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The Modern Capitalist State and the Black Challenge: Culturalism and the Elision of Political  
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By  
Charisse Burden-Stelly

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
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Doctor of Philosophy  
in  
African American Studies  
in the  
Graduate Division  
of the  
University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

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## Abstract

# The Modern Capitalist State and the Black Challenge: Culturalism and the Elision of Political Economy

by

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Doctor of Philosophy in African American Studies

University of California, Berkeley

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This dissertation seeks to comprehensively refocus the analytical frameworks dealing with black modern subjectivity through an in-depth examination of “Culturalism,” or the regime of meaning-making in which Blackness is culturally specified and abstracted from material, political economic, and structural conditions of dispossession through state technologies of antiradicalism. Cold War liberalism institutionalized the hegemony of cultural politics and Culturalism by foregrounding cultural analyses of African retention and syncretism, cultural continuity, and comparative diasporic cultures. As the Cold War instantiated the bifurcation of the world and influenced the direction of decolonization, the African diaspora as an analytical framework became reduced to its cultural aspects. It essentially framed connections among African descendants in terms of culture; asserted Black modernity and claims to equality on cultural grounds; and constructed culture as the domain of struggle. Culturalism divorced Blackness and the African diaspora from the material realities of governmentalized, transnational state projects that sustain racial and class hierarchies.

The hegemony of Culturalism in contemporary theories of the Black condition and the African diaspora diverge significantly from those of the Black radical structure of feeling that conceptualized Diaspora (thought not explicitly named at this time) through a nexus that included political economy, cultural formations, and nationalism. Conditions of Black abjection were seen to permeate both the base and the superstructure such that mobilization on both fronts was necessary to combat white supremacy. The result has been a turn away from the political economy/structural critique that, in the interwar period, provided a theoretical framework to challenge American antiblack statist discourse. The marginalization of Black radicalism and political economy produced the politicization of culture as the dominant mode of organizing for Black equality, and the primary intellectual focus in African diaspora studies.

Anticommunism entrenched this move away from structural critique by criminalizing and disciplining critiques that opposed the racialized social order, the spread of empire, and capitalist accumulation. Instead of challenging their exclusion from the state based on economic dispossession and maldistribution of resources, Black people in the United States began to mobilize around cultural specification, for inclusion based on liberal civil rights discourse, and/or to assert international linkages based on mutually recognized cultural enunciations of blackness. In other words, the Cold War curtailed the possibilities of challenging the state in terms of the political economy of exploitation, thus Blackness came to be understood in nationalist and

cultural terms of exclusion. At the same time, decolonizing countries that sought equality in the world-system asserted their willingness and ability to adopt the culture of development, modernization, and anticommunism. This was notwithstanding the fact that their insertion into the global political economy as sovereign nations continued relations of unequal exchange, declining terms of trade, and neocolonialism.

Culturalism is thus a function of antiradical and antiblack statist pedagogy, and after World War II, it became entangled with anticommunism as an instrumentality of surveillance and violence. Culturalism institutionalized the erasure of radical political economic critique in the theorizing of the black global condition, the disciplining of Black radicalism, and the cultural specification of African diaspora studies examined in the dissertation. The cultural specification of blackness and the forms of Culturalism that it takes are integrally related to statist technologies that facilitate the accommodation of black intellectual and practical challenges to the capitalist state while, at the same time, ensuring their cooptation. These are the bases for the surveillance, disciplining, and punishment of black radical critique.

For  
Essie, Elizabeth, Clariiece, and Gianna,  
my beloved Burdens  
and Savannah  
my eternal guide

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## Introduction

### **Between Racism and Radicalism: Theorizing the African Diaspora and the Black Radical Structure of Feeling**

Between the two World Wars, Black radical thought and practice fashioned a global Black consciousness and spirit of defiance that created the conditions for contemporary African diaspora theory. The barbarity of World War I (WWI) presented a fundamental crisis in the white civilization narrative that positioned Europeans as the arbiters of culture, rationality, and reason—a narrative that was already being challenged by the defeat of Italy by Abyssinia in the battle of Adowa in 1896 and the defeat of Russia by Japan in 1905. In the United States, there was a tectonic shift in global race relations after WWI due to “the influences of global agitation, the growth of the Negro press, and the influx of southern migrants and returning Black veterans converg[ing] on American cities.”<sup>1</sup> At the same time, the emergence of the Comintern and Marxism as fundamental challenges to capitalist accumulation; the Russian Revolution; and Bolshevik identification with the colonized territories supported burgeoning Black radical internationalism. In short, “the political consciousness and collective racial identity of black people in communities throughout the United States and the [colonized world] more broadly, was a product of the domestic and global upheavals of World War I and its aftermath... the vast social, political and demographic transformations brought about by the global conflict made the New Negro of the... postwar perio[d] substantively distinct from previous historical epochs.”<sup>2</sup> The internationalization of Black relationality based on cultural eminence, shared conditions of economic dispossession, and militant racial solidarity can be described as a “Black radical structure of feeling” inasmuch as it was a forming and formative process that created the conditions for later interrogations of global Blackness. The Black radical structure of feeling is integral to a reconstitution and a new understanding of the contemporary African diaspora, which references a theory of Blackness that is overdetermined by culture. Unlike interwar Black radicalism, current articulations of the African diaspora reinscribe statist discourse because they negate the material and structural conditions that constitute the Black condition. The sustained critique of and struggle against these structures and materialities was integral to the Black radical structure of feeling. Enunciations of Blackness emanating from the Harlem Renaissance, Garveyism, and the Black Left fundamentally challenged U.S. statist pedagogy that marked the Black as abject other and rationalized her/his material dispossession.

Given the context in which they came about and their international scope, these challenges to statist pedagogy were radical and counterhegemonic articulations that paved the way for African diaspora theory. The struggles out of which the Black radical structure of feeling were forged became the foundations for Africa diaspora articulation because they were rooted in the experiences of dispersed African descendants in the project of modernity, and revealed that the black condition was reproduced by and through racialized technologies of domination. It emerged out of a historically specific conjuncture of internationalism, antiracism, anti-imperialism, and Black modernism, distinct from earlier challenges to white supremacy. And out of it emerged a comprehensive challenge to the discursive exclusion of Black people from modernity. However, as the African diaspora became the preferred conceptual framework for understanding the global Black condition in the 1950s and 1960s, and became institutionalized in the American academy as a field of study in the 1990s, the radicalism that created the conditions for its possibility was primarily replaced by a regime of “Culturalism” that reified the racial and

economic imperatives of the U.S. state. As the African diaspora became transformed into a tropological sign of Black cultural connectivity, the influences of the Black radical structure of feeling were lost. Because Black radical articulations of internationalism, antiracism, and anti-imperialism became targeted, disciplined, and punished by the U.S. state and empire, Black modernism in its culturally specified form, became the only acceptable assertion of Black equality, because it could be accommodated by the state through cooptation.

In *The Long Revolution*, Raymond Williams defines “structure of feeling” as “the culture of a period... the particular living result of all elements in the general organization.”<sup>3</sup> It is “a structure in the sense that you could perceive it operating in one work after another which weren’t otherwise connected—people [aren’t] learning it from each other; yet it [is] one of feeling much more than of thought—a pattern of impulses, restraints, tones.”<sup>4</sup> Sociopolitical enunciations interact, but none are dominant or determinant and all are essential to producing the “feeling” of a given historical moment.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, “[S]tructures of feeling can be defined as social experiences *in solution*, as distinct from other social semantic formations which have been *precipitated* and are more evidently and more immediately available... it is primarily to emergent formations (though often in the form of modification or disturbance in older forms) that the *structure of feeling*, as solution, relates.”<sup>6</sup> The intellectual orientation, forms of activism, and articulations of Black subjectivity that manifested themselves across socioeconomic status, geospatial realities, and ideological tendencies attest to the ways in which the interwar context bred a multivalent Black radical structure of feeling. As such, it can be characterized as “conjunctural,” or “a field or terrain of struggle in which systemic contradictions in a mode of production emerge in the realm of culture, in civil society, and in political ideology.”<sup>7</sup> Using structure of feeling as an analytic brings interwar Black radical conjunctures into a single focus.

The interwar period was constituted by a bricolage of “practice and production”<sup>8</sup> against racialized exploitation and marginalization. These included assertions of Black modern subjectivity through cultural creativity; analysis linking US racism and Jim Crow to other forms of racialized colonial and imperial oppression; and explorations of alternative modes of socioeconomic organization. While cultural practice became the primary means by which Black radicalism became alienated and marginalized in the post-World War II (WWII) era, during the interwar period artistic production was essential to Black radicalism. It challenged the narrative that Blacks were culturally retarded because they had no history or civilization—a narrative that legitimized their enslavement, segregation, colonization, and general marginalization. By contributing art that was distinctively “Negro,” Blacks were asserting a cultural future that was distinct from the American and European; it was thus an assertion of their right to self-determination and autonomy.<sup>9</sup> Though Williams contends that, “it is in art, primarily, that the effect of the totality, the dominant structure of feeling, is expressed and embodied,”<sup>10</sup> art was just one aspect of the Black radical structure of feeling. It included various modes of critical practice, including the creation of organizations, journalism, and struggles for socioeconomic justice alongside artistic practice.

The interwar period ushered in a new social formation emerging from the first successful socialist revolution, the increasingly cosmopolitan orientation of Black radical organization and thought, and increasing distrust of monopoly capitalism. Thus,

...The new generation [had] its own structure of feeling, which [did] not appear to have come ‘from’ anywhere... the changing organization [was] enacted in the organism: the new generation respond[ed] in its own ways to the unique world it [was] inheriting,

taking up many continuities, that [could] be traced, and reproducing many aspects of the organization, which [could] be separately described, yet feeling its whole life in certain ways differently, and shaping its creative response into a new structure of feeling.”<sup>11</sup>

Blacks were inheriting a world that continued to be defined in Eurocentric and white supremacist terms, and that continued to exploit Black labor; however, after having “closed ranks”<sup>12</sup> in WWI, they were far less willing to accept their second-class position. International mobilization and connection was having a direct impact on the lives of Blacks in the United States, and the galvanizations that ensued shaped the theoretical and conceptual framework that helped them analyze, disrupt, and attempt to redress local and global conditions of Black abjection and material dispossession. If a structure of feeling becomes manifest in emerging consciousness and new enunciations and representations in moments of transition, then the Black radical structure of feeling coalesced around struggles against white supremacy, racialization as a transnational technology of domination, and world-systemic conditions of economic exploitation. Harlem was the central hub of Black radicalism in the United States, but the scope was local, national, and international, and represented the different ways that Black Americans dealt with the entanglements of race, imperialism, coloniality, and dispossession. The ongoing correspondence of Black intellectuals in the U.S. with other African descendants in Europe, Africa, and the Caribbean facilitated an anticolonial critiques that “created a cognitive map of the existing world system as organized ‘in racial terms,’ thereby offering ‘a countermap of Wilsonian liberal internationalism’ as an ‘international politics promoting white supremacy.’”<sup>13</sup>

The Black radical structure of feeling builds upon what Erik McDuffie calls New Negro radicalism, “a political and cultural movement composed of... protest groups, as well as news and literary journals, [that] linked black struggles for self-determination with postwar, anti-colonial struggles across the Global South.”<sup>14</sup> Three distinct but interconnected enunciations, the Harlem Renaissance, Garveyism, and the Black Left, represented “an interpretation of reality rising from the structure of the national culture and society”<sup>15</sup> and from an advancing racial and international orientation.

### **The Harlem Renaissance**

The Harlem Renaissance—a pronouncement of an alterative narrative of modernity from which Blacks had been historically foreclosed—was an enunciation of radicalism in the 1920s. It was a means of harnessing race and culture for the purpose of achieving full equality and combatting discrimination, and of conveying “a modern, radical, and internationalist image of black masculine subjectivity.”<sup>16</sup> According to Alain Locke, the “dean” of the Harlem Renaissance, “This deep feeling of race is at present the mainspring of Negro life. It seems to be the outcome of the reaction to proscription and prejudice; an attempt, fairly successful on the whole, to convert a defensive into an offensive position, a handicap into an incentive. It is radical in tone... the thinking Negro has shifted a little toward the left with the world-trend, and there is an increasing group who affiliate with radical and liberal movements... the Negro is radical on race matters...”<sup>17</sup> Through New Negro art, Blacks sought to gain white recognition of Black creative genius to achieve full inclusion, citizenship, and equality, because “it could be in the sublimity of the fine arts... that white America... would at last embrace the Negro of 1925.”<sup>18</sup> Through cultural creativity they sought to insert themselves into the public sphere on their own terms by reconstructing and reconstituting the image of the Black.<sup>19</sup> In doing so, they would challenge statist pedagogy that excluded Blacks from citizenship by asserting the Black’s historicity,

rationality, and universal subjectivity through cultural production. Since “Western cultures [had] constructed blackness as an absence... [they would]... reconstruct Blackness as presence.”<sup>20</sup> The Harlem Renaissance challenged white supremacist and Eurocentric assertions that Blacks had no history of civilization and were therefore incapable of producing culture. It brought forth a historical connection between Blackness and modernity by establishing Black cultural creativity as a form of reason and rationality.

Locke contended that the New Negro was not only modern, but also quintessentially American: “Nor must they expect to find a mind and soul bizarre and alien as the mind of a savage, or even as naïve and refreshing as the mind of the peasant or the child. That too was yesterday and the day before. Now that there is cultural adolescence and the approach to maturity[,]—there has come a development that makes these phases of Negro life only an interesting and significant segment of the general American scene.”<sup>21</sup> As such, s/he was deserving of inclusion in the “American scene.” The cultural creativity of the Harlem Renaissance would enhance the stature of the New Negro in and for America. Locke believed that “subtly the conditions that are molding a New Negro are molding a new American attitude.”<sup>22</sup> That change in attitude, was, and would continue to be, made possible by the achievement of Blacks in the realm of artistic production because “...for the present, more immediate hope rests in the revaluation by white and black alike of the Negro in terms of his artistic endowments and cultural contributions, past and prospective.”<sup>23</sup> The New Negro was no longer the “savage”—who one could assume was the primitive African whom Locke stated elsewhere was essentially the ward of the Enlightened and civilized American Negro—nor the “peasant” or “child”—the undeveloped, immature Old Negro. The “approach” and “development” of the New Negro gave him access to historicity and the possibility of progress from which the savage and the peasant were foreclosed. In other words, the move from primitive to peasant to cultural adolescent proved that the Black was a historical subject and thus had a place in the narrative of modernity.

Locke and the Harlem Renaissance established the idea that “...nothing less than a full facelift and a complete break with the enslaved past could ameliorate the social conditions of the modern black person.”<sup>24</sup> This position maintained that Black people were indeed modern, that the poor social conditions of Black people were neither natural nor permanent, and that a reconstruction of the image of Blackness was possible through cultural production. This was a radical critique of inherent Black inferiority that legitimated Black dispossession; it posited that the *image* of the Black—not the Black itself—was the problem. Henry Louis Gates asserts that the New Negro is really the trope of reconstruction, the effort of the Black man to re-present himself in the eyes of his own and the white race to make claims to modern subjectivity. Gates variously refers to the New Negro as a “culturally willed myth;” “only a metaphor;” “neological self;” existing in the “non-place of language” as “only a rhetorical figure;” “a ‘black person that lives at no place’ and at no time;” “a second, new self;” and, “a coded system of signs.”<sup>25</sup> The caricature of Blacks in the sciences, film, and popular culture meant that aesthetic production was an essential site of struggle. “...The force of this visual archive in overdetermining African American conceptions of black identity”<sup>26</sup> meant that self-determination could only be achieved through the resurrection of black subjectivity. To manipulate the image of blackness was to manipulate reality, so the New Negro needed to be crafted to combat the pejorative stereotypes of Blacks, from the licentious rapist presented in David Llewelyn Wark Griffith’s *Birth of a Nation*, to the stupid and complacent Sambo that was ubiquitous in American popular art of the time. The New Negro, an idea and a discursive formation constructed to literally write the Negro

into modernity, provided a radical challenge the pedagogy of the racial state. By asserting blackness as presence, the Harlem Renaissance as the artistic and ontological space of Black development and self-realization produced a radicalized version of the American civilization narrative that, through cultural accumulation, included the New Negro as full citizen.

### **Garveyism**

Garveyism was a radical articulation of nationalist and separatist ideology that critiqued the ways in which white supremacy as a technology of coloniality, national exclusion, and European imperialism precluded Black people from claiming their place in modern civilization. He advocated separation and parallel development to overcome these conditions and to facilitate Black self-determination and autonomy. Like Alain Locke and the Harlem Renaissance, Marcus Garvey had a vision of a New Negro. This New Negro was dedicated to race first, race pride, and self-reliance<sup>27</sup>, and required the development of the Negro race in every aspect. In a 1928 speech in London, Garvey stated that, as the preeminent representative of the UNIA, “I am here tonight as a representative of the new Negro in finance, the new Negro in art, the new Negro in literature, the new Negro in music, the new Negro in economics, the new Negro in science.”<sup>28</sup> As such, Garvey’s project can be considered “an overall project of racial modernization”<sup>29</sup> that moved beyond Culturalism. In the same speech, he warned: “You cannot scare the Negro any more. The Negro is a man. We represent the new Negro. His back is not yet to the wall; we do not want his back to the wall because that would be a peculiar position and a desperate position. We do not want him there. It is because of that we are asking you for a fair compromise.”<sup>30</sup> Here Garvey was radically asserting that as a man, the Negro was entitled to independence and autonomy, and he was willing to fight for it; he was not asking for white charity, but rather for the acknowledgement that the New Negro would help himself so long as whites relinquished what rightfully belong to Black people—Africa.

Garvey encouraged the development of attributes associated with modernity, including self-definition, cultural influence, economic autonomy, and historical progress. As a racial project, this required the inclusion of the masses and the most disadvantaged elements, which was a radical challenge to both the Harlem Renaissance New Negro project and liberal integrationism. Garvey was able to mobilize millions across the world because of the cultural and performative aspects of the UNIA, his ambitious economic program that presented a materialist corollary to the New Negro, and his appreciation for the Black masses. According to Cyril Briggs, founder of the African Blood Brotherhood and one-time Garveyite:

The leadership of the Garvey movement consisted of the poorest stratum of the Negro intellectuals—declassed elements, struggling businessmen and preachers, lawyers without a brief, etc.—who stood more or less close to the Negro masses and felt sharply the effects of the crisis. The movement represented a split away from the official Negro bourgeois leadership of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People which even then was linked up with imperialists.<sup>31</sup>

E. Franklin Frazier added:

The leadership of Dr. Du Bois has been too intellectual to satisfy the mob. Even his glorification of the Negro has been in terms which escape the black masses. The Pan-African Congress which he has promoted, while supporting to some extent the boasted

aims of Garvey, has failed to stir any considerable number of American Negroes. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, which has fought uncompromisingly for equality for the Negro, has never secured, except locally and occasionally, the support of the masses. It has lacked the dramatic element.<sup>32</sup>

Kelly Miller concurred: “The effect of all the movements which have been launched by the intelligentsia among Negroes is that they have never been able to penetrate below a certain level of social grade. They do not reach the common people or stir their imagination... But Garvey arouses the zeal of millions of the lowliest of the frenzy of a crusade.”<sup>33</sup> It was not only the UNIA’s “dramatic element” or arousal of zeal, but also its promotion of those who had been cast aside in more bourgeois organizations and movements. “On the cultural and political front,” the latter “...posed great challenges to dominant representations of black working class humanity as physically and morally degenerate, socially pathological, intellectually inferior, and incorrigibly uncivilized.”<sup>34</sup>

Garvey articulated a radical view of racial uplift, racial solidarity, and Black agency that challenged hegemonic ideas of innate Black inferiority. Garveyism also negated the idea that whites always had been and always would be more advanced than Blacks. Before he embarked on his trip to the United States, he believed that racial cooperation was the agent of improvement, given that Europeans were the more improved race, and therefore could provide the model of civilization to the Negro. While there was a shift in rhetoric over time from interracial cooperation to the Negro recovering African history to develop civilization for himself, Europe remained the archetype. This was based on the fact that Africa, as a civilization, had fallen, leading to the enslavement and debasement of the Black race. Garvey wrote in 1916: “It is true that, by accident and unfavorable circumstances, the Negro lost hold of the glorious civilization that he once dispensed, and in process of time reverted into savagery, and subsequently became a slave, and even to those who he once enslaved, yet it does not follow that the Negro must always remain backward...”<sup>35</sup> This assertion, ironically, underscores Garvey’s unyielding belief in Black people even as it reproduced white supremacist narratives of the Black as backward and outside of history. By asserting that the Negro had *lost* Africa, as opposed to Europeans *taking* it, Garvey was constructing Black agency, and the possibility of regeneration. While it reproduced the idea of white dominance, it positioned it as historical as opposed to natural.

For Garvey, the condition of backwardness affected all people with African blood, irrespective of color or class, so he found the color caste that shaped Jamaican society ridiculous and deplorable. No matter how light-skinned, the loss of African civilization meant that for the time being, only “pure” whites had a reason to use color as a standard of superiority. He lamented, “The Caucasian is privileged to talk about his color for there is a standard in his breeding, and all of us have to respect him for his prowess and his might and his mastery, over established ideals. The Negro can attain a like position by self-industry and cooperation, and there is no one more willing to help him to attain position than the genuine *man of Europe*, the lord of our civilization, today.”<sup>36</sup> Many of the central tenets of Garveyism are inherent in his advocacy of racial purity. He believed that racial uplift was only possible if all Black folks, irrespective of color, were committed to the restoration of Africa and her descendants. As such, he believed that miscegenation brought about racial “degeneracy” because it was the *purity* of the white man that had produced the “standard in his breeding.” For Garvey, racial purity was a marker of commitment to racial uplift, self-help, and “mastery over established ideals.” He



believed that the development of a mighty African civilization, was based on the cultivation of racial self-esteem akin to that which whites possessed: "...the Negro should without compromise or any apology appeal to the same spirit of racial pride and love as the great white race is doing for its own preservation... [and] also without reservation raise the cry of a 'Black Africa.'"<sup>37</sup> Because whiteness derived its strength from sovereignty and pride, the Negro had to strive for both. They also needed to reclaim the grandeur of Africa, given that, "The world today is indebted to us for the benefits of civilization. They stole our arts and sciences from Africa... Their *modern improvements* are but *duplicates* of a grander civilization that we reflected thousands of years ago, without the advantage of what is buried and still hidden, to be resurrected and reintroduced by the intelligence of our generation and our posterity."<sup>38</sup> In other words, although the materiality of civilization currently belonged to the European, the African had originary claims to it. The purpose of Garveyism, then, was to reveal the inherent superiority of the Negro based on his history and to instill in him race-pride and hope for a redeemed future. According to John Henrik Clarke, "Garvey managed to convey to members of the black race everywhere (and the rest of the world) his passionate belief that Africa was the home of a civilization which had once been great and would be great again."<sup>39</sup>

According to Garvey, because Africa has slipped into a state of degeneration, so too had her progeny. However, the awakening of the Negro through the Universal Negro Improvement Association would render this lowly condition only temporary: "The Race has fallen but her instincts are not dead. The silence of centuries has been broken. Her winter has passed and her springtime is here with the promise of a bountiful harvest, for Negro genius has again been fanned into activity, and is ready to infuse into Negro life the qualities and characteristics that made Negroes great in their institutions of the past."<sup>40</sup> The rise of European superiority meant that Africa needed its descendants to redeem it from the decay and backwardness that had resulted from colonization and white domination.

Garvey used the term *redeem* to mean the rescue of Africans from European 'unrighteousness' and from their own 'backwardness.' In declaring himself provisional preside of Africa, he argued that Africans lacked the culture, education, and civilization at that time to assume leadership over the continent. In this sense, Europeans were guilty of the 'inhuman, unchristian, and uncivilized behavior in Africa,' contributing to the darkness emanating from the continent.<sup>41</sup>

Garvey's declaration that, "Pilgrim Fathers we must have if Africa is to rise from her slumber and darkness,"<sup>42</sup> reveals his conviction that New World Blacks—especially Garveyites—were the arbiters of culture and redemption vis-à-vis the savagery of the African continent. Through his appropriation of the narrative of intrepid pilgrims colonizing, and thereby civilizing, the American wilderness, his statement also underscores his belief that Blacks in the Diaspora needed to follow the European model. It is important to note that Garvey found the *methods* of Europeans to be superior, not the people in and of themselves; it is for that reason that Blacks who had the tutelage of Europeans would be the redeemers of Africa. Irrespective of the distinction between Diasporic and Continental Africans, all Black people were nonetheless one, especially in their relative inferiority to white civilization. This narrative of progress in historical time was not unlike that of the Harlem Renaissance. Locke would not disagree with the UNIA that, "...the Negro has at least a social, cultural, and political destiny of his own and any attempt to make a white man of him is bound to fail in the end..."<sup>43</sup> In other words, Black people had

their own unique contributions to make and thus should look to Africa, not Europe. Garvey found that, "...the fullest opportunity should be given to both races to develop independently a civilization of their own..." inasmuch as the ultimate goal of social, cultural, and political development was Black autonomy. Black autonomy, in turn, required self-determination, which, for Garvey, could best be achieved through a mighty Black empire.

Garvey encouraged the development of a Black imperial state that rivaled, and would be able to combat, European imperialism. Admiring European statecraft, "Garvey self-consciously patterned the movement after Euro-American empires... in short, an 'imperial model of diaspora'..."<sup>44</sup> He was not advocating imperialism in the sense of conquest, but rather in the sense of transterritorial linkages. The totality of the race, scattered throughout the world, would have to unite, as empire building would inevitably be violent given that the arrogant and technically advanced white race would abdicate nothing: "He [Garvey] believed bloodshed would prove necessary for the new Negro bent on claiming his Motherland, as the imperial powers would never willingly surrender control of their African colonies. He demanded the restoration of black political autonomy and bolstered this political discourse of militaristic national building with images of Africa as a bright continent of riches."<sup>45</sup> As the Negro developed to ancient levels of consciousness and civilization and European empires disintegrated as they continued to tear each other asunder, it was inevitable that power and control would shift back to Africa. Garvey asserted: "The Seat of Empire Northward Moves was true to history and poetry during the period of Negro decline. But its Northern limit has been reached and with the revival of Negro activity its path has again turned South. For Empire has not only a Seat but a Home and that Home is in Africa."<sup>46</sup> He was not only claiming that Blacks had the capacity to develop a strong sovereign state in Africa, but also that Europe's world-historical dominance was coming to an end. It was only through a unified Black empire-state in Africa that African people could defend themselves from the violence and vitriol of white supremacy. The colonial model, therefore, remained intact, but it was repurposed for a regenerated Black race.

A sovereign Black empire-state could not take place in the white man's land; Africa, the original site of civilization, was the only place in which the darker race could have complete self-determination. The agitation for integration and equality in the United States, the West Indies, and Europe ultimately distracted the Negro from developing his own territory, and wasted energy on something that would never be realized. For Garvey, it made more sense for Black people to work and fight for their own nation than to expect white people to concede equality to a group they deemed inferior. E. Franklin Frazier wrote, "And even in basing his program upon fantastic claims of empire, Garvey always impressed in his followers that his promise was more realistic than that of those who were constantly arguing for the theoretical rights of the Negro."<sup>47</sup> In Garvey's view, demand for these "theoretical rights" ultimately retarded the progress of the Negro, and garnered only disapproval and disdain from the more advanced races: "The retrograde state of the Negro is characterized as accidental and circumstantial; and the onus of his condition is attributed to the callous indifference and insincerity of those Negroes who have failed to do their duty by the race in promoting a civilized imperialism that would meet the approval of established ideals..."<sup>48</sup> The realization of global African self-determination would only be possible if the race was unified in working toward a united, disciplined, strong Black empire-state on the African continent.

One of Garvey's most radical positions was that along with a strong state, Blacks needed a strong and autonomous economic foundation. He believed that because the poverty and industrial underdevelopment of Black people were highly visible, it was only through equally

conspicuous displays of economic development that Blacks could hope to change their image for themselves and for the rest of the world. The Black Star Line Corporation, organized in 1919, proved to be the ideal venture. It would connect Blacks dispersed throughout the world through business and trade; garner respect in the mercantile and commercial world by employing Black captains and officers on the ships; and display a fleet of steamships that would showcase the UNIA's modernity. Initially, even W.E.B. DuBois conceded that, despite its orotundity, the program was feasible:

[S]horn of its bombast and exaggeration, the main lines of the Garvey plan are perfectly feasible. What he is trying to say and do is this: American Negroes can, by accumulating and ministering their own capital, organize industry, join the black centers of the south Atlantic by commercial enterprise and in this way ultimately redeem Africa as fit and free for black men. This is true. It is feasible... The plan is not original with Garvey but he has popularized it... and swept thousands with him with intense belief in the possible accomplishment of the ideal.<sup>49</sup>

According to Garvey in the article "Why the Black Star Line Failed," published in the *Pittsburgh Courier* in 1931, "There was no doubt that several governments of Europe were feeling the effects of the new spirit of racial consciousness that had come over the Negro people of the world. Big commercial houses in America were afraid of the result of my encouraging Negroes to develop their own business enterprises and trading among themselves... The big shipping companies were also determined to keep the Negro off the high seas..."<sup>50</sup> Not only had the venture garnered the recognition from whites—albeit with negative feelings—that had long escaped Blacks, but it also brought scattered African descendants together through the identification with a Black-run enterprise. For Garvey, the fear that Europeans and Americans developed about the possibility of Blacks developing an independent economic infrastructure underscored the importance of race-specific economic activism to the realization of an autonomous empire-state. Garvey believed that Black enterprise and Black capitalism—of which the Black Star Line was a shining example—were key to racial modernization. He also felt that Black people would always be treated as cheap and disposable labor in the dominant system, therefore they needed to develop their own. Thus, he organized the Black Cross Navigation and Trading Company in 1927 after the collapse of the Black Star Line and purchased the company's only ship, the *S.S. General Goethals/S.S. Booker T. Washington*. He wrote, "One important factor in the marketability of the UNIA's latest economic venture was the mounting concerns of black workers over the consolidation of corporate capital, the accelerated rate of mechanization, and the ubiquitous problem of labor redundancy in many parts of the urban South."<sup>51</sup> While Garvey's plans were construed as naïve, irresponsible, and even criminal by many of his critics, for Black people who could secure only the most parlous employment, Garvey's economic model provided an alternative that was no more far-fetched than the idea of getting a fair deal in white owned and dominated industry.

