maat* is published

The University of Massachusetts at Amherst creates the second U.S. Ph.D. program in African American Studies

1997

Phile Chionesu organizes a million black women on the Benjamin Franklin Mall in Philadelphia to bring about changes in the life conditions of black women

Henry Louis Gates's edited volume *The Norton Anthology of African American Literature* is published

The University of California, Berkeley announces plans for a Ph.D. program in African American Studies

Kariamuwelsh Asante's *African Dance* is published

1998

Tennessee State University becomes the first predominantly black institution in more than 25 years to develop a program in African American Studies

Manning Marable and Leith Mullings's edited volume *Let Nobody Turn Us Around* is published

Manning Marable's *Black Leadership* is published
Katherine Bankole's *Slavery and Medicine: Enslavement and Medical Practices in Antebellum Louisiana* is published

1999

The Cheikh Anta Diop Conference becomes an international event, with attendees and participants from four continents

2000

Randall Robinson publishes *The Debt: What America Owes to Blacks*

2002

Molefi Kete Asante publishes *The Egyptian Philosophers*

Michigan State University announces a Ph.D. program in African American Studies

Mark Christian's *Black Identity in the 20th Century* is published

2003

Ama Mazama's *The Afrocentric Paradigm* is published

Molefi Kete Asante's *Erasing Racism: The Survival of the American Nation* is published

Ray Winbush's edited volume *Should America Pay?* is published

Maulana Karenga's *Maat: The Moral Ideal in Ancient Egypt* is published

Zizwe Poe's *Kwame Nkrumah's Contribution to Pan Africanism* is published

Jawara Giddings's *Contemporary Afrocentric Scholarship* is published

James L. Conyers's *Afrocentricity and the Academy* is published

2004

Publication of the comprehensive *Encyclopedia of Black Studies*, the first such encyclopedia in the field's history, edited by Molefi Kete Asante and Ama Mazama

Appendix II

Advanced Degree–Granting Programs

DOCTORAL-GRANTING PROGRAMS IN BLACK STUDIES

Departmental or Disciplinary Degrees

Temple University
College of Liberal Arts
African American Studies
8th floor, Gladfelter Hall
1115 W. Berks
Philadelphia, PA 19122

University of California, Berkeley
Ethnic Studies
Afro American Studies
506 Barrows Hall #2570
Berkeley, CA 94720

University of Massachusetts Amherst
W.E.B. Du Bois Department of Afro-American
Studies
Afro-American Studies
323 New Africa House
Amherst, MA 01003-6210

Interdepartmental or Interdisciplinary Degrees

Emory University
Graduate Institute of the Liberal Arts
American and African-American Studies
S415 Callaway Building
Atlanta, GA 30322

Harvard University
Department of Afro-American Studies
Barker Center
12 Quincy Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

Michigan State University
African American Studies
Morrill Hall, Room 1
East Lansing, MI 48824

Yale University
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
African American Studies
Box 208323
New Haven, CT 06520-8323

M.A.-GRANTING DEPARTMENTS

Boston University
African American Studies
705 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215

Clark Atlanta University
School of Arts and Sciences
African and African American Studies
Office of Admissions
J. P. Brawley Drive at Fair Street SW
Atlanta, GA 30314-4385

Columbia University
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
Institute for Research in African-American
Studies
African American Studies
Columbia University-IRAAS
1200 Amsterdam Avenue, Mailcode #5512
New York, NY 10027
Cornell University
Africana Studies and Research Center
310 Triphammer Road
Ithaca, NY 14850

Florida International University
College of Arts and Sciences
African-New World Studies Certificate Program
PC 236 University Park Campus
Miami, FL 33199

Morgan State University
School of Graduate Studies
African American Studies
1700 East Cold Spring Lane
Baltimore, MD 21251

The Ohio State University
Department of Black Studies
African-American and African Studies
486 University Hall
230 N. Oval Mall
Columbus, OH 43210-1319

State University of New York at Albany
Africana Studies
Office of Graduate Admissions
1400 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12222

Temple University
College of Liberal Arts
African American Studies
8th floor, Gladfelter Hall
1115 W. Berks
Philadelphia, PA 19122

University of California, Berkeley
Ethnic Studies
Afro American Studies
506 Barrows Hall #2570
Berkeley, CA 94720

University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)
Department of African American Studies
Afro-American Studies
Center for African American Studies
160 Haines Hall, Box 951545
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1545

University of Iowa
African-American World Studies
303 English-Philosophy Building
Iowa City, IA 52242-1408

University of Massachusetts Amherst
W.E.B. Du Bois Department of Afro-American
Studies
Afro-American Studies
323 New Africa House
Amherst, MA 01003-6210

University of Wisconsin - Madison
Afro-American Studies
4141 Helen C. White Hall
600 North Park Street
Madison, WI 53706

Appendix III

Major Journals in Black Studies

African American Review

Saint Louis University
Shannon Hall 119
220 N. Grand Boulevard
St. Louis, MO 63103
Publisher: St. Louis University

The Black Scholar

P.O. Box 22869
Oakland, CA 94618
Publisher: University of Nebraska Press

Journal of Black Studies

Department of African American Studies
Temple University
1115 W. Berks
Philadelphia, PA 19122
Publisher: Sage Publications

International Journal of Africana Studies

Center for Interdisciplinary Studies
124 Lane Hall
Virginia Tech University
Blacksburg, VA 24061-0227
Publisher: National Council for Black Studies

Western Journal of Black Studies

70 C Cleveland Hall
Pullman, WA 99164
Publisher: Board of Regents, Washington State
University Press

Journal of Black Psychology

Department of Psychology
Mail Location #376
University of Cincinnati
Cincinnati, OH 45221
Publisher: Association of Black Psychologists

Research in African Literatures

601 N. Morton Street
Bloomington, IN 47404
Publisher: Indiana University Press

Suggested Resources

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