Because of his racial radicalism, Garvey became, in his words, an "undesirable alien."<sup>52</sup> He was targeted by J. Edgar Hoover and the Bureau of Investigation as early as 1919, and was ultimately arrested, imprisoned, and deported. While he was convicted of mail service fraud, his actual crime was the articulation of a counterhegemonic racial program that challenged the U.S. state, and that was wildly popular among Black workers. The persecution of Marcus Garvey created the conditions for the surveillance, deportation, imprisonment, and disciplining of forms

of Black radicalism that, even when they were not Communist, were nonetheless considered un-American, subversive, and dangerous.

### **The Black Left**

The Black left was a group constituted by a range of militant scholars, activists, and organizations that were dedicated to bringing about fundamental change to the racial and economic order in the U.S. and beyond. They agitated and organized for a range of issues, including better working conditions, an end to Jim Crow, unionization, the protection of labor rights, access to equitable wages in the United States, and the centrality of the “Negro Question” and decolonization to the Communist platform. Though explicit advocacy of and support for socialism and communism was not widespread among Black people, organizations predicated upon an explicit critique of capitalism, including the African Blood Brotherhood, the League of Struggle for Negro Rights, and the Unemployed Councils, appealed to Black communities because they took up issues that were of immanent concern. Blacks sympathized with the Communist International’s platform that linked capitalist exploitation, structural racism, economic inequality, imperialism and the international oppression of workers. Concomitantly, Marxism provided a framework for Black people to connect their national second-class citizenship to worldwide forms of oppression produced by regimes of coloniality. Black left activism was antiracist, often interracial, anti-imperial, anticolonial, and internationalist.

An important example of the interracial and antiracist activism of the Black Left was their involvement in the 1931 Scottsboro Case. In this case, two white prostitutes, Ruby Bates and Victoria Price, accused nine unemployed teenage boys who were aged thirteen to nineteen and were looking for work, of rape in Paint Rock, Alabama. They did so in order to conceal their violation of the Mann Act, which prohibited the crossing of state lines for the purpose of committing an immoral act. Eight of the boys were convicted and sentenced to death by all-white juries despite the fact that one of the women recanted her story.<sup>53</sup> For the Black left, the Scottsboro Case was at the intersection of structural racism and economic dispossession. It was a paragon of racialized capitalist exploitation because the race and working-class background of the defendants made them targets to antiblack forms of criminalization and foreclosed any possibility of funding their own defense. According to Mark Solomon, “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 of 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.”<sup>54</sup> Black leftists believed that “black proletarians could not expect justice from a court created by the white ruling class but had to be freed by the revolutionary pressure of the masses.”<sup>55</sup> Thus, they sought to challenge not only the blatantly racist treatment of the defendants in the case, but also the racial logics of the legal system that accommodated “legal lynchings.”

The involvement of George Padmore, Jomo Kenyatta, and other Pan-Africanists helped to turn the case into an international fight against Jim Crow, or what was also referred to as “social fascism.”<sup>56</sup> By linking the case to fascism in Europe, the Black left publicized the struggle for revolutionary change and the imperative of an interracial struggle against racism and imperialism.<sup>57</sup> The Black left along with the communists defended the boys against the death penalty, globalized the struggle, and initiated a mass movement on behalf of the accused and Black people generally.<sup>58</sup> One example of their effectiveness was a protest in Havana, Cuba on April 7, 1927, in which “a mob... stoned the windows of an American bank, denounced Yankee imperialism, and demanded the freedom of the Scottsboro defendants.”<sup>59</sup> The defense of the

Scottsboro Boys developed sympathy among Black people for the Communist Party because the case was represented by the Party as a struggle against antiblack racism, capitalist exploitation, and global White supremacy.<sup>60</sup> Their defense of the nine accused underscored their larger fight against discrimination, which included organizing black and white workers and sharecroppers, contesting evictions, and incessantly confronting Jim Crow.<sup>61</sup> The formation of the International Labor Defense, headed by the Black Communist William L. Patterson helped to spread the influence of the Communist Party throughout the Black community and to demonstrate Communist commitment to racial justice and equality.<sup>62</sup> Involvement in the campaign gave Black people “the opportunity to become central actors in the defense of black men and the struggle against class and racial oppression... [which] transformed them from poor... workers into confident and fiery social activists.”<sup>63</sup> The organization of the Free Scottsboro Boys March, held on May 8, 1933, influenced a considerable number of Black people to recognize and challenge the entanglements of racialization and economic marginalization. Equally important, the March’s five thousand participants were interracial, and the presence of whites underscored the commitment of the Black left and the communists to challenge racial barriers and to promote social equality.<sup>64</sup> Significantly, it was the first major protest for racial equality in Washington D.C.<sup>65</sup>

In their Defense of the Scottsboro boys, the Black Left tied their campaign of mobilization explicitly to the anticolonial and anti-imperialist mobilization against Italy’s invasion of Ethiopia in 1935. This cause resonated with Black people across the political spectrum.<sup>66</sup> Historically, Abyssinia (or Ethiopia) had stood as a powerful symbol of African autonomy and independence in Black intellectual thought. Ethiopia was important symbolically and materially to Black people throughout the world because it had defied colonial imposition with the defeat of Italy in the Battle of Adowa in 1896. The invasion of Abyssinia was an important world-historical event to people on the Black Left because of its colonial, racial, and imperial significance. While many of the organizations that sprang up on behalf of Ethiopia were socialist or Communist, it was race—not class—that was the primary focus. The Invasion of Abyssinia prompted Black intellectuals, the Black Press, students, community leaders, and activists to critique not only Fascism, but also of the entire imperial-colonial project.<sup>67</sup> While whites on the left within Western European countries spoke out against Italy’s aggression, they failed to make the connection between antifascism and anticolonialism. This was not the case among black radicals, including George Padmore and CLR James, who, in making the connection, understood the impossibility of combating Fascism without attending to all forms of colonialism. They realized that in order to defeat Fascism, colonialism must be destroyed; as long as Africans and their descendants continued to be treated as inferior “others” to be ruled by Europeans, the threat of fascist tyranny would always be present.<sup>68</sup> Anticolonialism and anti-imperialism as articulated by the Black left linked the Invasion of Abyssinia to policies in the United States that denied equal rights and access to Black people. These connections were based on the recognition of conditions of Black abjection that were linked to and reproduced by European domination.

Myriad organizations, including the Ethiopian Research Council, the International Black League, the Afro-American Producers and Consumers League, the Ethiopian Guild of the Latter Day Garveyites, the International African Friends of Abyssinia, the Abraham Lincoln Brigade and Pan African Reconstruction Association (PARA) were organized on behalf and in support of Ethiopia.<sup>69</sup> These were combined with demands for antiracist and anti-imperialist legislation and for an end to racist and imperialist practices in the United States and the Third World. They drew

inspiration from Garveyism, Black nationalism, and communism. Leftists Blacks throughout the world mobilized around racial solidarity to expose the symbolic and material violence that was being committed against Ethiopia. Their effectiveness was clearly evident in labor strikes that broke out across the Caribbean in the 1930s, influenced in part by protests against the Ethiopian invasion and the failure of European metropolises to intervene.<sup>70</sup> George Padmore, referring to Italy's invasion as "fascist colonialism" wrote in *The Crisis* magazine: "the struggles of the Abyssinians is [sic] fundamentally a part of the struggles of the black race the world over for national freedom, political, social and racial emancipation."<sup>71</sup>

For the Black left, the Invasion of Ethiopia was an egregious example of the entanglements of race and capitalist exploitation. It was a special case of a universal reality that demanded international solidarity. The failure of the United States to act on behalf of Ethiopia resonated well with the reality of its domestic racial terrorism. Failure to respond was tantamount to the historical failure to protect Blacks from such terror. The experience of white supremacy in the United States, ranging from individual attacks by the Ku Klux Klan to the structural injustices of Jim Crow, fomented antifascist sentiments and a sense of solidarity with Ethiopians.<sup>72</sup> This stemmed from a history of black international solidarity in the mounting of challenges to racial oppression in the US. Such challenges stemmed from already-existing solidarities with other Black struggles throughout the world that influenced how the American racial model was envisioned and critiqued. Unlike traditional Marxists, the Black left understood race to be not simply a superstructural epiphenomenon, but rather an embodied experience of domination shared by those subjected to regimes of coloniality. Irrespective of how it was constituted in a particular location, its common denominator was violence and dispossession. Blackness, as a racial category, traversed geospatial realities, and operated metonymically to express a subjectivity produced through and opposed to colonialism, imperialism, racism, economic exploitation and cultural domination. For that reason, the Invasion of Ethiopia was taken up as the encroachment of white supremacy and imperialism on Black freedom.

The complicity of American industrial capitalists like Henry Ford in supplying economic aid to Mussolini was merely an international manifestation of the ways in which the owners of production financed the exploitation, marginalization, and diminution of Black lives domestically. The Black left understood that the United States was essentially uninterested in the plight of Ethiopia because it had little investments and no colonies in the Horn of Africa, just as it was indifferent to alleviating Black suffering at home because it would be economically disadvantageous. Though the United States officially declared neutrality in 1935 and imposed embargos on both Italy and Ethiopia, the economic support provided to Italy by American corporations represented the State's implicit alignment with the invaders.<sup>73</sup> In effect, the policy of neutrality actually hindered invaluable African-American efforts to procure financial aid for Ethiopia and enlist such aid in its defense efforts. It impeded efforts at cross-racial organizational cooperation because many white American organizations became vested in upholding the government's neutrality policy. This left it up to the collaborative efforts of Black organizations, from nationalist to cultural to Communist—with approval of and support from Ethiopian leaders in Europe—to create networks in order to link with African leaders, to petition the United Nations, and to organize rallies.<sup>74</sup>

The failure of the League of Nations to defend Abyssinia's sovereignty despite the 1928 Kellogg Briand Pact that committed its members to renounce war as an instrument of national policy, served to underscore to Black people that Italy's invasion of Abyssinia constituted an act of white supremacy against its only African member. In fact, a number of countries in the

League of Nations actually supported Italy's invasion, citing Abyssinia's history of involvement in the slave trade as a rationale for the breach of sovereignty that the invasion represented. Some even called it an act of European humanitarianism. Others were blunter in their support for Italy as an act of "white solidarity." Their allegiance to whiteness that superseded the legal obligations of the League of Nations reaffirmed for Blacks that freedom was precarious for racialized people and nation-states.<sup>75</sup> Moreover, despite the USSR's formal condemnation of Italy's imperial conquest, it nonetheless continued to supply Italy with oil even as the United Nations imposed economic sanctions.<sup>76</sup> This exposed the Comintern's supposed commitment to ameliorating racism and colonialism as capricious and contradictory. It posed a dilemma for American Black radicals that identified in one way or another with Communism, and spurred some to distance themselves from Moscow. They began to focus more of their attention on the regimes of racial injustice in the United States, and on the racial impetus for colonial domination underscored by Italy's invasion of Ethiopia and the response to it by European states.

Italy's invasion of Ethiopia served to radicalize many Blacks who were not initially Left-leaning, with a significant amount joining the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA). It served as a political awakening for important Black Communist leaders, including Claudia Jones: "Impressed with its ability to build mass, multiracial movements in defense of Ethiopia, she believed that the CPUSA offered a viable alternative to Harlem nationalists, who viewed the war narrowly in racial terms and who often shunned mass organizations."<sup>77</sup> Because the Communist Party was international in scope and linked the Invasion of Ethiopia to other struggles against fascism, it provided a space for Blacks to identify their struggles with that of other oppressed people of color. Advocating for Ethiopia was a way of supporting "anti-fascist internationalism," a position that crossed racial, class, and geospatial boundaries. The International Workers Order, an anti-racist, anti-fascist "movement culture" that acknowledged the unique national cultures of its membership but promoted pan-ethnic, working-class solidarity, was a coalition born out of the international offensive against Fascism. The Second World Congress against Racism and Anti-Semitism, held in September 1937, provided a forum for a connection to be enunciated between fascism in Europe and racism in the United States. In so doing, the destinies of countries threatened by Fascism came to be linked with the fate of Blacks suffering under the weight of racial violence.<sup>78</sup>

The Black left mounted some of the earliest radical challenges to the U.S. State. The critiques that they levied were framed in the context of racial repression, economic depression, and entrenched colonialism that collectively would become subsequently primary targets of anticommunist/antiradical/antiblack Cold War repression and discipline. The Black left became an element in the enunciation of the Black radical structure of feeling at a particular historical moment when the African diaspora was being forged out of a materialist foundation and a structural focus. Its militant interracial, antiracist, internationalist, and anti-imperialist articulations challenged American imperialism and the American State in fundamental ways. This explains its vigorous and violent suppression and its supplanting by Culturalism and forms of cultural politics that could be easily managed and co-opted by the state.

Even though contemporary articulations of the African diaspora became abstracted from radical enunciations of Blackness, and became a form of cultural critical practice, of mutual recognition against the universality of black misrepresentation and abjection, and an articulation of the politics of identity and representation, the Black radical structure of feeling nonetheless provided

the grammar and the pedagogy to critique and challenge regimes of coloniality<sup>79</sup> that sustain the trans-spatial and trans-temporal conditions of Black abjection. It created an intellectual map for theories of the African diaspora to reflect anticolonial and antiracist grievance articulated in the conjunctural space of black radical consciousness. Unlike post-Cold War articulations of Blackness, the Black radical structure of feeling inflected a heterogeneous critique imbued with not only cultural, but also structural, anticapitalist, and anti-imperialist foundations. “New Negro Culturalism”—the Harlem Renaissance enunciation of Black radicalism—had yet to become the hegemonic mode of theorizing and asserting Blackness, so the project of constructing Black modern subjectivity became inhered in a robust theoretical framework that included structural critiques of capitalist exploitation, analyses of racialization, and the politicization of cultural production.

This dissertation seeks to comprehensively refocus the analytical frameworks dealing with black modern subjectivity through an in-depth examination of “Culturalism,” or the regime of meaning-making in which Blackness is culturally specified and abstracted from material, political economic, and structural conditions of dispossession through state technologies of antiradicalism. As Deborah Thomas explains, “Herein lies the root of the epistemological violence generated by the turn to [C]ulturalis[m]... The question of where black populations stood in relation to states... became secondary to the question of how blacks in the West were connected to roots, to Africa... the language of cultural politics... abandons the impetus within *internationalism* toward imagining political community. It derails a more global political economic analysis...”<sup>80</sup> Herskovitsian cultural analysis, which asserted Black humanity and equality based on evidence of African cultural legacy,<sup>81</sup> inaugurated the shift from political economy to “the language of moralism.”<sup>82</sup> The focus on cultural continuity did not take into account historical conditions of forced labor, racialized oppression, colonial imposition, or capitalist exploitation;<sup>83</sup> instead it codified the “assumption that the history and culture of peoples of African descent in the New World have to be argued out anthropologically in terms of an identifiable authentic past persisting into the present.”<sup>84</sup> The latter was determined to be the key to citizenship and equality for Blacks. Cold War Culturalism institutionalized the hegemony of antiradical cultural politics by foregrounding cultural analyses of African retention and syncretism, cultural continuity, and comparative diasporic cultures. As the Cold War instantiated the bifurcation of the world and influenced the direction of decolonization, “diaspora became reduced to its cultural aspects... the question of origins became a question of culture.” It essentially framed connections among African descendants in terms of culture; asserted Black modernity and claims to equality on cultural grounds; and constructed culture as the domain of struggle. Culturalism divorced Blackness and the African diaspora from the material realities of governmentalized, transnational state projects that sustain racial and class hierarchies.<sup>85</sup>

The hegemony of Culturalism in contemporary theories of the Black condition and the African diaspora diverge significantly from those of the Black radical structure of feeling that conceptualized the Diaspora (thought not explicitly named at this time) through a nexus that included political economy, cultural formations, and nationalism. Conditions of Black abjection were seen to permeate both the base and the superstructure such that mobilization on both fronts was necessary to combat white supremacy. The ascendance of New Negro Culturalism as the progenitor of, and therefore the predominate structure in, post-Cold War theories of the African diaspora is the unfortunate consequence of the entanglements of anticommunism, antiradicalism, and antiblackness. The result has been a turn away from the political economy/structural critique that, in the interwar period, provided a theoretical framework to challenge American antiblack



statist discourse. The marginalization of Black radicalism and political economy produced the politicization of culture as the dominant mode of organizing for Black equality, and the primary intellectual focus in African diaspora studies. Post-Cold War theories of the African diaspora became divorced from the Black radical structure of feeling and reduced to the Harlem Renaissance enunciation of black radicalism in a manner that does not sufficiently theorize the conditions of Black abjection and their connection to the material realities of Black people.

Culturalism supports the constitution and maintenance of Blackness as a category of economic exploitation and dispossession and racialized abjection in three fundamental ways. First, it reinscribes the Black on the margins of the state by accommodating Blackness in a way that maintains their subordination and subjection on cultural grounds. The foregrounding of the culture, behavior, and performance of Black people leaves the effects of inequality, increased poverty, unemployment, and structural features of the global political economy on Black people largely undertheorized. Thus, on the one hand, deteriorating conditions of Black people globally are understood as innate cultural lack or pathology. On the other hand, it is assumed that Black empowerment and equality can be achieved in the struggle over cultural representation. Both of these positions reproduce cultural specifications of Blackness that negate the role of state and capitalist structures in its production and maintenance.

Second, Culturalism creates the condition for the Black that is inscribed in the modern project to “niggerize”<sup>86</sup> radical Blacks who present a fundamental threat to the organization of global and statist structures on the basis of racialized capitalist exploitation. Culturalism asserts a particular outlook, behavior, and set of goals for Black people,<sup>87</sup> and those who deviate from these norms that are ostensibly shared by the entire group are cast out. In other words, culture is asserted to rationalize the marginalization of those who occupy the constitutive outside of the state because they have been construed as seditious, subversive, and dangerous. The latter are foreclosed from belonging and are therefore subjected to the violation of their civil liberties, confinement, and deportation. By severely curtailing the possibilities, potential, and forms of freedom of those who are inscribed in the modern project and niggerizing those who are not, Culturalism ultimately functions as a technology of state repression and subjection.

Third, Culturalism has the dual function of erasing political economy as a means of understanding and critiquing the Black condition, and of specifying Black articulations of freedom and equality in terms of culture:

[A]nalyses of race and class began to privilege a focus on culture over a focus on socioeconomic inequality. This had both academic and practical effects. Academically, it supported a liberal view of development that naturalized capitalist competition and that positioned the cultural... practice of middle-class white Americans as normative... practically, the cultural model... directed attention away from the overall political economy of American capitalism and of how it ‘uses, abuses, and divides its poorly organized working class’...<sup>88</sup>

Anticommunism entrenched this move away from structural analysis by criminalizing and disciplining critiques of the entanglements of the racialized social order, the spread of empire, and capitalist accumulation. Instead of challenging their exclusion from the state based on economic dispossession and maldistribution of resources, Black people in the United States began to mobilize around cultural specification, for inclusion based on liberal civil rights discourse, and/or to assert international linkages based on mutually recognized cultural

enunciations of blackness. In other words, the Cold War curtailed the possibilities of challenging the state in terms of the political economy of exploitation, thus Blackness came to be understood in nationalist and cultural terms of exclusion. At the same time, decolonizing countries that sought equality in the world-system asserted their willingness and ability to adopt the culture of development, modernization, and anticommunism. This was notwithstanding the fact that their insertion into the global political economy as sovereign nations continued relations of unequal exchange, declining terms of trade, and neocolonialism.<sup>89</sup>

Culturalism is thus a function of antiradical and antiblack statist pedagogy, and after World War II, it became entangled with anticommunism as an instrumentality of surveillance and violence. Culturalism institutionalized the erasure of radical political economic critique in the theorizing of the black global condition, the disciplining of Black radicalism, and the cultural specification of African diaspora studies examined in this dissertation. The cultural specification of Blackness and the forms of Culturalism that it takes are integrally related to statist technologies that facilitate the accommodation of Black intellectual and practical challenges to the capitalist state while, at the same time, ensuring their cooptation. These are the bases for the surveillance, disciplining, and punishment of black radical critique.

In Chapter One, I theorize the Cold War's intellectual impact on the epistemology of African diaspora theory. I argue that "New Negro Culturalism" became reproduced in "Cold War Culturalism," and the latter institutionalized the cultural specification of Blackness and marginalized radical political economic critique.

In Chapter Two, I examine the entanglements of anticommunism, antiradicalism, and antiblackness in U.S. Cold War policy and practice. I argue that what was at stake in communism, understood critically as a threat and a danger to the stability of the U.S. State, was translated analogically and metaphorically through the specter of the black threat. I make the additional argument that the anticommunist/antiradical pedagogy was used to discipline and punish: internationalism, especially as it related to linking the struggles of Black Americans to those in the decolonizing world; antiracism/interracialism because it threatened the domestic and international racial order; and anti-imperialism because it generally articulated a critique of American foreign policy and exploitative method of accumulation. In effect, the imbrication and entanglement of Blackness and communism through analogy and metaphor created a constellation of meaning that accommodated the policing of radical movements, organizations, and individuals by characterizing them as subversive, dangerous, and un-American.

In Chapter Three, I apply the theoretical framework developed in Chapter Two to case studies of Black American and West Indian intellectuals and activists who had to contend with the Cold War impositions of U.S. state and empire. I focus on Claudia Jones, Paul Robeson, William Arthur Lewis, Eric Williams, George Padmore, William Edward Burghardt (W.E.B.) DuBois, Cyril Lionel Robert (C.L.R.) James, and Cheddi Jagan. My analysis demonstrates the manner in which Black radical challenges were disciplined, while Black political economic critique that operated within U.S. statist pedagogy became accommodated.

In Chapter Four, I provide an archaeology of African Diaspora Studies at the University of California, Berkeley (UCB). I begin by explicating the ways in which American studies and area studies acted as institutional precursors for Africana Studies as an interdiscipline in the American academy. I then present the discussion of Africana Studies at UCB. I argue that the administration's fear about Black radical mobilization motivated the separation of Afro-American Studies from the Ethnic Studies program, and the establishment of the African American Studies Department in 1974. I then argue that the development of the PhD program in

African diaspora studies in 1997 further entrenched antiradicalism by institutionalizing “diaspora” as the method of theorizing transnational Blackness, and by abandoning political economy. I do so to reveal the different forms of statist intervention deployed to manage the threat of Black radicalism wherever it arises.

In Chapter Five I argue that the institutionalization of Black British Cultural Studies (BBCS) in the U.S. academy reified Culturalism in the specification of African diaspora studies. I argue that when BBCS entered the discourse of Africana Studies, there already existed “Culture Wars” over the way in which Blackness should be theorized and studied. The institutionalization of BBCS in the context of these “Culture Wars” had the consequence of extricating and eviscerating the neo-Marxist/post-Marxist analyses that were integral to its critique in Great Britain.<sup>90</sup> The Americanized version of BBCS further entrenched Culturalism and the rejection of Black radical thought by conceptualizing “Blackness” as a deterritorialized theoretical construction constituted in and through struggles over representation rather than as a lived, embodied experience of white supremacy and capitalist exploitation. I argue that the collapsing of Blackness into Culturalism underscored the pervasive reach of the governmentalized state in the disciplining of Africana studies.

In the Conclusion, I present a materialist theory of the African Diaspora in order to adequately interrogate the shifting discourse on Africa. Once understood only as the “dark continent,” it is now becoming positioned as the “New Asia” and the final frontier of capitalism.<sup>91</sup> I examine the possible implications of such a shift for the meaning of “Blackness,” and the possibility of disarticulating “the Black” from “the nigger.”

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<sup>2</sup> Chad Williams, “Vanguards of the New Negro: African American Veterans and Post-World War I Racial Militancy,” *The Journal of African American History* 92 (2007), 348.

<sup>3</sup> Raymond Williams, *The Long Revolution*, (London: Chatto & Windus, 1961), 64.

<sup>4</sup> Sean Matthews, “Change and Theory in Raymond Williams’s Structure of Feeling,” *Pretexts: literary and cultural studies* 10 (2001), 179.

<sup>5</sup> Stuart Hall, “A Critical Survey of the Theoretical and Practical Achievements of the Last Ten Years,” in *Literature, Society, and the Sociology of Literature* edited by Francis Baker et al, (Essex: University of Essex, 1976), 2.

<sup>6</sup> Matthews, “Change and Theory,” 183.

<sup>7</sup> Michelle Ann Stephens, “The Conjunctural Field of New Negro Studies,” in *Escape From New York: The New Negro Renaissance Beyond Harlem* edited by Davarian L. Baldwin and Minkah Makalani, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 403.

<sup>8</sup> Hall, “A Critical Survey,” 3.

<sup>9</sup> T.G. Standing, “The Possibility of a Distinctive Culture Contribution from the American Negro,” *Social Forces* 17 (1938), 99.

<sup>10</sup> Matthews, “Raymond Williams’s Structure of Feeling,” 182.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 189.

<sup>12</sup> See W.E.B. DuBois, “Close Ranks,” *Crisis*, July 1918.

<sup>13</sup> Stephens, “The Conjunctural Field,” 406.

<sup>14</sup> Erik McDuffie, *Sojourning for Freedom: Black Women, American Communism, and the Making of Black Left Feminism*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 28.

<sup>15</sup> Fernando Ferrera, “Raymond Williams and the Italian Left,” in *Raymond Williams: Critical Perspectives* edited by Terry Eagleton, (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1989), 105.

<sup>16</sup> Williams, “Vanguards of the New Negro,” 349.

<sup>17</sup> Alain Locke, ed., *The New Negro: Voices of the Harlem Renaissance*, edited by Alain Lock, (New York: Touchstone, 1925), 11.

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- <sup>18</sup> Henry Louis Gates, Jr., “The Trope of a New Negro and the Reconstruction of the Image of the Black,” *Representations* 24 (1988), 147.
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 131.
- <sup>21</sup> Locke, *The New Negro*, xxvii.
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.
- <sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.
- <sup>24</sup> Gates, “The Trope of a New Negro,” 143.
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 129-147.
- <sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 140.
- <sup>27</sup> Frank Guridy, “Making New Negroes in Cuba: Garveyism as a Transcultural Movement,” in *Escape From New York: The New Negro Renaissance Beyond Harlem* edited by Davarian L. Baldwin and Minkah Makalani, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 183-204.
- <sup>28</sup> John Henrik Clarke, ed., *Marcus Garvey and the Vision of Africa*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), 298.
- <sup>29</sup> Claudrena Harold, “Reconfiguring the Roots and Routes of New Negro Activism: The Garvey Movement in New Orleans,” in *Escape From New York: The New Negro Renaissance Beyond Harlem* edited by Davarian L. Baldwin and Minkah Makalani, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 216.
- <sup>30</sup> Guridy, “Making New Negroes in Cuba,” 196.
- <sup>31</sup> Cyril Briggs, “The Decline of the Garvey Movement,” *The Communist*, June 1931.
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- <sup>34</sup> Harold, “The Roots and Routes of Negro Activism,” 217
- <sup>35</sup> Marcus Garvey, “The British West Indies in the Mirror or Civilization,” *The African Times and Orient Review*, October 1913.
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*
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- <sup>38</sup> Marcus Garvey, “African Fundamentalism,” in *Marcus Garvey and the Vision of Africa* edited by John Henrik Clarke, (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), 157.
- <sup>39</sup> John Henrik Clarke, “The Impact of Marcus Garvey on the Harlem Renaissance,” in *Marcus Garvey and the Vision of Africa* edited by John Henrik Clarke, (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), 188.
- <sup>40</sup> Marcus Garvey, “Negro Progress Postulates Negro Government,” *The Blackman*, April 23, 1929.
- <sup>41</sup> Jeanette Eileen Jones, “‘Brightest Africa’ in the New Negro Imagination,” in *Escape From New York: The New Negro Renaissance Beyond Harlem* edited by Davarian L. Baldwin and Minkah Makalani, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 43.
- <sup>42</sup> Marcus Garvey, “An Answer to his Many Critics,” in *Marcus Garvey and the Vision of Africa* edited by John Henrik Clarke, (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), 252.
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 250.
- <sup>44</sup> Guridy, “Making New Negroes in Cuba,” 184.
- <sup>45</sup> Jones, “‘Brightest Africa’ in the New Negro Imagination,” 42.
- <sup>46</sup> Garvey, “Negro Progress.”
- <sup>47</sup> Frazier, “Garvey: A Mass Leader,” 147-148.
- <sup>48</sup> Marcus Garvey, “A Talk with Afro-West Indians,” in *Marcus Garvey and the Vision of Africa* edited by John Henrik Clarke, (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), 83.
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- <sup>50</sup> Marcus Garvey, “Why the Black Star Line Failed,” in *Marcus Garvey and the Vision of Africa* edited by John Henrik Clarke, (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), 149.
- <sup>51</sup> Richard B. Moore, “The Critics and Opponents of Marcus Garvey,” in *Marcus Garvey and the Vision of Africa* edited by John Henrik Clarke, (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), 215.
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- <sup>64</sup> Mark Naison, "Historical Notes on Blacks and American Communism: The Harlem Experience," *Science and Society* 42 (1978), 325.
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- <sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 104-107.
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## Chapter One

### New Negro Culturalism, Cold War Culturalism, and African Diaspora Theory

The Cold War played a crucial role in the epistemological and intellectual constitution of African diaspora theory. Starting in the 1950s, anticommunism and antiradicalism overwrote and built upon extant regimes of antiblackness that continued to dispossess, subordinate, and marginalize the majority of African descendants in the United States and in the decolonizing world. While concessions were made to a certain group of Blacks—particularly Cold War liberals and Global South developmentalists—these exceptions were directly contingent upon the repression of labor, radicalism, and any forms of mobilization that moved beyond the pedagogy of the Cold War state. Those who received entitlements from the state were complicit with the regime of violence against those they helped to construct as deviant. Black liberal intellectuals in the United States were particularly implicated in this collusion, and their ideology—what I term “Cold War Culturalism”—became hegemonic in the production of knowledge about Blackness and in the articulation of the project of Black liberation. They came to exemplify what Sylvia Wynter calls “...the academic refusal to question the presuppositions of the egalitarian creed of the United States.”<sup>1</sup> Equality was asserted on cultural grounds that did not fundamentally challenge the logics of the state, and political economy and radical critiques of racial capitalism were marginalized and maligned. Their conscription into the statist discourse and practice of liberalism had the effect of foreclosing the space and possibilities of freedom in what became an act of bad faith that instantiated Cold War Culturalism in the project of antiblackness in which anticommunism and antiradicalism were inscribed.

Intellectuals that sought to fundamentally challenge capitalist exploitation and racism through a critique of political economy were misrepresented as Communists, irrespective of their ideological orientation. They became subjected to surveillance, physical violence, deportation, incarceration, and other forms of discipline and punishment. By distancing and distinguishing themselves from those deemed “subversive” and “anti-American,” Black Cold War liberals effectively leveraged the Black left in seeking an end to Jim Crow policy and practice. In effect they made cultural claims to equality. This became the basis for their reinscription into a European civilizing discourse in which culture became the marker of the modern human subject. The genealogy of Cold War Culturalism linked it directly to the intellectual project of the Harlem Renaissance with its cultural assertions of the “New Negro.” Both sought to contest *narrations* of Blackness rooted in white supremacy and coloniality, that is, the construction of Blacks as morally, ethically, and culturally inferior and therefore foreclosed from the ability to contribute to humanity. This “culturalization” limited the possibility for critical engagement with political economy and the fundamental and essential role it serves in Black subordination and abjection. The possibilities for rights and recognition came to be pinned to a certain type of Black—whether the New Negro or the Cold War Liberal—deemed fit to receive them. Without the sociocultural and political attributes of the New Negro or the Black liberal, the majority of the Black population became niggerized. They were left open to the continued deployment of violence and to the forces of erasure and indignity because they fell outside of the domains of respectability. Their freedom continued to be severely circumscribed.

Cold War Culturalism had its genealogical roots the New Negro pedagogy of the Harlem Renaissance. Even though they emerged in different historical contexts and under different statist

discourses of Blackness, both asserted Black humanity and claims to citizenship on cultural grounds while refusing to engage with the political economy as a source of Black dispossession. For New Negro Culturalists, the effect was the continued location of the Old Negro on the constitutive outside of humanity as the abject primitive and savage. The narrative of the Old Negro continued to be grounded in the construction of slave labor as a source of debasement and degradation. This negated consideration of plantation slavery as the space through which African descendants built the modern world. Instead, artistic expression became the means by which Negroes would gain white recognition. This constituted a rejection of the location of Black modern subjecthood in the material conditions of plantation production. This was the framework that allowed Cold War Culturalists to ignore, erase, and defame the Black radical subject, engaged in contesting capitalist domination through a political economic critique. By disavowing all forms of radicalism that challenged the U.S. state, Cold War liberals created the conditions for, and indeed became complicit with, the anticommunist state in its campaign of violence and brutality deployed against Black radicals.

The Cartesian valorization of the mind was particularly potent under conditions where Black people were conscripted into embodied labor. The devalorization of the Black body was rooted in the devaluation of labor. It rejected the possibility of Black modern subjecthood constituted out of material conditions of the base/political economy that would challenge Black abjection and contest the myth of Black inferiority. It privileged the “thinking” subject and rationalized the violence that resulted in the decimation of the Black body now reduced to the primitive/savage/niggerized non-citizen. It also rejected the rootedness of black subjection in the lived conditions of embodied material realities out of which history and culture are produced and through which they are reflected. The emphasis on culture and history, posited as products of the mind, became a Culturalist distortion. Marxist analysis, with its distinctions between the material base and the superstructure, allow the exposure of both New Negro and Cold War Culturalism as being enraptured by the privileging of reason and rationality. It also explains the complicity of the Black elite, specified in terms of culture, in the repression of “popular” Blackness rooted in material conditions. The marginalization of labor, political economy, and Marxism served to reinscribe the Black liberal elite in the structures of domination that dispose the overwhelming majority of African descendants.

The dominant racial pedagogy in the 1920s conscripted the New Negro into a form of Culturalism that challenged the U.S. state by offering a critique of the natural inferiority of the African that particularly manifested in the emergence and popularity of scientific racism and social Darwinism. The assertion of Black culture, with its claim to the capacity for self-consciousness, inserted the New Negro into a historicist discourse that allowed for the possibility of Black modern subjecthood. Through the Harlem Renaissance, New Negroes positioned themselves as the arbiters of civilization for the Negro race. However, unlike its Cold War counterpart, New Negro Culturalism did not foreclose antisystemic challenges to political economy. Many in fact belonged to Leftist organizations. The explanation rests with a statist pedagogy that was not yet consumed by the existential threats of communism and socialism. The focus of the state as a rapidly emerging global power was on Europe’s colonial power, and this was especially the case prior to WWII. The assertion of Black cultural genius functioned not only as a challenge to white supremacy and racism in the United States, but also as a challenge to the rationalizing order upon which rested the continuation of colonization. As producers of culture, Black intellectuals demonstrated claims to self-consciousness as universal subjects with the capacity to produce their own history and constitute their own reality. This translated into



calls for an end to inequality in the United States. It also supported calls for self-governance in the colonies that fit well into U.S. anti-imperialist assertions of global power.<sup>2</sup> This located New Negro Culturalism firmly in historicist discourse and the linear progress narrative of developmentalism.

While Cold War Culturalism retained the coupling of Black modern subjecthood with Black cultural production, its counterhegemonic potential became circumscribed by the virulent anticommunism of the post-WWII American state. By the advent of the Cold War, discourses of Blackness had moved away from “naturalist” formulations that negated the possibility of modern subjectivity to “historicist” notions of a Black civilized subject, even though “not-yet” and “not quite” modern. This was the reigning thesis of modernization theory and its original manifestation in developmentalism. New Negro Culturalism had already firmly located the Black in historicist discourse. Furthermore, on the one hand, Developmentalism emphasized material conditions as the root cause of exclusion and dehumanization. On the other hand, Black decolonial struggle had already inscribed itself in radical antisystemic challenges influenced by Marxism. In its drive for legitimation and white recognition, Cold War Culturalism was forced to accommodate itself to the burgeoning anticommunism by embracing its international and domestic imperatives through the suppression of the Black radical tradition. Thus, while New Negro Culturalism challenged the fictions of the state and the legitimizing myth of the Negro as foreclosed from Black modern subjectivity on cultural/civilizational grounds, Cold War Culturalism became complicit in the fictions of the Cold War state in ways that conflated Black radical challenges with insurgent communism that posed an existential threat to the nation. In this manner, anticommunism, antiblackness, and antiradicalism became entangled discourses that negatively impacted persons of African descent nationally and globally. New Negro Culturalism came with potentially liberatory possibilities; Cold War Culturalism, in juxtaposition, became inscribed in the pedagogies of the state. As a result, the possibilities of Black liberation became severely curtailed.

### **Theorizing Culturalism**

Culturalism can be defined as the regime of meaning-making in which Blackness is culturally specified and abstracted from material, political economic, and structural conditions of dispossession through state technologies of antiradicalism.<sup>3</sup> Produced out of colonialist discourse and reproducing imperial logics, it does not fundamentally challenge the social constructions of Blackness that are vivified in and through relations of production that mark the Black as slave/nigger/primitive/savage. As such, this particular assertion of Black culture as the basis for rights and recognition reinscribes the Black into narratives of inferiority as abject. Myth, discourse, and ideology—in other words, the superstructure—have been used to *rationalize* the continued dispossession of the Black subject and to negate the material and structural conditions that reify the Black as “other.” When culture is used as an exclusive challenge to these distortions it leaves intact the structural basis for Black abjection, rendering the challenge incomplete. While arguments put forth by Sylvia Wynter and Neo-Marxists including Paul Riceour and Karl Mannheim that the superstructure is critical in sustaining the conditions of dispossession are true, it remains that the system cannot be challenged on cultural grounds alone because of its rootedness in relations of production. A cultural challenge that rejects political economy becomes entrapped in and coopted by the hegemonic discourse of the state. The possibility for antisystemic critique is pre-empted because of the distortions that sustain misrecognition. Culturalism reifies the denial of modern subjecthood on material grounds

because it produces a scotoma that satisfies only the desire of Black intellectuals and elites to be accommodated by the state. The benefits they are afforded are predicated on forms of statist economic accumulation that reproduce the dehumanization and peripheralization of Black people. Because Culturalists have a particular allegiance to the state, they cannot present a fundamental challenge to it. They become conscripted through their complicity with the state to participate in the exclusion—the niggerization—of Blacks who remain abjected because they are entrapped by the markers from which Culturalists attempt to distance themselves. The abject/nigger lacks access to modern subjectivity.

### **Abstract Labor and the Enslaved African**

The Marxist notion of abstract labor provides a means of understanding how Black subjectivity has come to be negated on the grounds of unfreedom. It is a technology deployed to deny the value produced by labor power. One of the most extreme manifestations of this relationship is that of the enslaved: “As C.L.R. James has reminded us, slave labor was the first form of expropriated social labor: ‘The slaves... were closer to a modern proletariat than any group of workers in existence at the time...’”<sup>4</sup> The negation of modern slavery as a condition of labor abstraction is at the root of the denial of the slave’s central and almost exclusive role in the building of the modern world. By its application to slavery, I propose a modification of Dipesh Chakrabarty’s contention that abstract labor is that which is “juridically and politically free, yet socially unfree.” As a laborer abstracted from the value produced by his/her work, the enslaved is denied not merely social freedom, but political and juridical freedom as well. If, as Chakrabarty claims, the labor of abstracting is a kind of unfreedom,<sup>5</sup> then it can be rightfully asserted that the plantation model was the source and origin of the domination of the worker in the workplace.<sup>6</sup> In this sense, I challenge Chakrabarty’s position because it essentially negates enslaved labor as modern labor. However, as Philip McMichael argues, “wage and non-wage forms of labor coexist[ed] within the same universe of value relations, each influencing the other... Slave labor was integral to the emerging world economy. It was a commodity-producing labor force expressing the close relation between the state and commerce in the formative period of world capitalism.”<sup>7</sup> The production and extraction of surplus value was thus a process shared by enslaved laborers and wage laborers. Since systems of enslavement and racialization foreclosed the possibility of an abstracted equality rooted in juridical and political freedom, to make the latter the only conditions under which the abstraction of labor is possible is a “negation of the negation.” Michelle Wright, borrowing from Frederick Engels, defines this as a form of idealist dialectics in which the antithesis is completely negated by the thesis, thereby resulting in a synthesis that is no different than the thesis.<sup>8</sup> In *Capital I*, Marx writes: “...all labour is an expenditure of human labour-power, in the physiological sense, and it is in this quality of being equal, or abstract, human labour that it forms the value of commodities.”<sup>9</sup> I contend that the abstraction of enslaved labor not only formed the value of commodities, but also the value of the universal subjecthood from which they were excluded. The capitalist world-economy began with an “interdependent dichotomy”<sup>10</sup> composed of unremunerated Black labor and white extraction of surplus value; and of Black unfreedom in the form of chattel slavery and the conflation of whiteness with protection from enslavement. In other words, “Slavery had created the pernicious tradition that manual labor was the badge of the slave and the sphere of influence of the Negro.”<sup>11</sup> The denial of this dialectic allows the white universal subject to posit itself as “wholly independent in his derivation” and as “a wholly self-actualized subject,”<sup>12</sup> which ultimately forecloses the modern subjectivity of the Black. Even after emancipation, the negation of modern

subjectivity was instantiated in labor performed by African descendant people, rationalizing their continued dispossession.

The conflation of juridical and political freedom with the abstraction of labor creates the conditions for Culturalist discourse because it assumes that the granting of rights and access eradicates conditions of abjection. This denies the material conditions upon which Black modern subjectivity rests. Culturalist narratives inherited in developmentalism and historicism resolve the problem of Black emancipation by producing the Black as “not yet” and “not quite” a universal modern subject; they begin to be considered “traditional” but not “savage.” This culturally specified insertion of the the Black into modernist discourse negates that slave labor produced the surpluses that inaugurated industrial capital, technological innovation, and the accumulation of wealth.<sup>13</sup> It can be argued that the technical sophistication and modern labor skills of the enslaved ushered in the capitalist world-economy. Because of their condition of unfreedom, the role of enslaved Africans in producing the modern world was erased through white supremacist, colonialist, statist discourse. The devalorization of Black labor served to erase the immense value that they created. The failure to take into account this erasure and its persistence in post-emancipation form forecloses the possibility of a counternarrative to the bourgeois capitalist state in which the notion that slave labor is merely a sign of degradation and debasement is retained and embodied in the form of racial labor. Through this antiblack distortion, the owners of slaves and capital became the architect of modernity despite the fact that the labor power of the enslaved produced the most important materials for expansion of the capitalist world-economy, including cotton, tobacco, coffee, and sugar.<sup>14</sup>

### **Cartesian Dualism**

The reduction of laborers to “biological/physiological categories”<sup>15</sup> was a technique of domination that had long been applied to the colonized generally, and the Black African particularly. Complete domination was rationalized through the reduction of the Black to the body as the condition for the denial of his capacity for intellect: “The plantation order which made it illegal for a slave to learn to read and become educated, which exhausted the black with relentless work, then produced empirical evidence of the Negro’s ‘lack of intellectual faculties.’ The Negro then becomes the SYMBOLIC OBJECT OF THIS LACK.”<sup>16</sup> It can be assumed that “relentless” work is simply a physiological activity that requires no thinking, innovation, or mastery. Work is completely devoid of thought. “As against capital, labor is merely the abstract form, the mere possibility of value-positing activity, which exists only as a capacity, as a resource in the bodiliness of the worker.”<sup>17</sup> For the Black, this “capacity” and “bodiliness” was directly related to the incapacity for reason and rationality. This reduction of labor to the body, and its complete bifurcation from “intellectual faculties” links the Black experience of abstraction of labor to the Cartesian mind/body split. This is so because abstraction under conditions of freedom assumes the capacity for choice. Thus, it is located in the mind and leads to distortion and false consciousness. Based on conditions of unfreedom, choice was denied to the Black, hence the reduction of Black labor to the realm of the body. As Ramòn Grosfoguel explains, “Descartes claims that the mind is of a different substance from the body. This allows for the mind to be undetermined, unconditioned by the body.... Without ontological dualism, the mind would be located in a body, would be similar in substance to the body and, thus, conditioned by the body...”<sup>18</sup> Lewis Gordon adds, “Descartes argued that the mind was distinct from the body because the latter was sensory, changing, and contingent but the former was linked to cogitation or thinking, which revealed essential or necessary invisible features of reality

that were not sensible but comprehensible. Further, parts of the body could be destroyed while thinking continued intact. In thinking, we are linked to God, who thinks reality in its clarity and distinctness.”<sup>19</sup> The potential for the destruction of the body is essential here. It follows that if labor belongs to the body, and if the body can be destroyed, then labor has an intrinsic relationship to violence and subjection to dismemberment as a negation of its existence. The mind, in contradistinction, is a link to God, a safe haven that allowed the world to be apprehended and understood without the vulnerability of the body. As such the mind is representative of life and living, while the body is under the constant threat of death.

Life, to use Hegel’s expression, ‘is a standing fight’ against the possibility of the dismemberment with which death threatens the unity of the living body. Life, in Marx’s analysis of capital, is similarly a ‘standing fight’ against the process of abstraction that is constitutive of the category ‘labor.’ It is as if the process of abstraction and ongoing appropriation of the worker’s body in the capitalist mode of production perpetually threatens to effect a dismemberment of the unit of the ‘living body.’<sup>20</sup>

Thus labor, the body, the slave, and the Black come together as “lack,” as vulnerability, and as proximity to violence. Thus, “the mind” is essential to Culturalist discourse, inasmuch as the mind can be understood as “*spirit*... ‘whatever substance is purely active, immaterial and always gains understanding through itself (i.e. directly), and acts from self-motion and with intention in regard to an end and goal of which it is conscious of itself.’”<sup>21</sup> Culturalism seeks to avoid the shame elicited by embodied labor, which represents the space devoid of education, intellect, literacy, and by extension, civilization. The Cartesian mind became the trope that provided the means of overcoming the precariousness and lack of the (Black) body because it provided the self with certitude of existence through its immateriality (read superstructural situatedness), as Kwasi Wiredu points out: “[a]s far as he [Descartes] is concerned, the alleged fact that one can doubt all spatial existence and yet at the same time be absolutely certain of one’s existence under the dispensation of the *Cogito* implied ‘I’, the ego, exists as a spiritual, non-spatial, immaterial entity.”<sup>22</sup> Black intellectuals sought to distance themselves from physical labor, which had come to be conflated with enslavement and abjection, and asserted their Black modern subjectivity through intellectual labor—especially aesthetic and cultural production—to assert their equality with whites. This is what Sylvia Wynter refers to as the “colonization of desire”:

The most desired attribute was the ‘intellectual faculty.’ The sign that pointed to one’s possession of the attribute was whiteness of skin. This sign that pointed to its nonpossession was blackness of skin... The black exists as the Symbolic Object constituting the Lack, the Void of these qualities... That a man, or almost a man can exist, lacking these things, sets into play the terror that these attributes can be lost.<sup>23</sup>

The colonized desire is engendered by the threat of slipping into the realm of the non-intellectual, the realm of the slave/laborer.

The “terror of lack”<sup>24</sup> required the New Negro to assert himself on cultural grounds as an escape from the embodied figure of the Old Negro—“the symbol of the Negative Other, the very principle of Lack.”<sup>25</sup> Cold War Culturalism was directly transferred from the civilization narrative of the New Negro that associated Black embodied labor with savagery. Both forms of Culturalism, predicated on the departure from the waiting room of history through culture,

sought to release the Black from the savagery symbolized by Black skin. The accommodation of the antiradical pedagogy of the state by Black Cold War liberals rested upon this notion that “blackness of the skin” was the sign of nonpossession of intellect. Liberation was collapsed into the realm of culture as Black radical critique became a danger to the state. The inherent contradiction is that “the deliberate creation of lack [is] a function of the market economy.”<sup>26</sup> It can only be resolved by a struggle that is waged at the level of the base. Otherwise, the materialities of dispossession—i.e. the exploitation of labor, the inequitable distribution of resources based on the extraction of surplus value, the entrenchment of poverty and the global axial division of labor—would remain uncontested. A focus on the relations of production threatened the order based on the “non-value of being black.”<sup>27</sup> More importantly, any challenge to the “non-value of black being” threatened the hegemonic social order.

### ***Ego Conquiro and Colonial Commandment***

Culturalism is produced out of colonialist logic constituted by the imperial gesture and legitimized by the Cartesian split. The will to progress through Culturalist narratives of Black modern subjectivity were the source of violent practice and/or complicity with such practice: “[t]hat is why the idea of progress always meant in modernity progress for a few... The *imperial attitude* promotes a fundamentally genocidal attitude in respect to the colonized and racialized people. Through it colonial and racial subjects are marked as dispensable.”<sup>28</sup> The work of Nelson Maldonado-Torres makes the case by illuminating the imbrication of the Cartesian *cogito*, the reflection of subjectivity and reason, and the *ego conquiro*, the certainty of the self as conqueror. Maldonado-Torres, by way of Enrique Dussel, posits that Cartesian *cogito* must be understood against the backdrop of *ego conquiro* because the certainty of the self as conqueror preceded the development of the cognitive framework that provided a way to interpret and understand colonial conquest.<sup>29</sup> Achille Mbembe’s theory of *colonial commandment* emplaces *ego conquiro* in an African context. Colonial commandment is the form of racialized governmentality that rationalizes the dispossession and domination of African people through the expropriation of their land, labor, and resources. It regulates human behavior through technologies of violence imposed by the state.<sup>30</sup> It employs “physical force, violence, coercion, manipulation, deceit, cajoling, incentives, law(s), taxes, penalties, surveillance, military force, repressive apparatuses, ideological mechanisms, and media—in short, all means at a state’s disposal—ultimately to the ends of racial rule.”<sup>31</sup> The *ego conquiro* justifies and requires the use of force and violence against the racialized other: “Coercive deployment of force by the ‘dominant’ (read white colonizer) group is the basis for the maintenance of order and colonial integrity... Disorder and chaos are deemed inevitable with the departure of the colonizer.”<sup>32</sup> Because African people are deemed “other” and therefore conquerable, the supreme authority of the state is to deny the rights of the colonized. Colonial commandment is predicated on three types of violence: founding violence, legitimating violence, and violence that assures authority.<sup>33</sup> On the African continent, founding violence represented a right to conquest, the construction of space over which colonizers could exercise authority, and the manipulating of traditional systems so that the ultimate sovereign would be the colonizer.<sup>34</sup> Another form of founding violence was the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, which was the means through which Europeans exercised ultimate control over African bodies; created spaces, such as the plantation, that precipitated the dehumanization of African subjects; and attempted to eradicate traditional practices.

The *ego conquiro* established the subordination of racialized others through legitimating violence. This established what was right—colonial violence as both ends and means—and what

was wrong—any resistance or challenge to colonial authority. The central feature of colonial commandment and the will to conquer was its arbitrariness: all justification for and sanction of violence was wholly predicated on the whim of the colonizer.<sup>35</sup> Essentially, it was based on the creation of a set of laws, practices and entitlements that were teleological and that served the purpose of formalizing the relationship between colonizer and colonized. Furthermore, the *ego conquiro* drove colonial authorities to assert entitlements to the land, labor, and resources of the colonized because they monopolized the means of control; Mbembe writes, “Colonial arbitrariness notoriously sought to integrate the political with the social and the ethical, while closely subordinating all three to the requirements of production and outputs.”<sup>36</sup> In other words, it became necessary and essential to rationalize economic imperatives with political, moral, and civilizing discourse. Violence, surveillance, and discipline were rationalized through the pretense of “civilizing,” “developing,” and “grooming”:

This is the purpose behind the regulations governing forced labor, compulsory crop production, education, women, the family, marriage and sexuality, vagrancy, health disease and prevention, even prison policy. Within this design for subjection, the colonized had no rights against the state. He or she was bound to the power structure like a slave to a master, and paternalism had no compunction about expressing itself behind the ideological mask of benevolence and the tawdry cloak of humanism.<sup>37</sup>

The idea that through force, authority, punishment, and domination the colonizer could bring civilization and development to African people made the project much more palatable for those who were not directly involved but were nonetheless complicit. The primary aim of institutions, procedures, techniques, and epistemologies of colonial commandment was racialized subjugation; for the *ego conquiro*, the objective was obedience as opposed to any sort of benefit for the conquered.<sup>38</sup> In this way, “white supremacy [an ideological outcome of *ego conquiro*] both created and was created out of a racialized pattern of distribution of privilege, power, knowledge, and wealth.”<sup>39</sup> The colonial state used racialized governmentality to define populations, regulate all levels of public and private relations, govern populations based on racialized dispossession, and manage economic relations to reproduce racial relationships.<sup>40</sup> It was the will to conquer that led to the reproduction of the imaginary of the African native and the Black—the thriftless, indolent, atavistic, simple, lazy thing who could only come out of darkness through unremunerated labor and domination.<sup>41</sup>

The racialized barbarian—or the niggerized Black—was produced out of the conflation of the self, the conqueror, and the colonizer in the *cogito* of the white/European. As a result, the racial other’s capacity for modern subjectivity became suspicious and questionable. Maldonado-Torres writes, “Skepticism becomes the means to reach certainty and provide a solid foundation to the self... a certain skepticism regarding the [subjecthood] of the enslaved and colonized subothers stands at the background of the Cartesian certainties and his methodic doubt.”<sup>42</sup> The certainty of the thinking self, then, is fundamentally predicated on the doubt, and thus the negation, of the Other’s subjectivity. If the mind can be thought of as the capacity to will, then to think one’s self into existence is ultimately to will the Other out of existence. Maldonado-Torres continues:

The Cartesian idea about the division between *res cogitas* and *res extensa* (consciousness and matter) which translates itself into a divide between the mind and the body or

between the human and nature is preceded and even, one has the temptation to say, to some extent built upon an anthropological colonial difference between the *ego conquistador* and the *ego conquistado*. The very relationship between colonizer and colonized provided a new model to understand the relationship between the soul or mind and the body...<sup>43</sup>

It is this logic that explains why the New Negro must necessarily erase the Old Negro to establish the Black modern self, and why the Black Cold War Culturalist must sacrifice the Black radical, subjecting him to the violent and negating impulses of the Cold War state, to secure and ensure his existence and continuity. What was at stake was exclusion from the space of the civilized modern self. Culturalists, as colonized/racialized subjects, were able to distance themselves from a proximity to death and elimination by niggerizing the Blacks who were reduced to the body. The inscription into the dominant narrative of civilization requires the rejection of his black body. This is perhaps an alternative narrative to DuBoisian double consciousness inasmuch the “two warring souls” can never be fully reconciled, because to bring himself into Being, the Black Culturalist must only see himself in a way that garners white recognition; that is, to inhere the Self in colonial domination and violence. This point is summed up thus:

If the *ego cogito* was built upon the foundations of the *ego conquiro*, the ‘I think therefore I am’ presupposes two unacknowledged dimensions. Beneath the ‘I think’ we can read ‘others do not think’, and behind the ‘I am’ it is possible to locate the philosophical justification of the idea that ‘others are not’ or do not have being. In this way we are led to uncover the complexity of the Cartesian formulation... ‘I think (others do not think or do not think properly), therefore I am (others are-not, lack being, should not exist or are dispensable).’<sup>44</sup>

Hence the violence of abstraction, and the project of Culturalism that rests upon it, is revealed. To abstract the mind from the body, and to exalt the former over the latter is to disregard, negate, violate, and degrade the body. Concomitantly, to abstract Black labor from the value it produces and to reduce it to bodily function, thus bifurcating it from the intellect, is to erase the historical reality that enslaved Africans were the fundamental producers of value in and for the modern world-system. Culturalism results from the enrapture of the mind by the superstructure. The latter is directly grounded in the abjecting of the black body; the elision of the materialities of the Black condition that cannot be overcome through assertions of culture; and the reduction of Black labor to the body, thus exposing it to violence, erasure, and the negation of modern subjectivity.

### **The Harlem Renaissance and New Negro Culturalism**

The Harlem Renaissance was the movement that attempted to insert the American Negro into modernity, from which he had been historically foreclosed. It was organized around an assemblage of elite aesthetes that aimed to assert Negro rationality that was produced out of history and employed to make claims to a potential for progress. Alain Locke, in a speech at Howard University in 1923 described the cultural project in these terms: “The stamp of culture is, therefore, no conventional pattern, and has no stock value: it is the mold and die of a refined and completely developed personality. It is the art medallion, not the common coin.”<sup>45</sup> If culture

“has no conventional pattern” or “stock value,” it must be cultivated over time. It implied the capacity for development—that the Negro could exist in History with a consciousness of self. The refinement of personality required the ability to reason and move logically toward betterment. As such, production of “the great human arts” necessarily entailed reason. Additionally, to move from “the common coin” to the “art medallion” was an act of progression. Thus, the creation and possession of culture through aesthetic production was the quintessential marker of modernity for the New Negro. It would be realized in, by, and through a historical vanguard of black artist-intellectuals.

Culture must develop an elite that must maintain itself upon the basis of standards that can move forward but never backwards. In the pursuit of culture one must detach himself from the crowd... If to be cultured is a duty, it is here that that element is most prominent, for it takes courage to stand out from the crowd. One must, therefore, pay a moral as well as an intellectual price for culture... America’s chief social crime, in spite of her boasted freedoms, is the psychology of the herd, the tyranny of the average and mediocre; in other words, the limitations upon cultural personality.<sup>46</sup>

Culture was to be developed by the elite, and diffused to the “Saharas of culture” and “the vulgar crowd”—in other words, the masses.<sup>47</sup> Given this position, the Harlem Renaissance is an interesting site for theorizing the ways in which Black culture was asserted to reject “the average and mediocre” and to assert modern subjectivity. It was a fundamental rejection of social Darwinist logics proposed by thinkers like Joseph Arthur Comte de Gobineau (the father of modern racism) who saw artistic expression as a mark of racial inferiority: “the Aryan lacked the artistic temperament that is the sole possession of the Negro.”<sup>48</sup> Science, reason, rationality, and accumulation were considered the domain of the European, while art became, for de Gobineau, tied to racial inferiority and savagery. Michelle Wright the following point: “African races [were] the most inferior and, to the artistic temperament with which he [Gobineau] accredits those races, he adds the irrational lusts of the savage for violence, blood, and sex—the same lack of reason and civilized feeling that Hegel asserted.”<sup>49</sup> The New Negro of the Harlem Renaissance rejected de Gobineau’s assertion that cultural creativity existed *in lieu of* reason and rationality, possessed exclusively by the European. They argued that it was precisely “the ethics of culture”<sup>50</sup> that was reflected by reason and rationality to which they were making claim. The indisputable modern subjectivity of New Negroes was asserted through their capacity to create and possess culture. In a rejection of de Gobineau’s thesis, Alain Locke made the historicist argument for culture as salvation. The New Negro became charged with the task of using culture to overcome the handicap of “low average cultural tastes” that plagued the entire American (white) society. This mediocrity could be raised by sourcing material from the (primitive/uncivilized) Black masses and transforming it into cultural products that could be incorporated into the larger society. Sylvia Wynter provides the following discussion of this “low average,” and the role of Black culture in addressing it:

The movement to Negritude, which began with the revaluation of the popular culture of Haiti, followed on the movement of the Harlem Renaissance which also began with a return to the source even if this return took place in the context of the return to the *primitive* by the West. The West was now to become conscious of the cultural death it has inflicted on itself by channeling all libidinal energy to a productive finality.<sup>51</sup>



For Alain Locke, “[a]s a race group” New Negroes were “at the critical stage” where they were “releasing creative artistic talent in excess of [their] group ability to understand and support it.”<sup>52</sup> New Negroes were engaged in the project of producing culture not only to cultivate the masses, but also to be harnessed to the project of whiteness. “Black culture... became an original source of raw material to be exploited as the entertainment industry burgeoned,”<sup>53</sup> and by liberating whites from cultural backwardness through the “raw materials” of black culture, the New Negro began to make claims to recognition of Black modern subjects.

The New Negro Culturalism of the Harlem Renaissance was rooted in assertions that Black modern subjectivity was produced aesthetically. Such assertions effectively foreclosed the “Old Negro”—and his vestiges—from modernity. The foreclosure of the “Old Negro” from modernity essentially reduced him to the African savage and/or the debased slave. New Negro Culturalists thus became complicit in the naturalist logic of African savagery and Black inferiority that justified Black enslavement. This was due, in part, to the new mantle of historicism that reproduced the Enlightenment narrative of linear progress through historical time upon which their assertions rested: “Historicism enabled European domination of the world in the nineteenth century. Crudely, one might say that it was one important form that the ideology of progress or ‘development’ took from the nineteenth century on... Historicism thus posited historical time as a measure of the cultural distance (at least in institutional development) that was assumed to exist between the West and the non-West.”<sup>54</sup> Additionally,

[Historicism] tells us that in order to understand the nature of anything in the world we must see it as an historically developing entity, that is, first as an individual and unique whole—as some kind of unity at least in potential—and second, as something that develops over time... it seeks to find the general in the particular... But the idea of development and the assumption that a certain amount of times elapses in the very process of development are critical to this understanding.<sup>55</sup>

The historical development of the New Negro was manifest in his assent to the unifying logic of civilization through cultural/aesthetic assertions. It was the capacity to develop over time and progress beyond the narrative of the Old Negro that created the conditions for recognition of the New Negro as a modern subject. Locke writes, “No sane observer, however sympathetic to the new trend [of Black aesthetic production], would contend that the great masses are articulate as yet, but they stir, they move, they are more than physically restless...”<sup>56</sup> This construction of the “great masses,” presumably Old Negroes, renders them effectively speechless, unable to express themselves on the one hand, and lacking anything worthwhile to contribute—in and of themselves—on the other. By contrast, historicist thought provides New Negroes with the possibility for such contribution. The New Negro assumed the role of articulating the future for the Old Negro, both in terms of its enunciation (hence speaking for the Old Negro) and providing the necessary historical linkage. This was the manner in which the Old Negro was silenced and dismissed from modern subjecthood. That Old Negroes “stir” and “move” without enunciation (re)produces the image of a gesticulating Negro, wholly reduced to the body, that cannot speak or write himself into existence—a man far removed from the New Negro. As such, the masses remain the caricature against which progress is to be measured, the problem to be solved, and the representation to be overcome. The idea of a “dated grid of an homogenous empty time” in which the Old Negro is trapped renders his “present as ‘anachronistic...’”<sup>57</sup> The denial of historicity to the Old Negro is the necessary condition for the New Negro’s self-realization as an historical subject.

In a 1923 speech to Howard freshman, Locke asserted that “As Goeth says, ‘[w]hat thou has inherited from the fathers, labor for, in order to possess it.’ Thus culture is inbred—but we ourselves are its parents.”<sup>58</sup> Locke seems to be arguing that what was “inherited” was the idea that through culture one became civilized, and the “fathers” were the architects of dominant (white/European) thought. With this inheritance the Negro must progressively labor to create the cultural artifacts requisite to possess civilization. Culture was the inheritance of the idea and it could be produced through intellectual labor. New Negroes were thus the “parents” of Negro cultural inheritance. Thus, it was the New Negro that was the historical subject who could progress into civilization on cultural grounds. In the same 1923 speech Locke argued: “Moreover, personal representativeness and group achievement are in this respect identical. Ultimately a people is judged by its capacity to contribute to culture. It is to be hoped that as we progressively acquire in this energetic democracy the common means of modern civilization, we shall justify ourselves more and more, individually and collectively, by the use of them to produce culture-goods and representative types of culture.”<sup>59</sup> New Negroes, as the representative of achievement for the entire group/race, would *contribute* the fruits of their labor to civilization, thereby revealing the modern subjectivity of the Negro. The implication of the enrapture of the Harlem Renaissance by historicism is that the “common means of modern civilization” could only be “*progressively* acquired.” The Old Negro, lacking the consciousness to move through history, was foreclosed from the possibilities of entrance into civilization.

This historicist foundation of New Negro Culturalism had spatial and temporal logics. The distinction between Old Negro and New Negro was based the idea of typological time, understood as a “quality of states.” It relegated the “Old Negro” to the past, rendering him irrelevant, even antithetical, to progress. Johannes Fabian writes,

The Time-distancing effect may, for instance, be achieved by moral-political connotations of ostensibly pure temporal terms, or by the temporal connotations of ‘strictly technical,’ classificatory terms. Take a word like *savagery*. As a technical term in evolutionary discourse it denotes a stage in a developmental sequence. But no degree of nominalist technicality can purge the term of its moral, aesthetic, and political connotations... it clearly expresses temporal distancing.”<sup>60</sup>

This distancing “irrevocably plac[ed] [the Old Negro] on a temporal slope, a stream of Time... downstream.”<sup>61</sup> The spatial dimensions manifested in Locke’s statement that, “The answer is in the migrating peasant. It is the ‘man farthest down’ who is most active in getting up.”<sup>62</sup> The “answer” that the migrating peasant possessed was his movement *out of the South* and into the North generally, and into Harlem particularly. This move through space was effectively a double move through Time, and it was this move through spacetime that created the conditions for the realization of the New Negro. If “relationships between parts of the world... can be understood as temporal relations [and] [d]ispersal in space reflects directly... sequence in Time,”<sup>63</sup> then a move from the South to the North is a progressive one, a move forward in time, a move toward the realization of modern subjectivity. Concomitantly, it is a move from the primitivism of rural life and the purported savagery that justified white racism to the cosmopolitanism of urban, Harlem life and relative racial possibility. In other words, the South was located in the spacetime dimension constituted by the uncivilized Black. That the peasants were actively “getting up,” implied a relative spatio-temporal distance from the present, which was occupied by the New

Negro; the “there” of the peasant marked a “then,” while the “here” of the New Negro equated to a “now.”

After all, it is not difficult to transpose from physics to politics one of the most ancient rules which states that it is impossible for two bodies to occupy the same space at the same time. When in the course of colonial expansion a Western body politic came to occupy, literally, the space of an autochthonous body, several alternatives were conceived to deal with that violation of the rule... Most often the preferred strategy has been simply to manipulate the other variable—Time. With the help of various devices of sequencing and distancing one assigns to the conquered populations a *different* Time.<sup>64</sup>

The “leaving behind” of the Old Negro was thus based on the manipulation of Time, asserted on cultural grounds, which allowed the New Negro to emplace himself in a different spacetime.

For Black culture to be considered modern and civilized, it had to gain white (Western) recognition, and therefore assert itself as part of Western/European culture. Culturalism thus collapsed into the Western historicism that acted as a measure of the degree of advancement. The difference between the Old and the New Negro was measured on a developmental/temporal scale.<sup>65</sup> The Old was indistinguishable from the primitive/savage/conquered, and, “*Primitive* being essentially a temporal concept, [was] a category, not an object, of Western thought.”<sup>66</sup> Further, because the primitive was essentially unchanging, temporal relations could be substituted for spatial ones, so that the Old Negro’s emplacement beyond the pale and outside of history reified the New Negro’s historicism and proximity to the West and whiteness. The New Negro’s spatiotemporality, predicated on existential and epistemological distance from the Old Negro, denied coevalness, “a common, active ‘occupation,’ or sharing, of time.”<sup>67</sup> This intentional construction of the Old Negro as existing in a Time other than the present allowed the New Negro to overcome the discursive location of Blackness outside of history by sacrificing the Old Negro as the ahistorical object to be overcome through the assertion of modern subjectivity rendered visible through cultural production. Laying the foundation for the the Cold War Culturalist project, New Negro Culturalism created the conditions for certain types of Blackness to be niggerized if it posed a fundamental threat to the hegemonic project of civilization/modernization/Black modern subject formation.

In addition to establishing the historicity of the Black modern subject, New Negro Culturalism also asserted the humanity of the New Negro through an erasure of the material conditions of Black life. Black modern subjectivity was manifested in his aesthetic-cultural production, enraptured by a vindicationist, redemptive, and counterhegemonic notion of Blackness. In other words, the achievements and the possibilities of New Negro Culturalism redeemed the Black condition, vindicated Black existence, and produced a counterhegemonic narrative to the dominant discourse of Black abjection. Additionally, the reason and rationality displayed in and through Black artistic expression and cultural production rendered irrelevant the materialities of the Black condition and the central position of Black labor in the modern world-system. The material contributions of Black folk in different regimes of coloniality—from enslavement to debt peonage to other forms of unfree or underpaid labor—and the continued dispossession that constituted the lived reality of the Black population, were relegated to the discursive margins. If, as Locke posited, “The American mind must reckon with a fundamentally changed Negro,”<sup>68</sup> the American capitalist could take solace in the familiar conditions of material degradation and labor conscription that remained enduring features of Black life in the

North and the South, even as the Harlem Renaissance remained a site of struggle over representation. New Negro Culturalists and their Cold War successors laid claim to inclusion and equality on cultural grounds through the deployment of a civilization narrative that was ultimately a racialized version of the dominant American/white narrative. This had the effect of marginalizing political economy as an extension of the body, therefore entrapping Black modern subjectivity in the realm of the mind/superstructure. Stated differently, the Black body and its inscription in the economic base through the extraction of labor was rendered invisible as a source of modern subjectivity by the narrow focus on the mind/superstructure. Because the abjecting of the Black rested on the presumed absence of culture, morality, and ethics, rendering invisible the materialities of black modern subjectivity, New Negro challenges to the negation of their modern subjectivity in those terms, reproduced the dismissal of labor and denied its abstraction as an essential source of Black modernity.

New Negro Culturalism presented a narrative that reproduced the negation of the fact that, because of their enslavement, Black people had always-already been modern by virtue of their conscription into the capitalist world-system, not situated outside of it. Their racial abjection was the product of the discursive and pedagogical denial of their modern subjecthood. The New Negro Culturalist inherited this discourse and pedagogy. The claim that Negroes must “look largely to culture to win [their] just reward and recognition”<sup>69</sup> rationalized the devaluation of black labor as something to be exploited and as a mark of black dispossession. It left the condition of material inequality virtually intact as white recognition and its realization became both the means and the end of Black modern subjectivity. The Harlem Renaissance became constituted as “a mission of rehabilitating the race in world esteem from that loss of prestige for which the fate and conditions of slavery have so largely been responsible.”<sup>70</sup> As such it misrecognized the modern subjectivity of enslaved Africans. Because of its failure to critically engage with the material conditions of black existence as central to its challenge to white supremacy, New Negro Culturalism became trapped at the level of the superstructure that confined the Old Negro to his state of savagery.

New Negro Culturalism reproduced the Old Negro/African savage through naturalist discourse. The fact that enslaved Africans and their descendants created the conditions of possibility for the modern world refuted the New Negro claim that “the race” needed to be redeemed. In referring to creative expression as a “productive field”<sup>71</sup> for “culture-goods,”<sup>72</sup> Locke elided the productive fields and commodity goods—cotton, tobacco, sugar, etc.—in which and for which Black people labored, developing and using modern technology and labor techniques that created and expanded the capitalist world-system. While Locke acknowledged that the Negro had “contributed materially through labor” to the South, he subordinated this to what he identified as the Negro’s greatest contribution: their spirituality, “folk temperament,” “...leaven of humor, sentiment, imagination and tropic nonchalance.”<sup>73</sup> This elided consideration that Black modern subjectivity was created at the level of the base. For Locke, the possibilities of reaping the material rewards of modernity rested in the first instance with the superstructure: “the present generation will have added the motives of self-expression and spiritual development to the old and still unfinished task of making material headway and progress.”<sup>74</sup> This rendered Black contribution to the material project of modernity simultaneously archaic and inchoate, incomplete and insufficient. It became meaningful only by and through artistic and cultural production as the true vessels of modern subjectivity.

In the foreword to *The New Negro*, Locke writes, “We turn therefore in the other direction to the elements of truest social portraiture, and discover in the artistic self-expression of

the Negro to-day a new figure on the national canvas and a new force in the foreground of affairs. Whoever wishes to see the Negro in his essential traits, in the full perspective of his achievement and possibilities, must seek the enlightenment of that self-portraiture which the present developments of Negro culture are offering.”<sup>75</sup> He was asserting that the New Negro had brought himself into modern subjecthood through culture, and it was upon this terrain that recognition would be granted: “The especially cultural recognition they [New Negroes] win should in turn prove the key to that revaluation of the Negro...”<sup>76</sup> The use of “revaluation” here, like the use of “productive field” and “culture-goods” discussed previously, was another example of the assertion that the value of the Negro as a modern subject was located exclusively within the superstructure, “discounting” the material contributions of black labor. In other words, the “revaluation” of the Negro at the level of culture had a direct relationship to the devaluation of the Negro in material terms. If the “new force” in affairs was brought into being by “artistic self-expression,” then the old force, brought into being through the exploitation of labor, was not only rendered invisible, but was denied significance through its association with the body under the Cartesian logic of the mind/body split. The “achievement and possibilities” of “the body” that created the conditions for accumulation in the capitalist world-economy were thus rendered irrelevant to modern subjecthood, and the worth/value of the Negro was abstracted from its material realities. That the New Negro was the “truest social portraiture” and possessed all “essential traits,” with all of its classed implications, effectively denied the subjectivity of not only the “Old Negro” but also the masses/rank-and-file who Locke had previously stated were “leading the leaders.” Refusal and denial were underscored in Locke’s claim that “the only safeguard for mass relations in the future must be provided in the carefully maintained contacts of the enlightened minorities of both race groups.”<sup>77</sup> To be sure, the “enlightened minorities” are not the “bodies” upon whose backs the modern capitalist system was built, but the “minds” that were bestowed the power to inaugurate, evince, and maintain modernity.

The “myth of the Old Negro” was foundational to the enunciation of New Negro Culturalism as a struggle over representation, and the concomitant negation of the base in the articulation of Black modern subjectivity:

...the Old Negro had long become more of a myth than a man. The Old Negro, we must remember, was a creature of moral debate and historical controversy. His has been a stock figure perpetuated as an historical fiction partly in innocent sentimentalism, partly in deliberate reactionism. The Negro himself has contributed his share to this through a sort of protective social mimicry forced upon him by the adverse circumstances of dependence.<sup>78</sup>

By articulating the Old Negro as myth, he became the “shadow” against which New Negro subjectivity was asserted. In other words, the New Negro became the true Black self through the constitution of the Old Negro as “shadow”/myth. In reducing the “Old Negro” to a creation of (white) bad faith, Locke was negating the subjectivity of the Old Negro. Locke became complicit in basing the inherent denial of the Old Negro’s humanity on grounds of its materiality. Such denial is essential to Culturalist claims. If the “myth” effectively overcame the “man,” then the problem became one of representation, and the challenge had to be waged on cultural grounds. In reality, the “myth” could only be exposed to reveal the “man” through the superstructure (culture) and through its abstraction from the base (material conditions). The

misrecognition of Black modern subjectivity emerged from the enrapture of the New Negro by aesthetic/cultural claims to white civilization narratives.

Locke continues,

So for generations in the mind of America, the Negro has been more of a formula than a human being—a something to be argued about, condemned or defended, to be ‘kept down,’ or ‘in his place,’ or patronized, a social bogey or social burden. The thinking Negro even had induced to share this same general attitude, to focus his attention on controversial issues, to see himself in the distorted perspective of a social problem. His shadow, so to speak, has been more real than his personality.<sup>79</sup>

The Cartesian bifurcation of mind and body (or, the idealization of the Superstructure [culture] and the estrangement of the Base [labor]) became evident in Locke’s reference to “the thinking Negro,” which, in the final analysis, is the New Negro. The Old Negro, as shadow, was made seemingly real through dependence that had been reduced to the body, devoid of the mind. Accordingly, “...this subject [the Old Negro] can only be spoken for and spoken of by the transition narrative, which will always ultimately privilege the modern (that is, ‘Europe’),”<sup>80</sup> and ultimately render him obsolete. As such, the “Old Negro” is a shadow not only because he has been reduced to a *social* problem, but also because his very construction as a *social* problem elided his *material reality*—that is, the exploitation of his labor. To be ‘kept down’ or ‘in his place’ meant to be kept as a source of unfree and dispossessed labor, which ultimately implied the denial of the political rights and social equality afforded to free wage labor. The true source of distortion is the “thinking Negro’s” misunderstanding of the Negro problem at the level of the base; it is thus the overdetermination of the superstructure that creates the conditions for the “shadow...to...[be] more real than his personality.”

Though the Harlem Renaissance provided a fundamental challenge to the discourse of foreclosure that located the Black on the constitutive outside of modernity, its inability to provide space for labor and its conceptualization of the “Old Negro” in its constitution of Black modern subjectivity betrayed its Culturalism and severely curtailed its liberatory possibility.

### **Cold War Culturalism and the “Horne Thesis”**

The red scare and anticommunism—technologies of regulation and discipline especially targeting the (Black) left and the mobilization of labor—directly impacted how Black intellectuals after WWII theorized Diaspora as an explanation for and assertion of articulated connections among African descended persons on a global scale. WWII heightened the sense of connection and common history among African descendants because, as an international conflict, it provided opportunities for mutual contact: “Wartime events produced ferment among darker peoples everywhere; black men in America experienced a heightened sense of race consciousness and felt a surge of racial kinship with other colored peoples. As the war shattered the myths of white invincibility and white superiority, American negroes and other colored peoples acquired a new feeling of racial self-confidence and solidarity.”<sup>81</sup> This expanded sense of racial community among Black leaders and intellectuals was occurring during a period of growing strategic importance of Africa and the Caribbean to the United States in the early period of the Cold War. It made Black supporters of decolonization subjected to intense regimes of surveillance by the American state. Those who did not align themselves with U.S. anticolonial policy became the objects of persecution, prosecution, discipline, and punishment.<sup>82</sup> For Black intellectuals—whether American or from colonial territories who were resident in the United

States—calls for freedom and decolonization that were grounded in radical anti-imperial and antiracist ideology were intentionally misconstrued as red-inspired propaganda and treated as vehement anti-Americanism. Anticommunism became deployed as a technology for policing assertions of freedom, demands for economic justice, and critiques of the materialities of the Black condition globally that challenged American state practice. This prompted a move in Black intellectual thought away from Marxist-based critiques of racial capitalism. It produced a turn toward Cold War liberal antiracism rooted in the Culturalist project inaugurated by the Harlem Renaissance. It led to the condition where “the black middle class argue[d] for the primacy of ‘race’ to mask its historical complicity with oppression.”<sup>83</sup> The emphasis on culture and the end of Jim Crow racism, and the rejection of radical critiques of material dispossession and economic exploitation rendered Cold War Culturalists complicit with the regime of antiblackness inhered in anticommunism and antiradicalism.

Building upon the “Horne Thesis,” I argue that in order to ensure the end of Jim Crow, Black intellectuals, politicians, and Civil Rights leaders sacrificed the Black left in the face of the deployment of anticommunism. In the process they began to reject black intellectual thought organized around structural critiques of capitalism that advocated a global redistribution of wealth. The institutionalization of African diaspora studies in the United States academy petrified the epistemic effect of the turn to Culturalism and the suppression of Black radical thought. This created an “ideological vacuum,” that served to shape the trajectory of Diasporic scholarship and thought.<sup>84</sup>

Historian Gerald Horne argues that the antiblackness inhered in U.S. statist pedagogy required Blacks to mobilize internationally and emplace their struggles against racism, exploitation, and domination in a global context. The hegemonic discourse of the nation-state and its deployment of power influenced much of the work on the African-American experience. This has acted to obfuscate and silence radical internationalist thought and practice in black scholarship. Horne’s work corrects this epistemological distortion by moving his analysis beyond the nation-state. As Brenda Gayle Plummer writes, “Horne’s exegesis of a global history of racism unconfined by the particular practices of specific empires but deployed by all, escapes the strictures of national history and preserves the contours of a transcendent global black presence.”<sup>85</sup> Given this global vision, Horne’s work elucidates that the exigencies of Cold War foreign policy profoundly shaped, and in many ways curtailed, Black articulations of freedom.

The “Horne Thesis” consists of three major contentions. The first is that white supremacy and anticommunism were the major forces shaping post-WWII life and politics in the United States, and this greatly impacted African-descendants and colonized peoples.<sup>86</sup> Domestically, white racists used redbaiting as a means of contesting even the most liberal claims to civil rights and dignity by, for instance, characterizing integration as a Communist plot for equality between all race and mongrelization.<sup>87</sup> The U.S. state likewise mobilized anticommunism as a technology of white supremacy and antiblackness to eradicate any militant claims made by Black radicals. In his article “Who Lost the Cold War?” Horne argues that McCarthyism disproportionately victimized Blacks, precisely because, especially in the context of the Korean War (1950-1953), Black protest represented more of a threat to national security than Southern racism and segregation. In other words, Black radicalism was incompatible with the U.S. state while white racism was not.<sup>88</sup> The disciplining of militant struggle had a particularly deleterious impact on the Black Left, especially because their articulations of freedom—including equitable distribution of property, better conditions for labor, eradication of poverty, improvement in living conditions, and an end to race-based job discrimination—were deemed un-American and

sedition. Black demands for the redistribution of resources and the improvement of material conditions were cast as Soviet-backed subversion. In this way white supremacist logics came to be sutured onto anticommunism to defend capitalist property and privilege. In the process, Black freedom struggles came to be seen as a threat to national security.<sup>89</sup> The U.S. state needed to preserve white supremacist logic and to protect capitalism from challenge. The suppression of Black radical challenges served both purposes inasmuch as Blacks were more predisposed to mount such challenge because they were subjected to both racial and economic exploitation. It follows, then, that the red tagging of Negro protest by the U.S. Justice Department was meant to keep Black Americans on the narrow path of liberal Civil Rights.<sup>90</sup> This “close identification between anti-Black and anti-red”<sup>91</sup> led Black Cold War liberals to abandon protest against political economic oppression to focus on the acquisition of bourgeois rights of juridical and political equality that represented recognition of their modern subjecthood. Cold War Culturalism inscribed these demands into historicist discourse.

To distance themselves from Communism, Black liberals supported attacks on trade unions and labor mounted by the U.S. state to center state-sanctioned issues of discrimination related to color and race.<sup>92</sup> The betrayal of the Left by U.S. Black liberals helped to make antiradical suppression a global phenomenon: the “...ideological conformity of civil rights leaders indirectly helped to sustain anti-communism and rationalize continued political repression in the Third World as well as in the United States.”<sup>93</sup> Given the interdependence of the politics of decolonization and the politics of labor, the myopic focus on ending Jim Crow became a distraction from and hindrance to the larger goals of Blacks internationally, especially the liberation of colonial and working people. The different agendas of Africans fighting colonial administration and the Black Left in the United States on the one hand, and Black Cold War liberals on the other hand, is summed up thus:

The American Negro revolution emphasized integration and assimilation, and looked forward to the irrelevance of color, but revolutions in the Third World stressed separation and national independence, and in the case of African revolution, Negritude, or innate racial characteristics. American Negro leaders wanted to participate on an equal basis on the existing society and to share in the decision-making process. Colonials, on the other hand, strove to supplant existing authority and to achieve self-determination... in America the leaders were advocates of capitalism and liberal democracy; abroad liberation movements were often headed by socialists and Marxists.<sup>94</sup>

Black American liberalism undermined radical movements because of its complicity with American imperial capitalism. It served to deny support from Black Americans for anticolonial and anti-imperialist liberation movements abroad. As Brenda Gayle Plummer notes, “Communism remains crucial in what Horne portrays as a kind of ‘linked fate,’ that is, his sense that U.S. government repression aimed specifically at communism was also intended to take down other progressive formations, especially strong trade unions and militant civil rights organizations.”<sup>95</sup> In effect, the entanglements of anticommunism, anti-labor, white supremacy, and free market capitalism ensnared Black liberals, who supported the status quo, in a regime of antiradicalism and antiblackness that manifested itself in class, ideological, and material warfare in the United States and throughout the African Diaspora.

Horne’s second contention is that Jim Crow and legal segregation posed a threat to Washington’s campaign to bring the emerging “Third World” into the liberal democratic nexus;



thus, ending racism was pursued by the Cold War state as a tactic for combating communism.<sup>96</sup> “During the late 1940s and early 1950s, a period of substantial progress in the area of minority rights by the Court, Cold War ideology informed the broader discourse on civil rights in important and powerful ways.”<sup>97</sup> U.S. Embassy officials were concerned about the way in which domestic race discrimination would fuel propaganda about the U.S. race problem and encourage anti-American and pro-communist leanings of other nations—especially those of the decolonizing world.<sup>98</sup> Thus struggle to end Jim Crow, while serving the imperialist Cold War interests of the United States abroad, did not entail challenges to capitalist interests at home because it was organized on the ground of rights. It also did not pose a threat to the racialized axial division of labor because it was organized around historicist narratives of Black Culturalism. The “Cold War imperative,” then, was to make the U.S. racial policy conform with the *image* of democracy and justice that it wanted to present to the (decolonizing) world.<sup>99</sup> This “image” was rooted in bourgeois rights and freedom that were foundational to the regime of labor abstraction. The importance to U.S. foreign policy of enacting legislation against Jim Crow was manifested in the briefs for important anti-segregation cases, including *Henderson v. United States* and *Shelley vs. Kraemer*. In these, they referenced statements from the United Nations (UN) and the Soviet Union to underscore the belief that the practices and policies of segregation were having a negative effect on the U.S. fight against international communism.<sup>100</sup> In the liberal imaginary, the argument for anticolonialism rested on the claim that colonial abuses created the conditions for the spread of communism. This position made a case for anticolonialism that rejected radical militancy both at home and abroad. In fact, “...U.S. Cold War foreign relations... played a major role in overthrowing militant anti-racist, anti-imperialist regimes, and replacing them with corrupt, authoritarian, neocolonial governments.”<sup>101</sup> Further, “Only in the mid-1950s when the Soviet Union began actively to compete for the allegiance of colonial peoples and independence appeared undeniable did the United States undertake a concerted effort to convince its European allies to accelerate economic and political developments in their empires. When independence arrived, the United States rushed to embrace the new nations.”<sup>102</sup>

The construction of communism as the primary enemy in the Third World turned anticolonialism and antiracism into tools of anticommunism, and negated the material and structural consequences of colonial administration and racial domination. This erasure (re)inscribed Blacks into a regime of neocolonialism. Cold War Culturalism insured that U.S. tutelage would be imposed on the decolonizing world—especially African and Caribbean countries that were considered to be particularly vulnerable to communist influence—to discipline them into the global market economy and to thwart the Soviet threat. In fact, ending civil rights abuses was harnessed to the demands of capitalist accumulation. According to The President’s Committee on Civil Rights: “One of the principal economic problems facing [the United States] and the rest of the world is achieving maximum production and continued prosperity, and discrimination interfered with economic growth because it led to ‘[t]he loss of a huge, potential market for goods.’ Discrimination in the marketplace gave rise to interrelated losses in market and human terms.”<sup>103</sup> In other words, the granting of Civil Rights to Blacks was also imperative for the accumulation of wealth. As such, the *passing of legislation* to end (overt) discrimination in the United States (symbolic change, not the actual enforcement of desegregation) was essential to the Cold War global strategy of managing the decolonizing world economically and politically. In aligning with Wilsonian anticolonialism and Cold War anticommunist liberalism,<sup>104</sup> and discrediting and violently rejecting Black radicalism, Black

liberal organizations solidified their position as the only acceptable articulation of Black freedom.

The third point of the Horne thesis is that the United States government brutally suppressed African Americans on the left that pursued an “anti-racist, anti-imperialist, proletarian internationalist agenda” while making concessions to civil rights reforms in order to legitimate its claim to be the leader of the democratic free world.<sup>105</sup> Horne writes,

After the war rulers decided to ease the horror of Jim Crow, partly because of the need to be able to charge Moscow with human rights violations. Yet this civil rights victory had to be carried out while ousting black Communists like [Ben] Davis from previously held positions of influence among African-Americans. This opening of democratic space for blacks carried the possibility of creating more room for Communists, trade unions, and so on. The trick was to open democratic space for blacks while closing it down for their traditional allies—in other words, *black liberation/red scare*. Thus, *Brown v. Board of Education* and its progeny came in 1954 in the midst of the Cold War and the Red Scare.<sup>106</sup>

For Black Cold Warriors, “after 1947 full American nationalism apparently promised greater immediate rewards than racial internationalism.”<sup>107</sup> Here, “full American nationalism” meant full incorporation into the space of American liberal democracy. The concessions made to civil rights reformists were made possible through the convergence of Black domestic and white foreign policy interests. Mary Dudziak writes, “...the consensus against [segregation] in the 1950s was the result of a convergence of interests on the part of whites and blacks, and that white interests in abandoning segregation were in part a response to foreign policy concerns and an effort to suppress the potential of black radicalism at home... without a convergence of white and black interests in this manner, *Brown* would never have occurred.”<sup>108</sup> In other words, desegregation was used as a mean to both seduce the Third World into aligning with the United States against the USSR, and to crush Black militant struggle. By ruling that segregation was unconstitutional and therefore un-American and fundamentally incompatible with the most industrialized country in the world, the United States could validate the claims of Civil Rights activists that racism was backward, anachronistic, and unjust.

Since race was a primary feature of Soviet propaganda in their efforts to encourage and generate anti-American sentiment,<sup>109</sup> and because “by 1949, according to the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, ‘the ‘Negro question’ [was] [o]ne of the principal Soviet propaganda themes regarding the United States,’”<sup>110</sup> it was only through the pedagogy of the state that antiracism could be articulated. Any deviation from the statist position on antiracism was subject to red-baiting. The difference between accommodation of Black liberals and retaliation against Black radicals was evident in the different responses of the United States to two petitions filed in the UN. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) filed the first document, entitled *An Appeal to the World* in October 1947; and the Civil Rights Congress (CRC) filed *We Charge Genocide* in December 1951. The NAACP petition was filed under the USSR-initiated Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. Even though the petition was filed under a Soviet initiated sub-committee, it elicited no retaliation or backlash from the U.S. administration against the NAACP. This is notwithstanding its rejection by the United Nations. The U.S. response was starkly and stridently different in the case of the petition filed by the CRC under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of

Genocide. It was constituted as a radical rejection of American global hegemony on the grounds of its inherent racism: “history has shown that the racist theory of the government of the U.S.A. is not the private affair of Americans, but the concern of mankind everywhere.”<sup>111</sup> There was immediate retaliation against the CRC. The Justice Department demanded that William Patterson, the primary architect of the petition, surrender his passport. Dudziak argues that “[t]he strongly negative domestic reaction to the Civil Rights Congress petition had much to do with the fact that the organization was considered to be left-wing, and was on the Attorney General’s list of subversive organizations. Consequently, its motives were thought to be suspect... The Civil Rights Congress was under constant pressure from anticommunism in the federal government...”<sup>112</sup> The backlash that resulted from *We Charge Genocide* proved that any challenge to the pedagogy of the Cold War state was unacceptable. State response was rationalized through the instrumentality of anticommunism that justified and demanded the deployment of its multifarious techniques of domination and disciplining, including surveillance, the curtailment of movement, the disciplining of discourses of freedom, and even the use of physical violence.

The subjection of Black radicalism through surveillance and punishment by “...wiretapping, infiltrators, political jailings, long periods underground, and other harassments...”<sup>113</sup> forced reformist/liberal organizations, such as the NAACP, to distance themselves from their counterparts and to reject their militant agenda. They signaled such rejection by casting their platform in anticommunist terms. Dudziak writes, “A need to publicly distance the organization from the Communist party may have been considered to be politically necessary in light of the fact that many prominent blacks, including some NAACP members, joined the Party or espoused ideas associated with the Party during the 1930s... Accordingly, during the anticommunist fifties, public recantations were the order of the day.”<sup>114</sup> Prominent figures that renounced their previous affiliations with the Communist Party and the left include Max Yergan, Langston Hughes, and Ralph Ellison. These McCarthy era “anticommunist confessionals” painted the Communist Party as manipulative, disingenuous, exploitative, acting in its own interests at the expense of Black people, and disinterested in finding a solution to the race problem in the United States.<sup>115</sup> In their about-faces, they not only discredited communism, but also began to cast democracy—embodied by the United States—as the only hope for Black people to bring an end to racism and improve their conditions. Those who challenged the U.S. state were, according to their narratives, not only deluded and misguided, but were proposing policies and practices that were antithetical to Black progress. As such they needed to be neutralized. The manner in which the “progressive” move toward desegregation and racial equality in the United States was used to conscript the Black struggle against racism legitimized the shift to repression of communists and other radicals. Cast as “enemies of the state,” they became sanctioned targets of official violence.

The consolidation of the process of conscripting the Black racial struggle by a pro-American liberal agenda was articulated in a pamphlet entitled *The Negro in American Life*, written circa 1950. Circulated internationally, its authors argued that the racial progress of the United States between 1850-1950, from the enslavement of Africans to a gradual move toward equality, was a testament to the superiority and progressive nature of American democracy vis-à-vis the “dictatorial fiat” of communism.<sup>116</sup> It made the comparison between the progressive, developing, and democratic nature of the United States and the authoritarian, and therefore retrograde and oppressive Soviet Union, to validate the claims of the liberal antiracists who had become conscripted into the narrative of the Cold War state. The historicism of black Culturalist

thought, now appended to American liberalism, allowed official acknowledgment of U.S. racism while offering up the democratic processes as the means to implement social change. It was through the democratic order—not communism—that social development and improvement of the Black condition could occur. Communism came to be constructed as the antithesis of American advancement and freedom and therefore fundamentally incompatible with Black progress. It had to be defeated, if not eliminated. In the process, the “anti-racist, anti-imperialist, proletarian internationalist agenda” of the Black Left became reduced to “communism,” and the realization of desegregation and racial progress came to be thought of as only being possible through the discrediting of the Black Left agenda.

### **Niggerization, Bad Faith, and Cold War Culturalism**

In arguing that the Cold War created the conditions for the turn to Culturalism in African diaspora theory, the intention is not to erase the long history of Black cultural production and its impact on Black freedom dreams, or to deny the agency of Black intellectuals in identifying the potential of Black culture to create/imagine a better humanity for Blacks both domestically and globally. Rather, the attempt is to explain how the instantiation of Cold War surveillance and McCarthyism transformed the radical possibilities of culture into Culturalism through its erasure of Black radical thought in African diaspora theory. The object of critique is not “culture” itself, but rather Culturalism—the pedagogy of Blackness inhered in and transformed by Cold War distortion in ways that conscripted culture into the service of the liberal capitalist state as a technology of violent erasure and intellectual apartheid. Cold War ideology and surveillance not only shaped/shapes conventional historiography about the Black experience in the United States and the Diaspora; they also had a profound determinative effect on the types of scholarship that was produced in the field of Africana studies. Culturalism became the only viable (state-sanctioned) means of critiquing racism, colonialism, and (European) imperialism in ways that were peculiarly compatible with U.S. market imperatives. As an epistemology of ignorance, Culturalism systematically expunged from scholarly engagement both the role of structural domination and the reality of coloniality in the constitution, maintenance, oppression, and dispossession of the Black, and the radical intellectuals that reveal these connections. It is rooted in a scotoma.

The Culturalist rejection of the Black radical tradition in favor of a doxastic commitment to the colonial and imperial ambitions of the United States leads to the viewing of the world wrongly, “through substantive epistemic practices” of elision.<sup>117</sup> In this manner, Black radical intellectual thought is willfully (if not pragmatically) foreclosed to the detriment of labor, internationalism, and antisystemic articulations of freedom. At issue here is the anticommunist foundation of Culturalism, and the ways in which the latter becomes both product and process of knowing, in the Horkheimerian sense.<sup>118</sup> Anticommunism, as a metonym for antilabor, antiradicalism, pro-market capitalism, pro-United States, and anti-internationalism, leaves only the realm of the cultural as a viable/safe site for mobilization. If anticommunism can be characterized as “a type of subjectivity that forms patterns of perceptual attentiveness and supplies belief-influencing premises that result in a distorted or faulty account of reality,”<sup>119</sup> then its mobilization by Black Cold War liberals against Black radicalism can be postulated as a willful not-knowingness.

Implicated in the entanglement of antiradicalism and anticommunism is a continuing regime of antiblackness. According to Lewis Gordon, “from the standpoint of antiblack racism there is no difference between any of the following dyads—blacks versus *a* black, the black

versus a black, *blacks* versus this black. In existential phenomenological language, this means that blacks are ‘overdetermined.’”<sup>120</sup> Culturalism’s grounding in antiblackness became manifest in its epistemological complicity with the Cold War state’s sanctioning of only the “ideal Black.” In other words, the alignment of Culturalism with the state’s myth of the ultimate subversive—the Black communist/radical—created the conditions for the annihilation of forms of Blackness deemed deviant. “‘The other black’ must be punished at all costs because he carries in his gaze a powerful truth.”<sup>121</sup> Culturalism, an epistemology of ignorance that must avoid this “powerful truth,” was particularly pernicious because the misrecognition of forms of knowledge as anti-American and communist-inspired served to rationalize the use of lethal and inhumane forms of physical violence against the Black radical bodies that produced it.

The institutionalization of anticommunism in the U.S. academy can be considered a regime of meaning-making and world-making meant to criminalize, marginalize, and ultimately obliterate radical intellectual thought that moves beyond and/or contests the framework of Cold War liberalism. In this discourse, forms of dissent or critique of the state became constructed as anti-American, and therefore communist-inspired. The bad faith of anticommunism built upon a specific form of antiblackness aimed at the Black radical subject by demanding allegiance to the Cold War project in which he was always-already suspect. As mentioned previously, the failure of the Black radical to comply legitimized his/her subjugation and exclusion, the erasure of his history and “deeds,” and his ultimate annihilation: “This is a case where Black existence constitutes the threat, leading to the conclusion that the nullification of Black being is the only sure prerequisite for white safety.”<sup>122</sup> If it is true that, “As long as the justice of the *status quo* is presumed, *any* response that portends real change will take the form of violence,”<sup>123</sup> then the annihilation of Black *radical* existence was not only sanctioned, but also a requisite for the maintenance of the Cold War order. Anticommunism was fundamentally rooted in bad faith because of its denial of both the (Black) radical’s history, and his/her role in History.<sup>124</sup> As outsider to both the state and state-sanctioned forms of Blackness, the Black radical was “deemed [a] suspicious, vile, unclean, infestation of the (white) social body,”<sup>125</sup> while the Black Cold War Culturalist was deployed as the ideal subject for freedom.

Bad faith was foundational to the recruitment of the ideal Black subject because it demanded “perfect evidence” for proof of humanity. As the ideal Black subject, the Black Cold War Culturalist—simultaneously a creation of and participant in bad faith—had only the “adequate” evidence of cultural production to offer, falling short of the requirement of perfection. Thus, the recognition of humanity is never fully realized. The evidence offered required a hypervisibility that was easily managed by and inscribed in the nation-state through surveillance, discipline and punishment, thus inaugurating a new means of controlling the Black that replaced the legal framework of Jim Crow without substantially displacing the pedagogy of the racial state. According to this pedagogy, the ideal Black subject must constantly reveal itself to assert its humanity by rendering Black radical subjectivity superfluous through epistemic erasure and complicity with physical violence enacted against radical bodies. The collusion of Black Culturalists and the Cold War state in the disciplining of the Black radical resulted in a doubling of the latter’s subversive threat: because s/he is foreclosed from the nation-state, the Black radical could only realize himself in internationalist terms. As such, s/he constituted a threat to both the anticommunist project of whiteness and the Culturalist construction of Blackness. Domestically s/he threatened the Cold War order, and internationally, s/he jeopardizes U.S. foreign policy because of his/her potential to expose the U.S. racial state to Blacks emerging from the strictures of European colonialism whose loyalty the state was trying

to gain. The Black radical subject was thus transformed into a derelict, or put another way, niggerized. The ideal Black subject was created through the establishment of a stark distinction/distance between itself and the Black radical. As Gordon writes,

‘Nigger’ is forever situated in the third person; *they* are ‘niggers,’ he acts like a *nigger*; I can act like *a nigger*—which is an Other—but I can never *be* ‘nigger’ or ‘niggerness,’ only ‘*a nigger*.’ ‘Niggerness’ emerges as a universal category that alleviates responsibility. ‘Niggerizing’ the world hides one’s shame for one’s own ‘niggerness.’ Thus... [it] is a form of bad faith... since the image of a ‘nigger’ is black... the black who uses it can be interpreted as saying this to himself, ‘I am not *that* kind of black, I am not a nigger’ or ‘I am not a typical black, I am not a nigger’ or ‘I am not one of *those* blacks, I am not a nigger. No one is pro ‘nigger.’

Such a Black is mired in self-denial.<sup>126</sup>

If “the black who unleashes the word ‘nigger’ against another black has adopted an antiblack standpoint on human reality,”<sup>127</sup> then niggerizing Black radicals was unquestioningly a manifestation of antiblackness. To be “pro ‘nigger’” coincided perfectly with being pro-communist, or, un-American, subversive, threatening, and therefore a necessary object of the discipline of the state. In other words, the act of niggerizing collapsed antiblackness and anticommunism in the project of Cold War Culturalism, both abjecting the Black radical subject from the Cold War state, and entrapping the possibilities of Blackness in the narrow confines of culture to avoid its own process of niggerization. To be a nigger was not simply to be Black, but rather to be Black and *radical*. In this way, anticommunism could not be delinked from antiblackness. As such, the Black radical/nigger was the ultimate target of “white forms of disciplinary control, processes of white racist embodied habituation, and epistemic white world-making.”<sup>128</sup> It was with the latter that the turn to Culturalism in Africa diaspora theory was particularly complicit because implicit in the intentional alignment with anticommunism and Cold War liberalism was the ascription of a regime of antiblackness built upon the body of the Black radical that calcified Black performance and cultural production as the only acceptable modes of antiracist, anti-imperialist, and anticolonial critique.

The Black Culturalist, in aligning with U.S. Cold War imperatives, became “the perpetrator and the victim of a delusion” because, while receiving marginal gains, complicity with this project of erasure, violence, and antiblackness against the radical subject reaffirmed Black precariousness and left intact class inequalities, the unequal distribution of resources, and the nationalist frame of reference, which Culturalism was unwilling and unable to address. The object of critique on the national level became Jim Crow racism and the exclusion of Blacks from the entitlements of full citizenship, argued in cultural terms. Beyond the United States, the same logics used to critique Jim Crow were applied to colonialism: the procurement of culture became the marker of progress, and the impositions of Jim Crow and direct colonial administration precluded the development of culture among African descendants in the US and in the diaspora, and therefore impeded progress, understood as economic development, modernization, and the opening of markets. The enrapture of Culturalism resulted in the affirmation of Black modern subjectivity through various cultural practices that in no way challenged exploitation as a result capitalism, the racial axial division of labor, and the entrenchment of the wealth gap between colonizer and (formerly) colonized. Black intellectuals thus became entrapped in an ideological space that asserted that as human beings, Blacks could

produce culture, and it was through culture that Blacks could affirm their modern subjectivity. As such, whites needed only affirm/recognize Black subjecthood through the recognition of their cultural production. This allowed white supremacy to reconstitute itself through liberal-capitalist notions of antiblackness, or the devaluation and dispossession of the Black. This occurred through the denial of equal access to resources, the negation of the fact that Black embodied labor produced surplus value, and the linking of Black conditions of impoverishment to the very culture in which their modern subjectivity was inherited. The entire project was thus an act of bad faith.

The narrative of Civil Rights was deployed to gain the “hearts and minds” of the decolonizing world and to challenge the Soviet Union’s criticism of U.S. racism. It conscripted Blacks into the Cold War project of the racial state while at the same time occluding its foundational role in the continued denial of human rights to Black subjects on the grounds of their potential subversion. In this way, Cold War era antiracism became peculiarly tinged with the anticommunist rhetoric of the US state by focusing on racism’s stultifying effects on progress, modernity, and the spread of democracy and market imperatives. In other words, the mobilization around antiracism in no way accommodated demands for the redistribution of resources. Rather, its focus was shifted to the goal of integration of Blacks into the U.S. (imperialist) state by securing equal rights. Anticommunism and red baiting detracted from the goals of colonial, national, and working people’s liberation. The detraction was facilitated by Black Culturalists, acting in bad faith, who conspired to support their deployment against Black radicals. Their goal was to align themselves with Cold War liberals to articulate a project of equality that folded neatly into the Wilsonian brand of anticolonialism that was consistent with, and even necessitated, historicist accommodation of Blacks into the regime of bourgeois juridical and political freedom that left untroubled the structural inequalities of an oppressive American racial order. In direct contradistinction to the Black radical visions of freedom and liberation, predicated on the eradication of capitalist exploitation and entrenched polarizations of wealth, the Black Cold War Culturalists adopted a vision of freedom that was not incompatible with the global spread of markets:

America’s anticolonialism sprang from its revolutionary heritage, its desire for world peace and stability, and its commitment to unrestricted world trade. The nation’s conservative revolutionary tradition supported the principle of self-government achieved in an orderly fashion. International peace and stability required the satisfaction of the demands of militant Third World nationalism. And America’s interest in international trade demanded opposition to imperial preferential systems which roped off important markets and denied American goods and capita equal access.<sup>129</sup>

The appending of the containment of communism to the eradication of colonialism created the conditions for the casting of communism as the primary evil facing the Third World. The project for the end of the Jim Crow and the colonial racial order was incorporated into the “search for security”<sup>130</sup> as the condition of Black freedom precisely because it was based on a Culturalist rejection of the radical agenda that challenged a social order rooted in material exploitation and oppression.

The spectacle of Black cultural production congealed with the spectacle of anticommunist surveillance. Both served to mask the persistence of white terror, the former through the narrative of racial progress, and the latter by espousing its role in making the world

safe for democracy and freedom. Culturalism obfuscated and discredited radical critiques of the capitalist, imperialist, and racist foundations of the U.S. regime of coloniality by positioning itself as the only acceptable form of antiracism and anticolonialism. It instantiated itself in and through the violence against the Black radical. It was a form of epistemic injustice because it armed Black Culturalists with both testimonial and hermeneutic authority. The former was exercised through the distribution of credibility for the articulation of forms of antiracism and anticolonialism that did not contest the reinscription of white supremacy through market imperatives, and the denial of credibility to antisystemic critiques of any kind. Hermeneutic authority encoded Culturalism as the only acceptable challenge to racist governmentality, thereby foreclosing the possibility of radical critiques of the status quo. It is important to note that those who maintained their radical position were deported, exiled, had their movements circumscribed, and/or were otherwise antagonized and molested by the Cold War state and its advocates. The “red tagging” of Black radicals by the state was intended to undermine their claims to civil rights and equality.<sup>131</sup> In this way, anticommunism operated metonymically for white supremacy and provided a new justification for racism. Stated differently, white supremacy was reproduced by the merging of anticommunist rhetoric with the maintenance of whiteness as communism became inextricably linked to the challenge to white rule in America.

### Conclusion

Culturalism has proven to be an enduring feature of scholarship about the Black condition. Beginning with the Harlem Renaissance and continuing genealogically through the Cold War, Culturalism as an ideology grounded in coloniality, the Cartesian mind/body split, the historicist trap, and the elision of political economy, has overdetermined Black intellectual thought. As a result, the Black radical tradition has been subsumed in African diaspora theory, rendering the latter insufficient to critically engage with the material conditions of the Black subaltern and to use such conditions as the basis for true black liberation. New Negro Culturalism’s enrapture by the civilization narrative and the bad faith of Cold War Culturalism have resulted in scotomas regarding radical, structural solutions to Black abjection and dispossession. Culture, when articulated to the economic realities of the Black, can provide some solutions through the epistemic challenges it poses to capitalism. However, Culturalism, as a project of elision, is largely antithetical to contemporary conceptions of liberation. Because it is especially susceptible, and indeed amenable, to co-optation and reinscription, Culturalism must cease to be the defining feature of African diaspora theory. Only then can it begin to resurrect the radical foundations of Black critique and to develop the capacity for description, prescription, and correction.

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<sup>1</sup> Syliva Wynter, “Sambos and Minstrels,” *Social Text* 1 (1979), 150.

<sup>2</sup> See Cary Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism: The United States and the Genesis of West Indian Independence, 1940-1964*, (Westport: Praeger, 1994).

<sup>3</sup> See the introduction of this dissertation.

<sup>4</sup> Philip McMichael, “Slavery in Capitalism: The Rise and Demise of the U.S. Ante-Bellum Cotton Culture,” *Theory and Society* 20 (1991), 326.

<sup>5</sup> Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial thought and Historical Difference*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 58.

<sup>6</sup> Wynter, “Sambos and Minstrels,” 156.

<sup>7</sup> McMichael, “Slavery in Capitalism,” 325-326.



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- <sup>8</sup> Michelle M. Wright, *Becoming Black: Creating Identity in the African Diaspora*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 9.
- <sup>9</sup> Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 53.
- <sup>10</sup> Wright, *Becoming Black*, 9.
- <sup>11</sup> Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1944), 28.
- <sup>12</sup> Wright, *Becoming Black*, 9.
- <sup>13</sup> See Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*; and Joseph Inikori, *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England: A Study in International Trade and Economic Development*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
- <sup>14</sup> Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 28-48; Herbert S. Klein, "Slavery and the Plantation Economy in the Caribbean in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century," in *African Slavery in Latin American and the Caribbean*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 89-112; Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, (London: Bogle-L'Overture Press, 1972), 93-110.
- <sup>15</sup> Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 56.
- <sup>16</sup> Wynter, "Sambos and Minstrels" 152.
- <sup>17</sup> Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 59.
- <sup>18</sup> Ramon Grosfoguel, "The Structure of Knowledge in Westernized Universities: Epistemic Racism/Sexism and the Four Genocides/Epistemicides of the Long 16<sup>th</sup> Century," *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 11 (2013), 75-76.
- <sup>19</sup> Lewis Gordon, *An Introduction to Africana Philosophy*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 38.
- <sup>20</sup> Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 60-61.
- <sup>21</sup> Kwasi Wiredu, "Amo's Critique of Descartes' Philosophy of Mind," in *A Companion to African Philosophy* edited by Kwasi Wiredu, (Hoboken: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 200-201.
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.
- <sup>23</sup> Wynter, "Sambos and Minstrels," 152.
- <sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 153.
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>28</sup> Nelson Maldonado Torres, "On the Coloniality of Being," *Cultural Studies* 21 (2007), 246.
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 240-270.
- <sup>30</sup> Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 24-25.
- <sup>31</sup> David Theo Goldberg, *The Racial State* (Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2002), 112.
- <sup>32</sup> Percy Hintzen, "Whiteness, Desire, Sexuality, and the Production of Black Subjectivities in British Guiana, Barbados, and the United States," in *Problematizing Blackness: Self-Ethnographies by Black Immigrants in the United States* edited by Percy Claude Hintzen and Jean Muteba Rahier, (New York: Routledge, 2003), 130.
- <sup>33</sup> Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, 25.
- <sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.
- <sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>38</sup> Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, 32.
- <sup>39</sup> Hintzen, "Whiteness, Desire, Sexuality," 129.
- <sup>40</sup> Goldberg, *The Racial State*, 109-110.
- <sup>41</sup> Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, 33-34.
- <sup>42</sup> Maldonado-Torres, "On the Coloniality of Being," 245.
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 245-246.
- <sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 246.
- <sup>45</sup> Leonard Harris, *The Philosophy of Alain Leroy Locke: Harlem Renaissance and Beyond*, (Philadelphia: Temple University, 1989), 178.
- <sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 180-181.
- <sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 183.
- <sup>48</sup> Wright, *Becoming Black*, 15.
- <sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>50</sup> Harris, *Alain Leroy Locke*, 175.
- <sup>51</sup> Wynter, "Sambos and Minstrels," 149.

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- <sup>52</sup> Harris, *Alain Leroy Locke*, 182.
- <sup>53</sup> Wynter, "Sambos and Minstrels" 149.
- <sup>54</sup> Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 7.
- <sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.
- <sup>56</sup> Alain Locke, *The New Negro*, 7.
- <sup>57</sup> Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 12.
- <sup>58</sup> Harris, *Alain Leroy Locke*, 184.
- <sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>60</sup> Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 75.
- <sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.
- <sup>62</sup> Alain Locke, *The New Negro*, 7.
- <sup>63</sup> Fabian, *Time and the Other*, 11-12.
- <sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.
- <sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 75.
- <sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 17-18.
- <sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.
- <sup>68</sup> Alain Locke, *The New Negro*, 8.
- <sup>69</sup> Harris, *Alain Leroy Locke*, 185.
- <sup>70</sup> Alain Locke, *The New Negro*, 14.
- <sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.
- <sup>72</sup> Harris, *Alain Leroy Locke*, 184.
- <sup>73</sup> Alain Locke, *The New Negro*, 15.
- <sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 15-16.
- <sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, xxv.
- <sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.
- <sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.
- <sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.
- <sup>80</sup> Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 41.
- <sup>81</sup> James L. Roark, "American Black Leaders: The Response to Colonialism and the Cold War, 1943-1953," *African Historical Studies* 4 (1971), 254.
- <sup>82</sup> Penny Von Eschen, "Challenging Cold War Habits: African Americans, Race, and Foreign Policy," *Diplomatic History* 20 (1996), 627-638.
- <sup>83</sup> Lewis Gordon, *Fanon and the Crisis of European Man*, (New York: Routledge, 1995), 94.
- <sup>84</sup> Erik McDuffie, "Black and Red: Black Liberation, the Cold War, and the Horne Thesis," *The Journal of African American History* 96 (2011), 237.
- <sup>85</sup> Brenda Gayle Plummer, "African Americans in the International Imaginary: Gerald Horne's Progressive Vision," *The Journal of African American History* 96 (2011), 221.
- <sup>86</sup> McDuffie, "Black and Red," 236.
- <sup>87</sup> Dudziak, "Desegregation as a Cold War Imperative," *Stanford Law Review* 41 (1988), 122.
- <sup>88</sup> Von Eschen, "Challenging Cold War Habits," 635.
- <sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 627-638.
- <sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 619.
- <sup>91</sup> McDuffie, "Black and Red," 237.
- <sup>92</sup> Plummer, "African Americans in the International Imaginary."
- <sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 222.
- <sup>94</sup> Roark, "American Black Leaders," 269.
- <sup>95</sup> Plummer, "African Americans in the International Imaginary," 223.
- <sup>96</sup> McDuffie, "Black and Red," 236.
- <sup>97</sup> Dudziak, "Desegregation as Cold War Imperative," 113, footnote 299.
- <sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 92.
- <sup>99</sup> Plummer, "African Americans in the International Imaginary," 225.
- <sup>100</sup> Dudziak, "Desegregation as Cold War Imperative," 107.
- <sup>101</sup> McDuffie, "Black and Red," 243.

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- <sup>102</sup> Roark, "American Black Leaders," 260.
- <sup>103</sup> Dudziak, "Desegregation as Cold War Imperative," 102 footnote 243.
- <sup>104</sup> Von Eschen, "Challenging Cold War Habits," 627-638.
- <sup>105</sup> McDuffie, "Black and Red," 236.
- <sup>106</sup> Gerald Horne, *Black Liberation/Red Scare: Ben Davis and the Communist Party*, (Newark: The University of Delaware Press, 1994), 13.
- <sup>107</sup> Roark, "American Black Leaders," 268.
- <sup>108</sup> Dudziak, "Desegregation as Cold War Imperative," 64.
- <sup>109</sup> Mary Dudziak, "Josephine Baker, Racial Protest, and the Cold War," *The Journal of American History* 81(1994), 555.
- <sup>110</sup> Dudziak, "Desegregation as Cold War Imperative," 89.
- <sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 97.
- <sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 98 footnote 223.
- <sup>113</sup> Horne, *Black Liberation/Red Scare*, 12.
- <sup>114</sup> Dudziak, "Desegregation as Cold War Imperative," 76 footnote 77.
- <sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 99 footnote 230.
- <sup>116</sup> Mary Dudziak, "Brown as Cold War Case," *The Journal of American History* 91 (2004), 38.
- <sup>117</sup> Linda Martin Alcoff, "Epistemologies of Ignorance: Three Types," in *Race and Epistemologies of Ignorance*, edited by Shannon Sullivan and Nancy Tuana, (Albany: SUNY Press, 2007), 47.
- <sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.
- <sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 48.
- <sup>120</sup> Lewis Gordon, "Sartrean Bad Faith and Antiblack Racism." In *The Prism of the Self: Philosophical Essays in Honor of Maurice Natanson* edited by S. Galt Cromwell, (Berlin: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1995), 122.
- <sup>121</sup> Lewis Gordon, *Bad Faith and Antiblack Racism*, (New York: Humanity Books, 1999), 11.
- <sup>122</sup> George Yancy, *Black Bodies, White Gazes: The Continuing Significance of Race*, (Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2008), location 276.
- <sup>123</sup> Gordon, *Fanon and the Crisis*, 77.
- <sup>124</sup> Lewis, "Sartrean Bad Faith," 123.
- <sup>125</sup> Yancy, *Black Bodies, White Gaze*, location 219.
- <sup>126</sup> Gordon, *Bad Faith and Antiblack Racism*, 105-106.
- <sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.
- <sup>128</sup> Yancy, *Black Bodies, White Gaze*, location 157.
- <sup>129</sup> Roark, "American Black Leaders," 259.
- <sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 260.
- <sup>131</sup> Gerald Horne, "Who Lost the Cold War? Africans and African Americans," *Diplomatic History* 20 (1996), 615.

## Chapter Two

### Theorizing Anticommunism/Antiradicalism/Antiblackness

There is a fundamental relationship between the discourse of anticommunism and the “threat” to the nation posed by the Black. This relationship was the fundamental condition for revealing what was at stake in Communism. Starting with American involvement in World War I, the U.S. state manifested a variety of attitudes and anxieties toward the Comintern and the CPUSA and related forms of radicalism, ranging from indifference to obsession. This is contrary to the notion that the United States has always seen communism as a threat to national security. The crucial question for this chapter is, how has the U.S. and diasporic Black figured into the intensification of anticommunist surveillance and violence? Posed differently, if the Black has always-already been a threat and a danger to the stability of the U.S. state domestically and to U.S. foreign policy in the Global South, then is it *Black* communism/radicalism that is the specter of destabilization? Is it possible that Blackness converts communism from a nuisance that must be contained to the ultimate form of subversion that must be suppressed and eradicated?

Because of the legitimate historical and contemporary claims against the state—i.e. slavery, Jim Crow, lynching, disenfranchisement, and daily indignity—the Black came to pose the quintessential anti-American threat with the real possibility of its overthrow. If, as Robin D.G. Kelley’s asserts, “The tragedy for America, perhaps, is that these committed revolutionaries [on the left] set out to save the Negro when they needed black folk to save them,”<sup>1</sup> then the anxiety of the U.S. state around the radical potentialities of the Black was warranted. W.E.B. DuBois’s observation that, “The Negro problem... is the great test of the American Socialist”<sup>2</sup> can be interpreted to mean that the test of socialism was its ability to resolve the Negro problem and to commit itself to anticapitalism *and* antiracism. Both were imperative for the challenge to the state to be successful. The U.S. racial state recognized that what inhered in Black radicalism was the potential to fundamentally destabilize the American economic and social order.

Black radicalism was exceedingly dangerous not because of socialism or communism as such, but rather because it sought to mobilize the racialized dispossession of Black people internationally. While white Europeans and Americans identified fascism as the dominant threat to freedom and democracy starting in the 1930s until the end of World War II, Black radicals recognized that fascism was the “blood relative” of slavery and imperialism as global systems rooted in racist capitalist political economy.<sup>3</sup> From the position of discursive exclusion, abjection, and material dispossession rooted in racial discourse, the Black was able to expose the connection between fascism and capitalism, and the rootedness of racial discourse in political economy and the capitalist world-economy. In other words, Black radicalism integrally linked racism to capitalism, which posed a fundamental challenge to accumulation in the Global North and implicated the United States in the continuation of imperialism and coloniality. Robin Kelley writes, “As early as 1906, Du Bois argued that the imposition of the color line on a world sale, whether in the form of Jim Crow or colonial rule, ‘transferred the reign of commercial privilege and extraordinary profit from the exploitation of the European working class to the exploitation of backward races under the political domination of Europe.’ The ‘colored’ laborer, therefore, was the key to socialism’s success...”<sup>4</sup> Thus, the Black provided the linkage between the superexploitation of the Global South and the proliferation of welfare capitalism in the Global North because Blacks were critical constituents of both.

The relationship of dependency between the developed and developing worlds, upon which social democracy as a project of welfare capitalism in the Global North was based, was in danger of being revealed through Black radicalism and its global articulations.<sup>5</sup> Black radical demands for redistribution challenged not only domestic U.S. racial and economic policy, but also linked U.S. imperialism to the exploitation of the Global South. The possibility of such revelation was what proved dangerous to American-centered capitalism of the post-World War II period. Black radicalism, through its internationalism, came with the danger of linking up antiracism, anticapitalism, and anti-imperialism. This explains the attempt by the American state to reduce and conflate all forms of Black radicalism with foreign-inspired anti-Americanism and communism/socialism as forms of subversion and sedition.

### **Anticommunism and Antiblackness: Metaphor and Analogy**

As a technology of domination that discursively produced the Black as “nigger” located on the constitutive outside of the state, antiblack racism provided the template for disciplining those who posed discursive challenges to the pedagogy of the U.S. state. The Black, ontologically, was a political, social, economic, and historical problem for the United States.<sup>6</sup> Anticommunism, as analogy<sup>7</sup> to antiblackness, became a metonym for various forms of antiradicalism that derived its meaning from the unbelonging of the Black, who was the archetypal subversive non-citizen. The analogy between antiblackness and anticommunism becomes evident in that “...the United States has functioned as a ‘multi-nation state’ with [the Black] historically being treated at times as equivalent to, but often worse than, foreign nationals,”<sup>8</sup> and “state monitoring of [Black] movement and migration has been from the outset related to broader fears of racial and ideological subversion in national political cultures.”<sup>9</sup>

As an instrument of governmentality, antiblackness abducted the body of the Black, distorted it for the purposes of accumulation and exploitation, and returned that distortion as the Black reality.<sup>10</sup> This process of distortion, or niggerization, was a “violent act of reduction and mutilation,”<sup>11</sup> that produced the Black as economic, existential, and semantic surplus to be extracted by the state.<sup>12</sup> Anticommunism/antiradicalism became legible in and through this “surplus” of meaning through a process of entanglement where the Black and the Communist/radical became conflated as “nigger.” The Black as the “not” of white America,<sup>13</sup> was tied through analogy to the Communist, and the two became interchangeable. It was through this analogy that the Communist/radical came to be understood as not-American/un-American/anti-American. Thus the “darkness” of the Communist was codified as “a naturally occurring phenomenon, [that] became historicized... created and sustained by socioepistemic and semiotic communal constitutionality.”<sup>14</sup> In other words, because white supremacy inhered in capitalist accumulation “the structure of experience and understanding” of the United States, anticommunism derived “informative value” from the historical deployment of antiblackness.<sup>15</sup> This linkage explains the way in which, “Historically, states [especially the United States] weary of radical thought have posed being a Communist as one of the most hateful identities.”<sup>16</sup> The Communist/Black became entangled as not-white/not-American. Because whiteness meant citizenship, nationalism, patriotism, etc. then the Communist, through this analogy became necessarily foreclosed from belonging and thus niggerized. And because of the foreclosure of the nigger as the most “inferior, stained, and impure”<sup>17</sup> non-white, the Communist lost its claim to whiteness. The Black/Communist/nigger, “[became] part of a larger historical imaginary, a social universe of white racist discourse that comes replete with long, enduring myths, perversions, distorted profiles, and imaginings of all sorts regarding the nonwhite body.”<sup>18</sup> As such, the

deportation of “aliens” and the arrest of undesirables in the Communist Party USA became commonplace. For example,

During the latter part of 1919, the Department of Justice submitted to the Department of Labor a large amount of evidence of the Communist Party of America. This resulted in the issuance of a large number of warrants for deportation hearings. The deportation cases were based on the theory that the Communist Party of America advocated the overthrow by force and violence of the Government of the United States, and, therefore, its officials and members who were aliens were subject to deportation as being members of an organization proscribed by the immigration laws. As a result for the wholesale arrests and deportations, the Communist Party was forced underground.<sup>19</sup>

The Red Scare of 1919 that prompted these mass deportations built upon suspicion of Black loyalty to the Germans during WWI. Fears of Black pro-Germanism presaged and laid the foundation for the convergence of antiblackness and anticommunism and its link through suspicion of Black loyalty to the Soviet Union.<sup>20</sup> Both came to underscore the threat and danger represented by Black international engagement and the fear of its potential for sedition because it could capitalize on the Black’s propensity for anti-Americanism. As Mark Ellis writes,

[J]ust as Black civil rights protest during the war was frequently traced to German intrigue, so the same simplistic analysis, which relied on a presumption of Black gullibility and avoided consideration of the real causes of dissatisfaction—lynching, segregation and other forms of discrimination—led the government’s investigators after the war to unthinkingly attribute Black demands that they be granted some of Woodrow Wilson’s much-vaunted ‘world-wide democracy’ to the influence of the new alien threat—Bolshevism.<sup>21</sup>

In other words, it was the Black’s alleged susceptibility to foreign-inspired subversion, due to his/her inability to be fully citizen/fully American, which rendered the “alien” and the communist threatening and dangerous. The “socio-ontological structure” of the Black/Communist/nigger “gives intelligibility to”<sup>22</sup> him/her as “alien,” “deportable subject,” and/or non-citizen through incarceration. Historically, deportation and incarceration have been “the twin ways that the United States has dealt with ‘undesirables.’”<sup>23</sup> According to Carole Boyce Davies, “...deportation... is an earlier version of the criminalizing and parallel conferring of statelessness on those with political positions deemed radical by the state.”<sup>24</sup> The “conferring of statelessness” through deportation and/or imprisonment is another instrumentality of violent foreclosure from the state. Its instrument effect is the violation of the Black/Communist body because it “reduc[es] him to nigger.”<sup>25</sup>

Anticommunism/antiradicalism and antiblackness became interaction metaphors<sup>26</sup> that mutually informed Cold War surveillance, discipline, and punishment because “[t]he entire logic of ‘un-American’ behavior... [was] link[ed] to U.S. ideologies of capitalism and racism.”<sup>27</sup> Interaction metaphors “‘interact’ to produce a meaning that is a resultant of the interaction” and “cannot be simply reduced to literal comparisons... without loss of meaning or cognitive content, because meaning is a product of the interaction between the... parts of the metaphor.”<sup>28</sup> In this way, antiblackness and anticommunism were “active together” to give meaning to un-Americanness, non-citizenship, dangerous threat, and niggerness. “The interaction between the

two parts of the metaphor” rendered legible the threat of the Black and the communist and legitimated the use of instrumentalities of antiblack racism and anticommunist policy (e.g., the curtailment of movement, state-sanctioned violence, criminalization, denial of Civil Rights) instantiated in the Cold War state. According to Sander Gilman, “We do not see the world, rather we are taught by representations of the world about us to conceive of it in a culturally acceptable manner.” As such, the historical repression of the Black because of his embodied threat to the racialized socioeconomic order made it “culturally acceptable” to deploy technologies of repression against communists that likewise threatened the system of capitalist accumulation organized around the U.S. imperialist and hegemonic State.

In turn, it became “culturally acceptable” to reconstitute racism through anti-internationalist and anti-redistributive policies because of the threat of foreign authoritarianism that communism ostensibly advocated. This “...metaphorical system provided the ‘lenses’ through which people experienced and ‘saw’ the differences between”<sup>29</sup> whites and the Black, the citizen deserving of rights and the non-citizen/nigger deserving of discipline and who is to be punished, and the good American and the un-American communist/radical/foreign-inspired internationalist. The state was able to use anxieties about the Black to codify the dangers of the communist, and vice-versa because, “...in an interaction metaphor, a ‘system of associated commonplaces’ that strictly speaking belong only to one side of the metaphor are applied to the other... what makes the metaphor effective ‘is not that the commonplaces shall be true, but that they should be readily and freely evoked.”<sup>30</sup> Through metaphor, both the communist and the Black were “readily and freely evoked” as radical/non-citizen/nigger. The Black by virtue of his/her non-citizenship, lacked allegiance to the state and was always-already prone to insurrection and sedition; the communist, through commitment to the “overthrow” of the U.S. government, came to be understood as inherently subversive and therefore non-citizen. “...[B]y their interactions and evoked associations both parts of [the] metaphor are changed. Each part is seen as more like the other in some characteristic way.”<sup>31</sup> The Black and communist became interchangeable as suspicious, subversive, and inherently destabilizing. Because of the actual and presumed challenge to U.S. forms of governmentality, they both became represented as aligned with enemies of the United States, and undeserving of citizenship, rights, privileges, and entitlements.

In 1949, the House of Representatives Committee on Un-American Activities asserted the connection between the communist and the non-citizen that had historically applied to the Black: “Every citizen... today [1949] is faced with a single choice: To go Communist or not to go Communist,”<sup>32</sup> and those who chose to “go Communist” were spies, revolutionaries, and conspirators.<sup>33</sup> Further, “nobody, man, woman, or child, can be a Communist and a good citizen of the United States of America at the same time.”<sup>34</sup> This “hegemonic, monologic discourse,” “locked within... [a] structure of whiteness...”<sup>35</sup> foreclosed from the possibility of whiteness/citizenship those who were scripted as Communist/radical were. This is because,

...the metaphor... permits us to see similarities that the metaphor itself helps constitute. The metaphor... ‘selects, emphasizes, suppresses and organizes features’ of reality, thereby allowing us to see new connections between the two subjects of the metaphor, to pay attention to details hitherto unnoticed, to emphasize aspects of human experience otherwise treated as unimportant, to make new features into ‘signs’ signifying inferiority.<sup>36</sup>

Through metaphor, the Black became constituted as radical-revolutionary/secret agent and the communist as non-citizen/nigger. The Mundt-Nixon Bill (which did not pass the Senate in 1948 but provided many of the provisions of the McCarran Internal Security Act that became law in 1950) was meant to, “expose communists and their fronts by requiring them to register publicly with the Attorney General and plainly label all their propaganda as their own; forbid Communists passports or government jobs; make it illegal for ANYBODY to try to set up in this country a totalitarian dictatorship having ANY connection with a foreign power.”<sup>37</sup> The Bill, as documentary practice, created the conditions of slippage between totalitarian dictatorship and an allegiance to a foreign power on the one hand, and any form of mobilization that challenged the U.S. state on the other. As such it became a technology of governmentality. Its effect was to facilitate the transformative representation of demands for an end to racism, Civil Rights, and equal incorporation into the economy as authoritarian, anti-democratic, and foreign-inspired. As Carole Boyce Davies writes,

That the activities of those who struggle for rights against racist domination were identified as subversive in every instance and were always linked to Communism, or called Communism outright, according to state ideologies and definition of Communism as identified in the *Congressional Record*, one of the sites of the nation’s self-definition, reveals an important connect between U.S. state repression and racism. In those terms, all struggles for human justice, for liberation of a variety of sorts, because they challenge the nature of United States policies and practices are technically ‘deportable subjects.’<sup>38</sup>

In other words, as interaction metaphors that provided the meaning for “un-American” and “subversive,” antiblackness and anticommunism rendered insignificant and eviscerated the difference between challenges to white supremacy and challenges to capitalist exploitation because both opposed the pedagogy of the state and its practices. The justification for the Internal Security Act of 1950 underscores U.S. anxieties around radical challenges to the state through its conflation of communism, totalitarianism, internationalism, treachery, and violence:

There exists a World Communist movement which in its origins, its development, and its present practice, is a world-wide revolutionary movement whose purpose it is, by treachery, deceit infiltration into other groups (governmental and otherwise), espionage, sabotage, terrorism, and any other means deemed necessary, to establish a Communist totalitarian dictatorship in the countries throughout the world through the medium of a world-wide Communist organization.<sup>39</sup>

The coupling of treachery, deceit, and revolution with “world-wide” codified Communism as both an internal and external threat. It was the justifying basis for virulent forms of anti-internationalism. This became articulated to Blackness because of the Black’s location on the constitutive outside of the American state and his/her linkage to forms of Black internationalism. The international has always-already been the constitutive position of American Blackness. This imposed a form of statelessness upon the Black and had historically justified and legitimized deportation and incarceration. Black exclusion reifies the power of whiteness/Americanness to “relegate nonwhites to the margins, to segregate them, to instill in them the sense of existing outside the space of white normalcy and normativity.”<sup>40</sup> As such, the nigger—as Black and/or communist—came to mean s/he who was violent, terroristic, anti-democratic, and dangerous,



and who did not belong and could not be trusted. In short, s/he becomes the absolute abject, deserving of subjection, surveillance, suspicion, discipline, and punishment.

The demand in the Mundt-Nixon Bill for public registration, the curtailment of movement, and the foreclosure from public sector jobs transformed the communist into a “‘sign’ signifying inferiority” that had historically been applied to the Black to underscore his/her non-citizenship and foreclosure from the state. The McCarran Act was even more integral to the process of entangling antiblackness and anticommunism:

Deadlier than the Smith Act, referred to commonly as ‘the anticommunist law,’ the Walter McCarran Act lay the foundation for immigration checks, deportation, harassment of African Americans, and even ‘authorized concentration camps for emergency situations.’ In section 22 of this far-reaching act... a variety of aliens are identified as inadmissible or deportable for offenses such as teaching revolutionary information. Updating, revising, and tightening the Immigration Act of 1917, the McCarran Act along with the Smith Act were the basis for state surveillance and the well-know activities of the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) throughout the 1950s and after.<sup>41</sup>

The McCarran Act codified “new connections between the two subjects of the metaphor,” the Black and the communist. The trifecta of the Smith Act, the Walter McCarran Act, and the Internal Security Act, all of which were built upon the Immigration Act of 1917, thus created a chain of signification between the Black/nigger, the radical/revolutionary, the communist/socialist, the foreigner/deportable subject and the anti-American/un-American. This created the conditions for the suspicion and disciplining of internationalism, anticolonialism, antiracism, and anti-imperialism. The threat posed to the state by any one could easily and seamlessly be mapped onto another to legitimate forms of discipline and punishment. Through the deployment of interaction metaphors the U.S. state was able to construct and explain an understanding of reality that justified and legitimized its ability to cast a wide net of violence and repression against both Blacks and communists.<sup>42</sup>

Between the Red Scare of 1919<sup>43</sup> and the height of the McCarthy Era, the target of anticommunist discipline and punishment in the United States was in response to shifting concerns about managing the Black radical threat; it had less to do with the threat communism itself posed to the state. The primary concern was the extent to which its internationalist scope would resonate with the Black, and the means of propaganda used to garner his/her support. This was because Blacks in the U.S. were subjected to overt racism and racial terror through Jim Crow, lynching, and structural violence. They were the objects of economic exploitation through sharecropping, debt peonage, and unequal wages. They suffered from high rates of unemployment and from the unequal effects of militarization and war through their unequal status in the military. Their full rights to citizenship were persistently and continually denied even after serving in the armed forces. They were even victimized for their military service, especially after their return from war by racist whites that wanted to keep Blacks “in their place.”

Forms of Black internationalism were being forged through common cause with African descended populations overseas who were subjected to imperial aggression and colonial oppression in African and Caribbean states. The Communist Party’s championing of the oppressed, the worker, and the exploited came with the potential of fomenting Black rebellion against global white domination because of its historic denial of a “fair deal” to the Black. Anticommunism during the interwar years was constitutive of the anxieties felt around

internationalism, anticapitalism, antiracism, and anti-imperialism, rather than the direct threat of the Soviet Union to the American State. What inhered in Black radicalism were all of the State's fears about a challenge to its security, its ability to accumulate, and its social organization along racialized lines of inequality. Anticommunism developed during that period as an instrumentality to suppress and undermine Black radical mobilization beyond the United States. The U.S. state feared that it presented moral and racial peril and a fundamental threat to the modern capitalist state and to the proliferation and consolidation of U.S. imperialism in the Global South. While the United States was strategically anticolonial and anti-mercantilist, it was also overtly racist and increasingly imperialist. The latter would potentially provide the basis for the convergence of Black struggle in the Global North and in the Global South. Communism was a source of anxiety because it became the organizational basis for Black internationalism and anti-imperialism that had the potential to challenge U.S. policy and practice.

The specificities of anticommunist surveillance, discipline, and punishment were broad and far-reaching enough to incorporate all types of radicalism. This was because: "...it is not only the threat of Soviet-inspired subversion, spying, and sabotage that constitute a danger to our free institutions, but that the philosophy of communism in whatever form, or whatever name it may appear, regardless of how cleverly it may be camouflaged, or how attractively it may be packaged, is an even more dangerous threat to the American system of society and government."<sup>44</sup> J. Edgar Hoover adds: "What is important is the claim of the Communists themselves that for every Party member there are ten others ready, willing, and able to do the Party's work. Herein lies the greatest menace of Communism. For these are the people who infiltrate and corrupt various spheres of American life. So rather than the size of the Communist Party, the way to weigh its true importance is by testing its influence, its ability to infiltrate."<sup>45</sup> In other words, any form of radicalism was susceptible to communist influence and infiltration, and would ultimately advance the "Party's work." Therefore, any organization or individual that espoused any principles or tenets that could be construed as communist or that challenged or criticized "American Life" (broadly understood as the American way of life) were either directly guilty or complicit. And, anyone who opposed the "investigation" of communism—meaning any objection to state forms of surveillance and punishment—could be construed as communist or a fellow traveler. Hoover's characterization of communism was meant to incite a moral panic to provide the means to ensure and solidify loyalty and to justify the surveillance, disciplining, and punishment of anyone. The failure to move aggressively against the communist threat would allow "so many self-styled 'Anti-Communists,' with Socialist or Communist or Communist-front backgrounds... to get away with their attacks on congressional committees investigating communism—attacks which are aiding and abetting the Communist conspiracy in the United States..." In the final analysis, because "[t]here are different kinds of communism and different kinds of Communists, but they all have for their purpose the undermining and overthrowing of our Government and the destruction of the American way of life,"<sup>46</sup> even those who were mildly critical of the American way of life could be deemed "Communist" based on this logic. This broad umbrella of communism targeted all critics of the American way of life, and Blacks were at the forefront of this criticism.

This sweeping application of communism to any counterhegemonic challenge to the U.S. state was grounded in antiblackness. Any challenge to the state and statist discourse—especially issues of racial justice—was deemed "divisive" and thus complicit with the communist objectives of state overthrow: "The immediate objective of the Communist Party is to confuse and divide the majority so that in a time of chaos they can seize control."<sup>47</sup> As such,

anticommunism became conscripted into the project of white supremacy. This was true for a wide range of issues. To agitate for equal rights, the end of Jim Crow, equal access to work and wages, the right to self-rule in Africa and the Caribbean, the end to indignity, etc. could potentially cause “confusion” and division. As such, it became construed as both Anti-American and pro-communist. This is notwithstanding the fact that the objectives of these calls were to hold the State accountable to its laws and to the ideals of the Constitution. The violation was that these agitations threatened to expose the contradiction that inhered between these ideals and the customs, policies, and practices of the U.S. State as they applied to its treatment of the Black. Thus, it was the Black in particular that, under the “manipulation” of the Communist Party, was most susceptible to radicalization and to challenge the state, thereby creating the “chaos” that would allow the Communist Party to “seize control.” Thus the “confusion” produced by the demand that Blacks be treated as citizens, despite the reality of their foreclosure from citizenship, was used to legitimate claims that Black mobilization for various forms of equality was a communist plot or conspiracy, meant to cause division and unrest.

The threat that such demands posed rested not necessarily with “the confusion” but with the possibility of exposure of the historical reliance upon the exploitation and dispossession of Black labor, and racist discourse of white supremacy that legitimated its denial. Any challenge to white supremacy that was linked to capitalist accumulation would necessarily cause confusion and division. It is for this reason that the Black radical embodied subversion, rebellion, sedition, and conspiracy: s/he threatened to expose the link between statist practice, racist pedagogy, and capitalist exploitation, and as such, s/he had the potential to disrupt the foundational principles of U.S. empire. The slippages between the Black and the communist transformed the “fellow traveler,” or “one who sympathizes with the Party’s aims and serves the Party’s purpose in one or more respects without actually holding a Party card... the HOOK with which the Party reaches out for funds and respectability and the WEDGE that it drives between people who try to move against it,”<sup>48</sup> into the equivalent of the “nigger lover.” Just as the “nigger lover” was a race traitor who sided with the Black against the system of white supremacy, the fellow traveler became branded as traitor because s/he sided with the communist in opposition to the State. Those who opposed state tactics of surveillance, disciplining, and punishment on moral or constitutional grounds were also branded “nigger lovers” or “communist supporters.” In many ways, the fellow traveler’s/“nigger lover’s” subversion was more egregious and dangerous. They did not carry the signs and significations of the odious identity (communist/Black). As such, they were in a better position to easily persuade others who would otherwise “never willingly act as...agents.”<sup>49</sup> The fellow traveler and the one that s/he persuaded became “a deadly weapon, for he deceives others and often himself...”<sup>50</sup> The danger posed by the fellow traveler/“nigger lover” was the threat of legitimizing the radical claims made against the racial capitalist state by imparting “respectability” to those who contravened and challenge it. They become the most dangerous type of traitor by calling into question the use of state-sanctioned violence against “undesirables,” be they radical Black or communist.

### **Shifts in Anticommunist Discourse and Discipline**

The targets of statist anticommunist regulation and discipline varied depending on the imperatives of U.S. foreign policy, economic organization, and the geopolitical exigency. Changes in the Communist Party line also elicited shifts in the focus of anticommunist technologies. In the “Guide to Subversive Organizations and Publications,” the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) outlined changes in Communist Party imperatives

between 1935 and 1957.<sup>51</sup> As the Communist Party, U.S.A. (CPUSA), as a representative of the Comintern/Cominform, oscillated between primary objectives, State methods of surveillance and repression responded. These different responses became manifest in the changes in the organizational and individual targets of surveillance and repression. While the threat of communism legitimized the claim of sedition and subversion by a foreign power, the U.S. state broadly sought to contain: 1) internationalism, and the ways in which it linked racial and colonial struggles against capitalist exploitation and domination; 2) antiracism and interracialism, and their disruption of the domestic and global racial order; and, 3) anti-imperialism, which fundamentally challenged American foreign policy, war-mongering, and neocolonial imperatives. The communist label was used to manage these perceived and changing extant threats. The thematics enumerated above were reflected in changes in the Communist Party line over time. Since the communist came to be understood as “nigger,” irrespective of racial identity, and the Black radical came to be understood as a communist, irrespective of ideology, anticommunist repression tended to target the struggles through which these entanglements appeared to be an immanent danger. The imbrication of Blackness and communism through analogy and metaphor was orchestrated by making direct links between communist organizations such as the CPUSA and Black radicals and organizations. This prevailed through different representations of the relationship between communism and the United States in keeping with different understandings of the Soviet Union and its anti-American propaganda.

### **Internationalism**

Prior to 1935, the Communist Party line condemned all capitalists, irrespective of whether they were “democratic” or fascist. Because both forms of government engaged in the international exploitation of the “undeveloped” world, both needed to be replaced by a proletarian dictatorship. The domination of colonized people through their conscription into the capitalist world-economy was predicated on the imperialist objectives of all nation-states that participated in World War I. The League of Nations was considered especially exploitative and antithetical to revolutionary socialist objectives. In 1919, the Socialist Left Wing Party wrote the following:

...Undeveloped territory, possessing sources of raw material, the industrial development of which will require the investment of capital and the purchase of machinery, becomes the objective of capitalistic competition between the imperialistic nations. Capitalism... comes to rely for its ‘prosperity’ and supremacy upon the exploitation and enslavement of colonial peoples, either in colonies, ‘spheres of influence,’ ‘protectorates,’ or ‘mandatories’—savagely oppressing hundreds of millions of subject peoples in order to assure high profit and interest rate of a few million people in the favored nations.<sup>52</sup>

This line of argumentation presented a threat to U.S. authority because it critiqued the “bourgeois” state, and advocated international mobilization along the lines of class, race, and colonized status. At a time when much of the “developed world” was experimenting with some form of welfare capitalism or social democracy, socialist ideology was not considered to be threatening because it had become complicit with global capitalist accumulation. Therefore, critical political economy could be accommodated. However, the idea of “proletarian revolution” that moved beyond the state was dangerous: “Moderate socialism affirms that the bourgeois, democratic parliamentary state is the necessary basis of the introduction of Socialism...[but] [t]he state is an organ of coercion. The bourgeois parliamentary state is the organ of the

bourgeoisie for the coercion of the proletariat. The revolutionary proletariat must, accordingly, destroy the state.”<sup>53</sup>

For revolutionary socialists, the state was essential to the disciplining of worker’s struggles, and the internationalization of the latter would create the conditions for workers in the Global North to mobilize against state-centered accumulation that relied on the system of dependency imposed upon the Global South. In other words, the ability of the core to appropriate surpluses from the periphery would come under attack. Because the Communist International “issue[d] its call to the subject peoples of the world, crushed under the murderous master of imperialism;” determined that “[t]he revolt of [colonial] subject peoples [was] a necessary phase of the world struggle against capitalist Imperialism;” and argued that “their revolt must unite itself with the struggle of the conscious proletariat in the imperialistic nations,” it was inimical to the U.S. state for which capitalist accumulation was fundamental. The uniting of “subject peoples” with “the conscious proletariat in the imperialistic nations”—in other words, residents of the United States that were already hostile toward the government—could potentially undermine the authority of the state and its capacity to dictate the terms of economic, political, and social organization. If the United States came to be understood as the “murderous master of imperialism,” its international power and its claim to make the world safe for democracy would be delegitimized. The discursive coupling of colonialism with capitalism forged out of “imperialism” came with the threat of transforming the project of “development” into a process of violence, subjection, and the continued denigration of racialized peoples as forms of U.S. racist governmentality. Furthermore, The potential for the forging of linkages between anticolonial struggles and the struggles of the oppressed in the United States threatened to undermine U.S. state and empire through the rejection of its policies of liberalism and gradualism.

Since Africa was the twentieth century frontier<sup>54</sup> of the imperialist project, the spread of radicalism to the Continent came with the threat of undermining U.S. imperial ambitions as it sought to replace Western Europe as the center of global capitalist accumulation. The linkage of Blackness and international consciousness came with the distinct possibility of making a connection between, on the one hand, capitalist exploitation in the colonies and on the other hand sharecropping, debt peonage, and unequal wages and work conditions in the U.S. Radical internationalism came with the threat of exposing this connection rooted in the violent exploitation of Black labor. In “The African Roots of the War,” W.E.B. DuBois articulates this relationship:

That sinister traffic [Trans-Atlantic slavery], on which the British Empire and the American Republic were largely built, cost black Africa no less than 100,000,000 souls, the wreckage of its political and social life, and left the continent in precisely that state of helplessness which invites aggression and exploitation. ‘Color’ became in the world’s thought synonymous with inferiority, ‘Negro’ lost its capitalization, and Africa was another name for bestiality and barbarism. Thus the world began to invest in color prejudice. The ‘Color Line’ began to pay dividends.<sup>55</sup>

Trans-Atlantic slavery connected the Black in the United States and the African on the continent through the expropriation of the surplus produced out of the exploitation of labor. The consequence for Africa was the underdevelopment of the Continent’s economies,<sup>56</sup> and that created the conditions for European and American imperialist penetration. Capitalist

accumulation in the Global North was conditioned on the exploitation of Africa and the expropriation of its surpluses rooted in colonial commandment.<sup>57</sup> As DuBois argues, “[The] national body... is increased in wealth, power, and luxury for all classes on a scale the world never saw before... Whence comes this new wealth and on what does its accumulation depend? It comes primarily from the darker nations of the world... Africa... the West Indies... Negroes... are by common consent for governance by white folk and economic subjection to them.”<sup>58</sup> The Black and the African were discursively connected through the myth of lineage. However, the effect of this connection was the universal condition of dispossession through the history of Euro-American domination (colonial commandment) and white supremacy that explains the common political economic condition producing the “dividends” of the “Color Line.” This explains the deep anxieties of the U.S. State around internationalism, international cooperation, and the threat of “foreign influence”<sup>59</sup> because of the threat these posed to the racialized economic order, and by extension, capitalist accumulation. If the challenge posed by anticolonialism in Africa could be linked to antiracism in the United States through radical internationalism and the critique of capitalism that rendered visible the source of Black dispossession, it could pose a fundamental problem for endless accumulation.

The global condition of Black inequality was integral to capitalist accumulation and to the maintenance and reproduction of the U.S. capitalist state. The state feared that the condition of violent dispossession and repression necessary to maintain racial inequality rendered The Black susceptible to the destabilizing influences of America’s foreign enemies through claims of deserved equality denied by the American state. Stated differently, the acute fear of forms of internationalism could be attributed to its potential effect on the Black. Internationalism thus became tied to the threat of subversion and anti-Americanism. The logic was as follows: the Black was not fit for equality, and his/her equal integration would prove disastrous for U.S. society. The inferiority of the Black left him/her susceptible to the sinister influence of enemies—i.e. Germans, communists, and socialists—who would be able to manipulate him/her into believing that s/he deserved equal treatment. The Black would then begin to forget his/her place—the waiting room of history that would eventually give way to equal status once s/he was sufficiently developed and deserving—and would be willing to resort to violence and insurrection to gain the rights that s/he has been duped into believing s/he deserves. Thus, anticommunism and antiradicalism became entangled with antiblackness through anxieties about Black internationalism and Black susceptibility to foreign subversion.

Fear of sedition led to intense forms of Black surveillance by the state apparatus. Under the Espionage Act of June 1917 and the Sedition Act of May 1918, the postal service, gained broad authority to censor any mail that contained information considered antithetical to the war efforts and therefore dangerous to the U.S. state. The Black press became an object of surveillance starting in 1917 with rumors that German agents had been successful in garnering widespread Black support and allegiance. Such suspicion reached a peak in 1919 during the “Red Scare.”<sup>60</sup> The enduring delusion was that foreign enemies were using propaganda to stir up racial antagonism and race hatred among the Negroes, thus causing internal strife that would ultimately destabilize the United States.<sup>61</sup> This logic rested on the belief that the Black was always-already suspect, “not-quite,” and outside of the disciplining technologies of citizenship. The Black was considered inherently disloyal because s/he was foreclosed from the possibility of being an *authentic* American, and thus s/he was considered particularly susceptible to the charlatan enticements of America’s outside enemies. The war with Germany did foment Black challenges to the American State. However, these did not emerge from the development of

international alliances with Germany, but rather through exposing the contradictions between the demands for Black military service and denial of the rights of full citizenship. They also emerged out of opposition to WWI and selective service given Jim Crow in the military; self-defense in the context of the “Red Summer” riots of 1919; and Black nationalist organization that advocated Black self-determination and autonomy.<sup>62</sup> A. Phillip Randolph, in reflecting on Black unrest during World War I, wrote in *The Messenger*, “The only legitimate connection between this unrest and Germanism is... that we are conscripting the Negro into the military and industrial establishments to achieve this end for white democracy four thousand miles away, while the Negro at home, though bearing the burden in every way is denied economic, political, educational and civil democracy.”<sup>63</sup>

As Theodore Kornweibel explains, “Radical black organizations and activities increased after the cessation of hostilities in Europe, fueled in part by the return of black soldiers whose aspirations had been heightened by the experience of social equality in France as well as by fighting for the preservation of democracy and freedom.”<sup>64</sup> The focus on Black proclivity for dissent and sedition served to maintain the racial status quo while legitimizing and normalizing surveillance and racial repression. The trope of German charlatanism and Black susceptibility to foreign manipulation extended even to the judicial opinion expressed after the arrest of Randolph and Chandler Owen for publishing the article which was titled “Pro-Germanism Among the Negroes.” Because the two were Black, the judge opined that they were not smart or brazen enough to write such an article, and he drew the conclusion that they had been used and manipulated by the white socialists who were also arrested. This demonstrated the logic of the link that developed between antiblackness and the perceived threat of communism, socialism, and related forms of “foreign” radicalism, and the use of that link to deny claims for Black equality. Relationships between the Black and foreign/internationalist individuals and organizations proved dangerous because foreign enemies of the State, for their own self-interested reasons, could inveigle the Black to believe that s/he deserved equality and should fight for it. Black demands for equal rights became transformed, according to this logic, into incitements for revolution by foreign enemies. In this way, racism, capitalism, and American citizenship became inexorably entangled.

The demand for Black equality, and its exploitation by America’s foreign enemies, was linked to notions of “highbrowism,” which represented the insubordination of (“uppity”) Negroes in contravention of their “place.” Post Office Solicitor William H. Lamar made such a link in his admission to specifically targeting “pro-Germanism, pacifism (a persistent site of surveillance), and ‘highbrowism.’”<sup>65</sup> The Justice Department had two general views of Black protest during WWI: it was deemed either foreign-inspired or manipulative and conniving: “One view was that Black demands for better treatment were either the result of direct German subversion, or at least, evidence of an innate Black sympathy with the enemies of the United States. The other view, less paranoid, but no less uncomplimentary to Blacks, was that they had simply decided to screw as many concessions out of the government they could at a time when the United States was under pressure.”<sup>66</sup> The possibility that Negroes were “taking advantage of the present existing conditions to force Federal legislation to prevent lynchings, and also for recognition of themselves upon the same plane as the whites”<sup>67</sup> was as alarming and problematic as collusion with enemies of the state, and in fact both were seen as mutually constitutive features of the “uppity” Black. Critiquing official racial policies, lamenting Jim Crow and disenfranchisement, and/or condemning racial violence and hatred were considered “radicalism,”<sup>68</sup> and were effectively equated with sedition because they ostensibly caused and/or

exacerbated internal racial strife. Since condemnation of the United States served to jeopardize its position in the world, discontent with systematic victimization was construed as dissatisfaction with American generally in ways that directly or indirectly served the interests of enemies of the state.<sup>69</sup>

Always, the “negro question” was seen as a potential tool for anti-American propaganda because it put on display for the racialized people of the world the discontent of the American Negro. As one Translation Department official wrote to the Assistant U.S. District Attorney in New York City about an article published in the *Louis Argus* in 1918, “inflammatory” Negro newspapers,

...[p]ut the attainment of their own objects, that is to say treatment which includes their being allowed to mix freely as they choose among white people, ahead of the stirring [sic] of the war, but they apparently put this object ahead even of the safety of their own race. Surely they must realize that by the constant stirring up of the fires of race prejudice they are doing what is in their power to make lynching more, rather than less, frequent. Surely the frequency of lynching interferes with the war and thus, take it as you will, from whatever point of view, these papers... are obstructionist.<sup>70</sup>

Thus, by speaking out against inequality and discrimination, Blacks were purportedly not only causing their own immiseration, but were also posing a threat to national security. The equation of critiques of racial domination with opposition to the government naturalized and legitimized racial violence as a necessary condition of defending the sanctity of the state. It was consistent with the demands of a racist state, organized around the idea of white supremacy and exclusionary racial practice. The demands of Black protesters that “mob murders” be considered a crime by the Federal Government were thus dismissed as seditious and tied to the dissident nature of the Black. The call for a Federal Lynching Bill posed a fundamental challenge to the pedagogy of the state organized around its racial discourse. In other words, inherent in Blackness was the gratuitous violation of authority, and an errant desire for equality that transgressed the racial order. Such desire presented a fundamental threat to the United States. This supported the argument that organizations like the NAACP and “other unpatriotic Negro organizations” should be prosecuted for sedition because the resentment expressed in their criticism of lynching, for example, was a treacherous form of anti-Americanism aimed at mobilizing “colored” sentiment against whites. White citizenry operated as a metonym for the state, and white attitudes and beliefs became fiat and dictum that commanded the submission of the Black.

Solicitor Lamar deemed *The Amsterdam News* unmailable after editorials by Cyril Briggs were characterized by a Post Office reader as “decidedly discordant and out of harmony with present purposes of the government as they seek to incite the negro, and spread the idea that it is not worth while for the negro to sacrifice himself for a democracy which it says does nothing toward improving the conditions and liberties of the colored race.”<sup>71</sup> The *Chicago Defender* was accused of disloyalty starting in April 1917 for encouraging Blacks to leave the South,<sup>72</sup> presumably to escape white racial terror and to take advantage of better economic opportunity in the North. Blacks leaving the South were “disrupting agriculture and w[ere], therefore, ‘a menace to the whole nation.’”<sup>73</sup> Thus anything other than the complete submission of Blacks to economic, political, and social exploitation during wartime was deemed anti-American. *The Defender* continued to garner the scrutiny of Bureau of Investigation (B.I.) agents for describing in detail the barbarity of lynching incidents, lamenting the treatment of Black troops, and



printing material that would “arouse the resentment on the part of the white people [in the South].”<sup>74</sup> This was especially because the paper garnered international attention. After a visit from Major Walter Loving, a Black soldier and officer in the Military Intelligence Division, Robert S. Abbott, the owner of the newspaper, felt compelled to urge Blacks to leave agitation for equal rights until “the greater task of winning [the] war”<sup>75</sup> had been achieved. Loving had convinced him that Black protest was antithetical to the war effort and could be construed as disloyalty. One can assume that the idea of Black equality was considered to be detrimental to the war effort, and therefore unpatriotic. The linking of Black claims for equal treatment with antipathy toward the U.S. state and subversion was another means by which black dissent came to be construed as anti-American and therefore communist or foreign inspired.

In 1938, the preamble to the CPUSA constitution advocated the sharing of national wealth and an end to all forms of exploitation. In doing so it challenged directly the domestic and international racial division of labor:

...it [the Communist Party, U.S.A.] is devoted to defense of the immediate interest of workers, farmers, and all toilers against capitalist exploitation, and to preparation of the working class for its historic mission to unite and lead the American people and to extend these democratic principles to their necessary and logical conclusion: common ownership of the national economy, through a government of the people, by the people, and for the people; the abolition of all exploitation of man by man, nation by nation, and race by race, and thereby the abolition of class divisions in society...<sup>76</sup>

This position was especially troublesome because it implied the end of racial segregation, the preeminent organizing principle of U.S. economy and society; and called directly for an end to “exploitation of... nation by nation,” which was a fundamental challenge to international accumulation grounded in white supremacy. Socialism/communism as advocated by the CPUSA fundamentally challenged the “bourgeois socialism” of the Global North by exposing its objective of providing a social safety net merely to ensure only a minimum standard of living for its deeply impoverished citizens. By doing so, it ensured complicity with antiradical statist pedagogy. The dependence of the welfare state on the exploitation of the colonized and the racialized was exposed because “the white workingman has been asked to share the spoils of exploiting the ‘chinks and niggers.’”<sup>77</sup> The new welfarism that united capital and labor represented the new “democracy,” according to the CPUSA, that was predicated on the exploitation of the “colored” world.<sup>78</sup>

Bourgeois social democracy was incapable of accommodating an end to racism, because “the [project was]... to lift four-fifths of a group on the backs of the other fifth.”<sup>79</sup> The assumption that a better standard of living and a social safety net for whites would eventually benefit Blacks supported the rejection of the need for direct racial reforms.<sup>80</sup> “So far as these 10,000,000 workers [Negroes] are concerned, there is to be no active effort to secure for them a voice in the Social Democracy, or an adequate share in the social income. The idea is that ultimately when the 90,000,000 [white workers] come to their own, they will voluntarily share with the 10,000,000 serfs.”<sup>81</sup> In other words, in the Social Democratic alliance of the new welfare state, Blacks would continue to be an exploited and excluded class while a larger number of white workers would be absorbed into the “industrial aristocracy.”<sup>82</sup> The CPUSA sought to upend that exploitative relationship, starting in the United States, by redistributing resources to the majority of people—including Blacks—so that all could enjoy a decent standard of living.

This was to be achieved through mass action and struggle by the working classes in the United States in concert with workers throughout the rest of the world. The communist threat to the United States rested in the potential for internationalism and foreign cooperation to disrupt racialization, the inequitable distribution of wealth and resources, and the Social Democratic alliance built on the backs of the colonized.

### **Antiracism and Interracialism**

The Stalin-Hitler Pact of August 23, 1939 to June 21, 1941 had a significant impact on the Communist Party line, with implications for the understanding of Black radicalism and Black challenges to the racial state. The Peace Policy advocated by the Soviet Union because of its characterization of the war as imperialist supported isolationist calls by the CPUSA for the U.S. to pay attention to its own domestic problems. The line served to focus attention on the Voorhis Act passed on October 17, 1940, which “provided for the registration of every organization subject to foreign control which engages in political activity.”<sup>83</sup> In 1940, in keeping with its isolationist position, the CPUSA lent support to the Act by adding to its constitution Article VI, Section 1, stating that it “condemns and opposes all policies and acts of sabotage, espionage, and all other forms of ‘Fifth Column’ activity.”<sup>84</sup> The CPUSA was forced, in a special convention, to pass a resolution to withdraw from the Communist International. While, in de facto terms, this did not imply dissociation from the Communist International and the world Communist movement, it did force a focus on “domestic problems” and on race relations as the preeminent form of exploitation in the United States. Antiracism and issues of interracialism became catapulted to prominence in the party’s agenda. This solidified the relationship between Black challenges to the state and communism.

For the first time in the 1940 constitution the CPUSA, under the “Rights and Duties of Members,” Section 10 specifically declared its intention to join the Black struggle: “It shall be the duty of the Party members to struggle against the national oppression of the Negro people; to fight for complete equality for Negroes in all phases of American life and to promote the unity of Negro and white toilers for the advancement of their common interests.”<sup>85</sup> This addition undoubtedly inaugurated the sustained attack on U.S. racism, segregation, and white supremacy by the CPUSA. Communist challenges to racism not only gave Blacks, in the eyes of the U.S. State, the “fallacious” sense that they deserved equality, but also gave support to their efforts to fundamentally challenge the organization of U.S. society. A focus on domestic issues meant being forced to contend with the “Negro problem” and the “race question” as a means of achieving peace. The consequence of this focus came with the potential for the reorganization of society, the redistribution of wealth, and the disruption of accumulation grounded in exclusion and exploitation. Of course, the link with sedition was maintained, notwithstanding CPUSA’s isolationist position. The Committee on Un-American Activities reflected on the calls for isolationism as a cover for even more dangerous forms of sedition: “...from 1939 to 1941, while Germany and Russia were on the same side in the European war, American Communists sabotaged our arms factories, and spied on our Government for Hitler as well as for Stalin. They even tried to stir sedition and rebellion in the armed forces.”<sup>86</sup> This was an indirect reference by the Committee to A. Phillip Randolph’s threat of a march on Washington unless President Franklin D. Roosevelt desegregated defense industries.<sup>87</sup> The threat of demands for Black equality, branded as sedition and rebellion, worried the Committee.

Demands for equality in the Global North posed an immanent threat to the U.S. racial order, whose method of accumulation relied on segregation and a racialized division of labor.

Antiracism and interracialism came to be understood as potential tools of subversion that could be used by foreign enemies to undermine the social order and destabilize the U.S. state. Both came to be associated with communism. The Southern Conference for Human Welfare (1938-1944), for example, was an interracial organization that came under heavy surveillance and harassment by the government on the basis of accusations of being a communist front although only a few of its members were communists. It was accused of “seeking to attract southern liberals on the basis of its seeming interest in the problems of the South.” Its “‘professed interest in southern welfare’ was judged to be simply an expedient for larger aims serving the Soviet Union and its subservient Communist Party in the United States.”<sup>88</sup> The real threat posed by this organization was its interracialism, pro-labor platform, and defense of Blacks in the South.

J. Edgar Hoover, as the head of the Department of Justice’s Radical Division,<sup>89</sup> initiated a sweeping campaign of surveillance against Blacks that was specifically aimed at suppressing Black publications that articulated a program of racial justice. Hoover was particularly dedicated to suppressing Black radical publications, Black socialists and communists, and Black nationalism.<sup>90</sup> There was a particular official fixation on links between communism, socialism, and the advocacy of racial equality. While only a few Blacks were explicitly communist/socialist, these links formed the bases for suspicion of sedition. This was notwithstanding the absence of any evidence to support the claim. The fact that in 1919 the Bureau of Investigation (B.I.) found that the causes of racial agitation were “purely local” did not reduce the continued obsession by the state of linking blacks and communists.<sup>91</sup> Communism/socialism and its advocacy of racial equality was considered threatening because it was assumed to provide Negroes with the ability to become organized and to demand social equality.<sup>92</sup> The interracialism that inhered in these links and the demands for equality they provoked rendered the involvement of Blacks with communism especially dangerous. Black agitation for equality came to be conflated with communist demands for a classless, egalitarian society.<sup>93</sup> What was at stake was the fact that Blacks were being “urged to defend their rights,” and that Black veterans, having fought in the war alongside whites, were becoming less willing to return to positions of racial subordination. It was not communist ideology as such that posed a threat to the U.S. state, but rather the perceived threat of Black self-assertion that the former supported. It was race mixing and demands for equal treatment that posed a challenge to capitalist accumulation because they could potentially lead to a racially united overthrow of the state. This threat came to be attributed by national security agents to the influence of communism.

Interracialism posed a problem because it threatened to empower “niggers,” whose equal incorporation would fundamentally disrupt the U.S. state. It challenged the claim that the Black was ultimately undeserving of the full entitlements of citizenship because of her/his location on the constitutive outside of the American nation. The Communist Party was cast in the role of supporting and encouraging these dangerous forms of interracialism in its support for Black empowerment. This was the basis of its threat. The example of the link forged among these was found in, and the threat it posed was highlighted in efforts by, the Civil Rights Congress (CRC): “The CRC, with encouragement and support from the Communist Party of the United States, determined that it would meticulously document the violence and use the United Nations to expose the depths of American racism.”<sup>94</sup> Their document *We Charge Genocide* set out to prove that, contrary to the dominant narrative of a move toward racial equality, there was governmental intent in the discrimination and domination of Blacks in the United States. In this petition to the United Nations, “[William L.] Patterson [CPUSA Leader and head of the International Labor

Defense] argued forcefully that Jim Crow was the result of deliberate government policy to destroy African Americans... Just as Munich and Auschwitz had revealed the vile nature of the Nazi regime, Patterson boasted that the petition, if effectively used, would unmask the true barbaric nature of the U.S. government.”<sup>95</sup> By charging the United States with genocide, Patterson and the CRC were charging the United States with violating their rights as citizens, and were holding the U.S. to the standards of the U.S. Constitution. The multiracial, multinational, and antiracist membership of the UN came to be deployed in the CRC’s efforts to undermine and challenge the global authority of the U.S. state by exposing the contradictions in its claims to be the leader of the free, democratic world. This challenge to the “place” of Blacks in the racial order essentially confirmed all of the State’s fears about the problem posed by the link forged among the radical Black, internationalism, and antiracism.

During times of crisis, such as WWI, even liberal publications became susceptible to scrutiny by the federal government when it was suspected that whites were agitating on behalf of Blacks in ways that disrupted the racial order. This was especially the case in the South. “...[P]utting forward a doctrine of ‘racial equality,’ in a part of the country where it was wholly unacceptable to the white population, [became in and] of itself [during] wartime [particularly] ‘subversive’ and disloyal.”<sup>96</sup> This fear transformed the Black radical and his/her supporters into the preeminent subversives. War was used to cast as seditious any unwillingness to capitulate to racial violence and indignity, any predisposition to support interracial cooperation, and any demand for equal treatment beyond the racial program that was acceptable to Southern (racist) whites. Those who did so were deemed radical and therefore antagonistic to the U.S. state. This justified the need for surveillance, prosecution, and discipline. This became particularly pressing in 1919 during Black attempts to exercise their second amendment rights to protect themselves against white vitriolic mobs. It led to a concerted effort to disarm Blacks out of the fear that they were planning to violently rise against the U.S. state.<sup>97</sup> It was the fear of *Black* uprising that led to the surveillance of white supporters as targets of the state.<sup>98</sup>

A primary problem of Black radicalism and its instantiation in communism was that it brought Blacks and whites together on more or less equal footing. This ultimately threatened to upend the social and economic fabric of the United States that rested upon the racial order. Foreign enemies became all the more dangerous because of their potential to incite racial intransigence among the Black, and the Black was always-already dangerous and suspect because of his/her intractable and inherent susceptibility to foreign manipulation and influence.<sup>99</sup> In this way, the German during WWI, the communists thereafter, and anti-segregationists at any time were cast as enemies of the state because they were essentially “pro-nigger.” This anti-Black logic was at the root of maintaining white loyalty to the American state. The sanctity of white identity “was bound up with *not* being a ‘nigger,’ a savage, an uncivilized beast of burden.”<sup>100</sup> To be “pro-nigger” was to be anti-white and thus anti-American. DuBois interrogates this linkage when commenting on the American Socialist dilemma of whether or not to consider the “Negro question: “If it [the American Socialist Party] acquiesces in race hatred, it has a chance to turn the tremendous power of Southern white radicalism toward its own party; if it does not do this, it becomes a ‘party of the Negro,’ with its growth South and North decidedly checked.”<sup>101</sup> In other words if the Party aligned itself with white supremacy, it could grow in prestige and garner the support of those who equated Americanness with whiteness; on the other hand, if it showed sympathy for the Negro, it would effectively be a party of “nigger lovers.” The latter would ineluctably position them as subversive and anti-American. Interracial political cooperation tended to be seen as foreign inspired and therefore anti-American because “no loyal

American would be involved in that [interracial protest].”<sup>102</sup> This was because it was widely believed, especially in the South, that segregation and white supremacy were part of the “Americanism” that needed to be protected.<sup>103</sup> The statement by J. Strom Thurmond sums up this position: “The civil-rights program is the most un-American law ever proposed. It would undermine our government, our constitution, and our way of life. It was borrowed from the Communists who know well that they can never gain control of America so long as our fundamental rights are preserved to the States.”<sup>104</sup>

### **Anti-Imperialism**

The period between 1945 and 1956 represented “a return to overt Soviet hostility toward non-Communist powers.”<sup>105</sup> The Communist Information Bureau was formed in 1947 as a modified version of Communist International. There was a revival of the doctrine of inevitable conflict between two camps—the ‘progressive’ camp of the Soviet Union and its satellites and the ‘imperialist’ camp represented by the United States. By 1947, the “West-East split was formally acknowledged.”<sup>106</sup> On October 5, 1947, the USSR made its position known in the pages of *Pravda*: “On one side is the policy of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and democratic countries directed toward undermining imperialism and strengthening democracy, on the other side is the policy of the United States and England directed toward strengthening imperialism and strangling democracy.”<sup>107</sup> Thus, peace and anti-imperialism became the ultimate targets because support of pacifism was considered to be part of the communist “peace offensive.” Further, the United States considered itself to be at war with the Communist International.<sup>108</sup> Thus, to be anti-war, anti-aggression, and anti-imperial was ultimately to be anti-American. War and aggression/defense were necessary tools of the U.S. state to spread democracy, development, and freedom. The House on Un-American Activities construed advocates of disarmament as supporters of communism and the Soviet Union, using as an example “terrible strikes that delayed U.S. rearmament” during the Stalin Hitler Pact of 1939-1941.<sup>109</sup> It is during this period that W.E.B. DuBois had his passport revoked for circulating the Stockholm Peace Petition (World Peace Appeal), about which HUAC wrote the following: “The launching of the worldwide drive for signatures to a so-called World Peace Appeal... is the... most extensive piece of psychological warfare ever conducted by an organization on a world scale... The World Peace Appeal was launched 3 months before the outbreak of Communist armed aggression against South Korea. Obviously the appeal was intended as a smoke screen for such aggression.”<sup>110</sup> Additionally, a number of organizations advocating “peace” were listed as subversive, communist, and/or communist “fronts.”<sup>111</sup>

One of the primary methods of controlling those who opposed the U.S. policies of war and imperialism was to deny their ability to travel and to severely circumscribe their movements. Anti-imperialists and advocates for peace, including Paul Robeson, W.E.B. DuBois, and Herbert Aptheker were denied passports.<sup>112</sup> The opinion that “...the heinous character of Communism and the obligation of the secretary to prevent international incidents justified the State Department’s refusal”<sup>113</sup> to issue passports was generally representative of the U.S. state’s attitude at the time. The denial of citizenship<sup>114</sup> through the circumscription of movement made an important connection between the Black and the communist. If “the basis of personal liberty was the ability to move; therefore, departing was as much a part of liberty as the absence of physical restraint,” and “to prohibit an American citizen from travelling outside the United States was a deprivation of liberty protected by the Fifth Amendment,” then the historical denial of this personal liberty to the Black called into question his/her citizenship and Americanness. On June

15, 1958 in *Kent v. Dulles*, Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas “asserted that the right to travel was a part of the liberty which a citizen cannot be deprived without due process of law under the Fifth Amendment... [and] tied travel to basic democratic values and the freedom of movement and described travel as ‘an important aspect of a citizen’s liberty.’”<sup>115</sup> The reality was that, despite the guarantees of the constitution, the Black had historically been deprived of the right to travel [e.g., out of his/her place, off of the plantation, out of the South]. This denial of freedom of movement was fundamentally related to the denial of citizenship and its constitutive entitlements to the Black. Pass laws during enslavement; vagrancy laws after Reconstruction and throughout the “nadir” of Black existence; the denial of the right of Blacks to patronize or to go to spaces reserved for whites during Jim Crow; and the massive incarceration and warehousing of Blacks in jails and prisons starting in the 1980s were all ways in which the state circumscribed and criminalized the ability of the Black to move.

The threat of the Black to the U.S. state—and the necessity to regulate and discipline the black body—thus operated as metaphor for the domestic and international threat of communism/radicalism. By severely circumscribing the movement of “subversives,” the United States attempted to manage the “menace”. By applying the logics of the Black to the communist/radical, the U.S. state constructed communism pedagogically through this undesirable association that embodied an immanent ontological threat. This was underscored by the fact that one’s assumed past communist activities justified the denial of the right to a passport.<sup>116</sup> In other words, communism and its concomitant subversion became embodied and could never be fully escaped; like Blackness, it was not simply thought and practice, but rather being and identity. As such, the very citizenship of the communist/radical was called into question. It was irrelevant, therefore, that “[a] substantive constitutional right... protected a person from being denied a passport because of his political views, activities, or associations.”<sup>117</sup> These constitutional rights did not automatically apply to the Black/communist/radical. Like the “one drop rule” and its consequences for the disenfranchisement of those with even the minutest claim to African ancestry, the broad definition of who and what a communist was ensured that passports and travel could be denied to those with the faintest hint or suspicion of radicalism.

Anti-imperialism and pacifism came to be linked in the discourse of the U.S. state because any critique of U.S. “aggression” was also a critique of U.S. imperial ambitions linked to accumulation. Since WWI, the Communist International articulated imperialism, capitalism, and war as entangled technologies of domination meant to oppress the majority of the world’s population: “The League of Nations is dividing the world financially and territorially. It is directing the fight against the workers. It is the last effort of Capitalism to save itself. The reactionary League of Nations is the logical result of this imperialistic war. And the war was the product of Capitalism.”<sup>118</sup> Though the United States had “no direct territorial interest in the war, [it] was vitally concerned... since the issue was world power; and its capitalism having attained a position of financial world power, had a direct imperialistic interest at stake.”<sup>119</sup> The United States had become the preeminent imperial nation because, “[t]he export of capital, together with the struggle to monopolize the world’s sources of raw materials and to control undeveloped territory, produces Imperialism. A fully developed capitalist nation is compelled to accept Imperialism. Each nation seeks markets for the absorption of its surplus capital.”<sup>120</sup> Thus, capitalism necessitated war, aggression, and imperialism, so to be against these was to be anti-American.

The 1945 Communist Party constitution is instructive to the ways in which anticommunism in subsequent years was aimed at Black radicalism, pacifism, anti-imperialism,

and labor activism. It elucidated why the radical Black was cast as the destabilizing force that demanded the deployment of the repressive measures that proliferated at the end of the Second World War and endured through the 1950s. (It is no coincidence that the change to an explicitly racial position of the Communist Party line in 1945 was accompanied by the selection of Claudia Jones to the National Committee and Ben Davis to the National Board.<sup>121</sup> By 1947 there were four Blacks on the National Committee: Benjamin J. Davis, Jr., Ferdinand Smith, Abner Berry, Claudia Jones).<sup>122</sup> The 1945 Communist Party preamble states:

The Communist Party upholds the achievements of American democracy and defends the United States Constitution and its Bills of Rights against its reactionary enemies who would destroy democracy and popular liberties. It uncompromisingly fights against imperialism and colonial oppression, against racial, national, and religious discrimination, against Jim Crowism, anti-Semitism, and all forms of chauvinism.

The Communist Party struggles for the complete destruction of fascism and for a durable peace. It seeks to safeguard the welfare of the people and the nation, recognizing that the working class, through its trade unions and by its independent political action, is the most consistent fighter for democracy, national freedom and social progress.

...It recognizes further that the true national interests of our country and the cause of peace and progress require the solidarity of all freedom-loving peoples and the continued and ever closer cooperation of the United Nations.

The Communist Party recognizes that the final abolition of exploitation and oppression, of economic crises and unemployment, of reaction and war, will be achieved only by the socialist organization of society—by the common ownership and operation of the national economy under a government of the people led by the working class.”<sup>123</sup>

As an explicit critique of the United States and its system of racial capitalism through a radical political economy analysis, the preamble challenged the very foundation of the American state and its claim to “rights.” The U.S. state rejected the Communist Party’s assertion that it upheld “American democracy,” and “defend[ed] the United States Constitution and its Bills of Rights” because of their suspicion that the Party was trying to “disguise its role as the center of the world revolution.” As ‘non-citizens,’ ‘subversives,’ and ‘advocates of totalitarianism’ communists, according to the U.S. government, could never uphold the principles of democracy enshrined in the Constitution. Their assertion could be no more than an attempt to dupe liberals and uninformed persons into doing the work of the Party. Since the Black was generally understood as the most uninformed, and consequently the most susceptible to manipulation, concern about subterfuge has a particular racial valence. The Preamble, however, challenged the very validity of the Democratic claims of the state in its critical use of political economy. It casted the state and its capitalist beneficiaries as “reactionary enemies” of “popular liberties” that must be defended. It thereby inverted the source of the threat to freedom and equality by revealing communism as the true champion of the people. This had particular racial appeal. The U.S. state, in its continued treatment of Blacks throughout WWII as second-class citizens, and through its suppression of labor strikes, was presented as reactionary. The Soviets (Communists) who did not have a history of racial and labor hostilities and who fought valiantly in WWII were

presented as the true defenders of democracy. The fight against “imperialism and colonial oppression, against racial, national, and religious discrimination, against Jim Crowism, anti-Semitism, and all forms of chauvinism” advocated by the Party was cast essentially as a fight against every policy of the U.S. state.

Emboldened by WWII and the global connections it created,<sup>124</sup> agitation for the end of Jim Crow and colonial administration was increasing among blacks throughout the world. There was the distinct fear and belief by the U.S. administration that communists were taking advantage of this unrest. This was based on its continued investment in racialization as the basis for accumulation. The international scope and anti-imperial and anticolonial platform of communism threatened to violently upend the system of racial domination and to undermine American empire. It demanded a reformulation of the liberal policy aimed at the gradual end to Jim Crow policies at home and colonization abroad by legalistic means. A connection between Jim Crow and colonial dispossession in Africa and the Caribbean was being made by the radicals at a time when the United States needed increased access to strategic resources, cheap goods, and markets for the survival of its imperial project. The radical appeal to Black aspirations for racial justice and economic equality became transformed into an imminent threat because it had the potential to collapse the capitalist world-economy. Concomitantly, the struggle for a “durable” peace directly challenged the need of the United States to maintain its militarism to police the world and to neutralize hostility and opposition. Peace would make it impossible for the United States to control any dissent directed against its capitalist and imperialist ambitions. Further, the association of “peace” with “progress,” “freedom loving,” “solidarity,” and “cooperation,” came with the potential to expose U.S. aggression—domestically against Blacks and internationally against Third World nations—as despotic, oppressive, and anti-democratic. The preamble therefore exposed the U.S. narrative of democracy as more myth than reality. Relatedly, the advocacy for “close cooperation” with the United Nations challenged the United States as the global political authority that could dictate and determine economic policy. It also threatened to put U.S. racial misdeeds on display for the growing community of nations, most of which were Black, Brown, and Yellow. Moreover, by identifying the working class as the “most consistent fighter for democracy,” the Communist Party was directly challenging the narrative of U.S. state and empire that it had the right and responsibility to intervene in nations throughout the “developing” world to defend democracy. By challenging U.S. labor policies and its hostility to unions and to Blacks, it also contested bourgeois notions of “rights.” Further, because most Blacks in the United States were working class, the Communist Party line positioned Blacks as the “most consistent fighter[s] for democracy... and social progress,” thus legitimating their struggle against racism, discrimination, and white violence. Finally, by arguing that only the “socialist organization of society” by the working class could alleviate “exploitation and oppression, economic crises and unemployment, [and] reaction and war,” the preamble identified the United States, as the leading capitalist nation, as responsible for all of capitalism’s destructive tendencies. If the Black, who was disproportionately affected by all of these maladies, became radicalized, the U.S. imperialist project would be in serious crisis.

The continued struggle over what constituted democracy and imperialism produced in the United States an intense intolerance for any form radicalism that challenged U.S. state and empire. It also produced the need for the disciplining, control, and surveillance of those most susceptible and sympathetic to the struggle against domination—the Black domestically and the African internationally. Anti-imperialism when coupled with pacifism directly challenged the project of the U.S. state, especially when articulated by the Black. This was so because of the



continuing need to violently suppress any challenge to the U.S. state, particularly in the face of Cold War contestation.

### **Black Liberalism, Antiradicalism, and Cold War Culturalism**

To stave off the appeal of communism, the U.S. state accommodated liberal antiracism and anticolonialism as constitutive aspects of its imperialist project. The exigencies of the Cold War demanded an end, or at least a modification, of U.S. aversion to ending overt racism. It “devised a strategy of not denying the presence of racial discrimination in the U.S., but of pointing out that it is not sanctioned by the Government and that reforms are always in process.”<sup>125</sup> Racism was explained away through the narrative of linear progress; just as slavery had receded into the historical memory of the United States, so too would the insidiousness of racism that was its product. The discursive strategy of the state was to point to marginal legal gains that had been made, and to reduce racism to an archaic practice of the “backward” South. It harnessed the support of liberal Blacks like Edith Sampson, who, in Helsinki in 1952, attributed even the most heinous racial violence in the South to the “last ditch acts... of a small group of pathological people.”<sup>126</sup> The official policy of liberal antiracism dovetailed well with an emergent anticolonial position adopted by the imperialist U.S. State in accordance with its vested interest in breaking up colonial empires to satisfy demands for markets, investment and resources to combat overaccumulation at home.<sup>127</sup> The argument that colonialism retarded the colonies economically and culturally mirrored and was compatible with the position of bourgeois anticolonial leaders in the colonies. This created the conditions for the United States to emerge as a neocolonial power advocating for “development” and democracy in Europe’s former colonies. Support for racial reform at home and development and democracy abroad conditioned Blacks to be both antiracist and anticolonialist without posing a fundamental threat to U.S. imperial ambitions.

Radical challenges to American racism were strengthened by the proliferation of electronic media, like television and radio, that circulated incidents of imperial, colonial, and racial aggression internationally. This information provided the basis for solidarity among Third World peoples. It contributed to the flourishing of forms of unity among marginalized groups pitted against their perceived oppressors. The embrace of racism—or failure to address it—posed significant challenges to U.S. imperial aspirations. St. Clair Drake recognized the consequences of such failure: “Even when the relations in a specific contact situation may not be explicitly defined by the participants as *race* relations, colored people in other parts of the world may view the situation as such. Insofar as they do so, Pan-Colored sentiments will be evoked. These sentiments may affect attitudes toward groups with which the coloured people are in contact.”<sup>128</sup> People across the decolonizing world began to define themselves as “non-white” and “non-European” in opposition to colonialism, and every act of racism reified and strengthened this solidarity. This was manifested, for instance, in the United Nations, where the Pan-Asian Bloc, led by Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, invited Egypt and Ethiopia to join in a call for Afro-Asian racial solidarity in 1953.<sup>129</sup> This led, eventually, to the development of a racially defined “Third World” bloc of nations that defined itself against both sides of the ideological divide comprising (white) Eastern Europe and the Western Industrialized countries.<sup>130</sup> While countries maintained their national, ethnic, and “tribal” loyalties, they also found a common identity as peoples subjected to Western domination. For this reason, “the Western nations (except South Africa) [placed] themselves squarely on record as opposing racism. The very nations whose acts brought the doctrine of ‘white supremacy’ into being have repudiated it...”<sup>131</sup>

The end of Jim Crow and the support of Black Liberals was of paramount importance to the U.S., and by extension the West, if it hoped to successfully eradicate the Soviet threat. Marxist-Leninism, especially after 1917, had been used to criticize U.S. racial policies and to “instigate” discontent among those who had been racialized as Black. Jim Crow, lynching, disenfranchisement, and overt discrimination was fodder for Soviet propaganda.<sup>132</sup> “The Communist movement, today, not only attempts to manipulate racial sentiments in order to ‘set in motion the oppressed;’ it also never tires of publicizing its own repudiation of racism and all theories of biological determinism. At the same time, it exposes, attacks, and ridicules any evidences of racism among the ‘free nations.’ The West has been forced to face the problem of color-caste and racial prejudice within its own ranks.”<sup>133</sup> To successfully battle “Soviet imperialism,” the U.S. could no longer use racism as the organizing principle of society.

In this atmosphere of Cold War competition, liberal antiracism and desegregation—formerly cast as subversive—came to be seen as a prerequisite for gaining the support of the decolonizing nations of African and Asia. Civil Rights legislation and support by Black liberals allowed the state to project and sustain a narrative of racial progress while violently repressing expressions of Black radicalism and strategically reconstituting antiblackness. According to Manning Marable, “The black liberals represented the tendency of the Negro petty bourgeoisie that was trained in the humanities and the liberal arts. These were lawyers, doctors, schoolteachers, journalists, and writers. This class stratum bitterly opposed the imposition of racial segregation and demanded equal treatment under the law...”<sup>134</sup> Black Cold War liberals succumbed to the pragmatic importance of amending overt white supremacy and its concomitant spatialization of race, and seized upon the opportunity to improve their condition in keeping with demands consistent with the pedagogy of the Cold War state. These “pragmatic politics” were aimed at the de-racialization of statist discourse.<sup>135</sup> The Black liberal believed that as Negroes joined mainstream organizations and assumed leadership roles, and as interracialism became more acceptable for Black entertainers and “symbolic” personalities (like Walter White, Sugar Ray Robinson, and the Harlem Globetrotters), the larger society would become conditioned to accept, or at least tolerate, marginal gains for Blacks.<sup>136</sup> These forms of symbolism were thus deployed by the state to accompany its move toward Civil Rights legislation in support of its claim of an end to racism. Together, these signified an end to “racial prejudice.” The predisposition of Black liberals to support this agenda was made evident by Stanford scholar St. Clair Drake, who proposed the need for the U.S. to follow the lead of the French, who “exhibit[ed] no strong racial prejudices in their personal relations with Africans, [and who had] traditionally carried out a policy of assimilation of the Negro elites to French culture... [and had] not rationalized their preeminence with racist ideologies.” The African elite had direct representation in French legislative and consultative bodies, and this “function[ed] as important symbols of ‘integration’ and their very presence in the metropolitan center has international implications.”<sup>137</sup> It was largely because of this investment in the liberal, symbolic project of rights that “[b]y 1964 Blacks had replaced Jews as the most liberal and loyal bloc in the Democratic Party.”<sup>138</sup> This emphasis on symbolism, meritocracy, and keeping up appearances on the international stage was very much in line with the shift to an antiradical racial policy by the Cold War state. This approach allowed “civil rights for negroes” to become disentangled “in the popular mind from ‘Communist agitation,’”<sup>139</sup> while maintaining the foundational idea, through suppression of communism/radicalism, that the Black was the enemy of the State.

The antiracism of the NAACP and other liberal organizations underscored the unrelenting Americanness of Black people, the vast improvement in U.S. race relations, the

backwardness of Southern racists who deviated from the progressive nature of U.S. society, and the commitment of the overwhelming majority of Blacks to work within the legal framework of the U.S. state to achieve Civil Rights. By focusing on domestic gains for Blacks, NAACP policy represented a turn away from internationalism, which could potentially threaten U.S. authority. This new commitment was integral to the image the United States was tried to convey in its attempt to present to the world a form of liberal antiracism. It aimed to contravene Soviet assertions that the U.S. was not much better than Nazi Germany or South Africa. By the 1950s, “NAACP leadership was determined to put its resources, expertise, and valued name in the hands of the Truman administration and State Department to beat back the damaging Soviet charges of racial discrimination in the United States.”<sup>140</sup> By capitulating to the pedagogy of the Cold War State, liberal organizations like the NAACP eschewed internationalism for a national agenda; purged leaders and members with any communist or radical proclivities; and stuck to a very narrow path to achieve nominal social and political rights. Carol Anderson writes:

Then came the Cold War and the NAACP’s strategy shattered. In McCarthyist America, economic equality quickly became linked with communism... Southern Democrats and right-wing Republicans immediately denounced the economic and social equality secants as a Soviet Trojan horse that would corrupt the very foundation of American society. Because those rights were supposedly rooted in communist ideology, the Truman administration was averse to accepting them... When the United States made it clear that it could not reconcile economic and social rights with full democracy, the NAACP, afraid of jeopardizing its legal efforts to dismantle Jim Crow, declared itself an ‘American organization.’ It... opted to pursue the still difficult, but politically safer, civil right strategy.<sup>141</sup>

This strategy of “Americanization” demanded the denigration of Black communism/radicalism and a complete alignment with anticommunism. Civil rights activist and NAACP leader Walter White, taking a cue from J. Edgar Hoover, characterized forms of Black radicalism, like the CRC’s *We Charge Genocide* (referred to earlier) as “a subversive conspiracy.”<sup>142</sup> This “Cold War respectability”<sup>143</sup> and the maligning of Black radicalism resulted in a complete silencing of those advocating economic rights, structural change, and redistributive justice for racialized peoples.

Because Nazism had taken racial logics to their most extreme conclusion—on the European continent and against other whites—countries that had previously incorporated racist dogma into their legal structures were compelled to oppose racism in all forms.<sup>144</sup> Since the U.S. was a predominately white nation that had a history of enslaving and oppressing Blacks, exterminating Native populations, and oppressing other racial minorities, its race relations had international economic and political implications.<sup>145</sup> If it did not redress these historical injustices, it would effectively be cast as no better than South Africa and its “reactionary” racial policies, especially as elaborated under Daniel François Malan. Malan served as Prime Minister of South Africa between 1948-1954 as the champion of Afrikaner nationalism and implemented the country’s policies of racial apartheid. By the 1950s,

South African policy ha[d] placed a strain on Commonwealth relations and embarrassed the British Colonial Office in its attempt to keep Africans loyal the the Western bloc. It has presented a convenient target for persistent verbal attacks by the Soviet Union, and

has actually strengthened the Communist movement within the Union... West Africans have been very bitter over Malan's opposition to their development toward Commonwealth status, and in 1951, Nkrumah, Gold Coast leader, lodged a strong protest over disfranchisement of the Coloureds... One result of Malanist policy was that the Bantus elected a Communist to represent them for the first time in their history when a reduction in their status was threatened.<sup>146</sup>

South Africa came to serve as the example of the ways in which overt racist governmentality encouraged the spread of communism and compromised stability of the state because it incited protests, civil disobedience, and alliances against the state. "Informed" Black liberals like Joseph Bibb responded to South Africa in the following way: "Africa should not be allowed to fall into Kremlin hands... The United Nations should meet the impact of Communism on the Dark Continent. One way to do that is to throw its influence against the mean and dirty influence of Malan..."<sup>147</sup> A liberal connection was made by analogy between Jim Crow and apartheid as systems that undermined the spread of democracy and the free market, and that would ultimately alienate the decolonizing world from the West. The only way that the United States could protect itself from the communist threat was to distance itself from the Union of South Africa by abolishing segregation and racial discrimination from its legal framework. Thus, the example of South Africa had the paradoxical effect of supporting an end to legalized forms of state supported racism in the United States. Apartheid was constantly evoked in relationship to the Jim Crow by those who sought to end or condemn its formal practices in the United States. The case of South Africa was important because it demonstrated the connection between capitalist accumulation and antiblack racism. While South Africa was used as a foil against charges of U.S. racism by comparing its apartheid practices against the liberal form of antiracism adopted by the United States, the country continued to receive strong support from the United States and international financial institutions such as the World Bank. This was because South Africa played a central role in global capitalist accumulation and as an ally in anticommunist campaigns on the African continent.

Civil Rights and affirmative action, by opening up educational and economic opportunities for (liberal and middle class) Negroes, allowed representation by the best and brightest American Blacks not only in domestic organizations, but also in international bodies like the United Nations. These Black Americans came to signify American racial equality. Black leaders such as Ralph Bunche, who was one of the leading Americans instrumental in the formation of the United Nations and in the writing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, were central to the shaping and disciplining of Black leaders in the decolonizing world to become good "world citizens," to adopt the "right attitude," (anticommunist, antiradical, developmentalist, market-oriented, etc.), and "to enhance the status of the groups with which they [were] identified."<sup>148</sup> At the height of the Cold War the nations of Africa and the Caribbean became essential to the imperialist project of the United States because of their geopolitical and strategic importance. Their decolonization was critical to the anticommunist antiracist project.<sup>149</sup> The Global North in general, and the United States in particular, were forced to modify their racial policies and practices to secure their continued allegiance against challenges from the Soviet Union. Black liberals in the U.S. accepted the opportunity offered up by the end of Jim Crow practices to aid the U.S. state in gaining the support of former African and Asian colonies in a rapidly decolonizing world. They succumbed to the U.S. promise of the "Triple Sanction"<sup>150</sup> to give all citizens a "fair deal" irrespective of race or ethnicity; to keep the nation unified by

making some concessions to Blacks and other racial minorities; and to avoid national embarrassment by ending the practice of Jim Crow domestically and by ending the export of these practices abroad. In exchange Blacks were given the opportunity to critique the social (racial) policy of the State as long as it was done within the limits set by Cold War policy and practice aimed at preserving the global capitalist racial order. This foreclosed any support for anti-imperialism and radical anticolonialism and accommodated the violent suppression of dissent at home and abroad. Imperialism and capitalism--and the violence upon which they rested—were the twin conditions of U.S. global domination; any challenge to either could not be tolerated.

Cold War liberal challenges to U.S. racism were being mounted by Black Culturalist intellectuals and artists who began to rise in stature. They used creative expression to assert Black modern subjectivity that exposed the existence and impact of systemic racism and discrimination.<sup>151</sup> The official anticolonial policy of the United States was in danger of being jeopardized by its own form of internal colonial racial practices that brought into sharp relief the hypocrisy of the moral high-ground upon which the U.S. had positioned itself as the leader of the free world.<sup>152</sup> In the interest of the free market, the U.S. had to accommodate these liberal/Culturalist assertions of Black modern subjectivity and modify its overtly racist forms of governmentality to legitimate its anticolonial claims. This was especially so because the “old imperialists” began to use U.S. virulent racial practices to mitigate their own colonial histories. Literature, drama, periodicals, and scholarly works circulated internationally and had the effect of transforming Jim Crow from a local practice to an international human rights issue. Devoid of radical critique, this form of Cold War Culturalism and its advocacy of Civil Rights allowed the U.S. state to continue its campaign of violent suppression of Black radical calls for fundamental change in a capitalist order that depended fundamentally on Black dispossession. The essential inscription of Blacks into the Cold War project was conditioned by the necessary end to Jim Crow and the management of the decolonizing world, accompanied by the continued suppression of Black radicalism. This proved fatal for Black challenges to the integral link between racism and capitalism and to the eradication of both. As Gerald Horne writes, “when in the 1950s racial concessions were granted as the labor movement itself was frog-marched to the right, many of the ultimate gains of African Americans were vitiated.”<sup>153</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The threat of communism was rendered meaningful because of its analogical and metaphorical link to Blackness, understood as always and forever a threat to American and global capital because of its centrality to capitalist accumulation and its location on the constitutive outside of the state and of the modern civilized world. This link is manifested through a focus on the CPUSA and its different iterations of the “party line.” These shifts in Party line, which at different times emphasized internationalism, antiracism, and anti-imperialism, prompted a change in focus of U.S. surveillance, discipline, and punishment. These thematics demonstrated that, whatever the perceived threat of communism, the link between radicalism and Blackness ensured the legitimacy of violent suppression of challenges to global capital and statist discourse rooted in critical political economy. The link between the communist and the Black served the interests of U.S. imperialism as a result of the state’s accommodation of Black Cold War liberalism while maintaining the racial order and its essential support for global capital. It did so through a virulent anticommunism that became disembodied, discursively, from Blackness but was still reliant on the maintenance of the racial order and the suppression of Black radical

critique of political economy. Black radicalism at home and abroad came to be contained through a discourse of anticommunism that justified its violent suppression.

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<sup>1</sup> Robin Kelley, “‘The Negro Question’: Red Dreams and Black Liberation,” in *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002), 39.

<sup>2</sup> W.E.B. DuBois, “Socialism and the Negro Problem,” *The New Review: A Weekly Review of International Socialism* (1913), 3.

<sup>3</sup> Kelley, “The Negro Question,” 56.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 43. Emphasis mine.

<sup>5</sup> Percy C. Hintzen, “Structural Adjustment and the New International Middle Class,” *Transition* (1995), 57.

<sup>6</sup> George Yancy writes, “the relationship between being Black and being a problem is noncontingent. It is a necessary relation.” In George Yancy, *Black Bodies, White Gaze: The Continuing Significance of Race*, (Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2008), 87.

<sup>7</sup> Analogy “derives its informative value because... ‘it says what it wants to say by comparison’ to a sign or signification that is already part of the structure of experience and understanding of people’s social world” See Hintzen and Rahier, “Introduction. Theorizing the African Diaspora: Metaphor, Miscognition, and Self-Recognition,” in *Global Circuits of Blackness: Interrogating the African Diaspora*, (Urbana-Champaign: The University of Illinois Press, 2010), x-xi. Here, analogy is the means through which the Black “renders visible” the non-citizenship and unbelonging of the Communist, thus opening up the ideological space for anticommunism. In turn, communism constructs the Black as traitor and universalizes him/her as a fundamental threat to the state, thus reifying and reinscribing antiblackness in statist discourse.

<sup>8</sup> Carole Boyce Davies, “Deportable Subjects: U.S. Immigration Laws and the Criminalization of Communism,” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 100 (2001), 954.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 955.

<sup>10</sup> Yancy, “The Return of the Black Body: Seven Vignettes,” 66.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 92.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 67.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 71.

<sup>15</sup> Hintzen and Rahier, “Introduction. Theorizing the African Diaspora: Metaphor, Miscognition, and Self-Recognition,” x-xi.

<sup>16</sup> Davies, “Deportable subjects,” 955.

<sup>17</sup> Yancy, “The Return of the Black Body: Seven Vignettes,” 79.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>19</sup> HUAC, Committee on Un-American Activities, U.S. House of Representatives, “Organized Communism in the United States,” (Washington, D.C., 1954), 69.

<sup>20</sup> *Crisis* is a case in point; because of accusations in the first half of 1918 that it was inciting pro-German sentiment among Blacks, it was thereafter associated with “enemy-inspired race subversion of American race relations.” CMD Ellis, “*Negro Subversion*”: *The Investigation of Black Unrest and radicalism by Agencies of the United States Government, 1917-1920, Volume I*, PhD Thesis, (University of Aberdeen, 1984), 197.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Yancy, “The Return of the Black Body: Seven Vignettes,” 74.

<sup>23</sup> Davies, “Deportable subjects,” 955.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 951.

<sup>25</sup> Yancy, “The Return of the Black Body: Seven Vignettes,” 80.

<sup>26</sup> Interacting metaphors are “metaphors that join together and bring into cognitive and emotional relation with each other two different things, or systems of things not normally so joined... in an interaction metaphor, a ‘system of associated commonplaces’ that strictly speaking belong only to one side of the metaphor are applied to the other... what makes the metaphor effective ‘is not that the commonplaces shall be true, but that they should be readily and freely evoked.’” Nancy Stepan Leys, “Race and Gender: The Role of Analogy in Science,” in *Anatomy of Racism* edited by David Theo Goldberg, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990), 44. “A metaphor is a figure of speech in which a name or descriptive term is transferred to some object that is different from, but analogous to, that to which it is properly applicable... ‘Every metaphor may be said to mediate an analogy or structural correspondence.’” *Ibid.*, 54 note 1.

<sup>27</sup> Davies, “Deportable subjects,” 958.

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- <sup>28</sup> “Stepan, “Race and Gender,” 44.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid., 42.
- <sup>30</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid., 45.
- <sup>32</sup> Committee on Un-American Activities, U.S. House of Representatives, “100 Things You Should Know About Communism in the U.S.A.,” (Washington D.C., 1949), 5.
- <sup>33</sup> HUAC, “100 Things You Should Know,” 10.
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid., 60.
- <sup>35</sup> Yancy, “The Return of the Black Body: Seven Vignettes,” 90.
- <sup>36</sup> “Stepan, “Race and Gender,” 48.
- <sup>37</sup> HUAC, “100 Things You Should Know,” 20.
- <sup>38</sup> Davies, “Deportable subjects,” 959-960.
- <sup>39</sup> Ibid., 958-959.
- <sup>40</sup> Yancy, “The Return of the Black Body: Seven Vignettes,” 84.
- <sup>41</sup> Davies, “Deportable subjects,” 957-958.
- <sup>42</sup> “Stepan, “Race and Gender,” 49.
- <sup>43</sup> HUAC, “Organized Communism in the United States,” 69: “During the latter part of 1919, the Department of Justice submitted to the Department of Labor a large amount of evidence of the Communist Party of America. This resulted in the issuance of a large number of warrants for deportation hearings. The deportation cases were based on the theory that the Communist Party of America advocated the overthrow by force and violence of the Government of the United States, and, therefore, its officials and members who were aliens were subject to deportation as being members of an organization proscribed by the immigration laws. As a result of the wholesale arrests and deportations, the Communist Party was forced underground.”
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid., 2.
- <sup>45</sup> HUAC, “100 Things You Should Know,” 10.
- <sup>46</sup> HUAC, “Organized Communism in the United States,” 2.
- <sup>47</sup> HUAC, “100 Things You Should Know,” 14.
- <sup>48</sup> Ibid., 15.
- <sup>49</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>50</sup> Ibid., 101.
- <sup>51</sup> U.S. Congress House Un-American Activities Committee, “Guide to Subversive Organizations and Publications,” (Washington, D.C., 1957), x.
- <sup>52</sup> HUAC, “Organized Communism in the United States,” 14.
- <sup>53</sup> Ibid., 18, 23.
- <sup>54</sup> W.E.B. DuBois, “African Roots of the War,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 115 (1915), 711.
- <sup>55</sup> Ibid., 708.
- <sup>56</sup> Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, (London: Bogle-L’Overture Publications, 1974), 1-30.
- <sup>57</sup> Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 24-65.
- <sup>58</sup> DuBois, ‘African Roots of the War,’ 709.
- <sup>59</sup> “Foreign influence” cut in many ways. Communists, socialists, and/or other “subversives” could influence Blacks in the U.S. to act against the U.S. state. In turn, U.S. Blacks, articulating their discontent with their racial condition, could be a negative “foreign” influence on colonized Blacks. In this way, international political interactions were especially threatening to U.S. imperial and neocolonial ambitions.
- <sup>60</sup> Ellis, *Negro Subversion*, 142.
- <sup>61</sup> Ibid., 159.
- <sup>62</sup> Theodore Kornweibel, Jr., ed., *Federal Surveillance of Afro-Americans (1917-1925): The First World War, the Red Scare and the Garvey Movement*, (Frederick: University Publications of America, Inc.), xi.
- <sup>63</sup> Ellis, *Negro Subversion*, 150.
- <sup>64</sup> Kornweibel, *Federal Surveillance of Afro-Americans*, xiii.
- <sup>65</sup> Ellis, *Negro Subversion*, 140.
- <sup>66</sup> Ibid., 167.
- <sup>67</sup> Ibid., 168.
- <sup>68</sup> Ibid., 164.
- <sup>69</sup> Ibid., 168.
- <sup>70</sup> Ibid., 161.

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- <sup>71</sup> Ibid., 45-146.
- <sup>72</sup> Ibid., 155.
- <sup>73</sup> Ibid., 160.
- <sup>74</sup> Ibid., 155-157.
- <sup>75</sup> Ibid., 159.
- <sup>76</sup> HUAC, "Organized Communism in the United States," 99.
- <sup>77</sup> DuBois, "The African Roots of the War," 709.
- <sup>78</sup> Ibid., 709.
- <sup>79</sup> DuBois, "Socialism and the Negro Question," 3.
- <sup>80</sup> "Indeed there is a kind of fatalistic attitude on the part of certain transcendental Socialists, which often assumes that the whole battle of Socialism is coming by a kind of evolution in which active individual effort on their part is hardly necessary." Ibid., 2.
- <sup>81</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>82</sup> Ibid., 3.
- <sup>83</sup> HUAC, "Organized Communism in the United States," 108.
- <sup>84</sup> Ibid., 110.
- <sup>85</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>86</sup> HUAC, "100 Things You Should Know," 95.
- <sup>87</sup> HUAC, "Subversive Organizations and Publications," x.
- <sup>88</sup> Ibid., 81.
- <sup>89</sup> David Krugler, *1919, The Year of Racial Violence: How African Americans Fought Back*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 198.
- <sup>90</sup> Kornweibel, *Federal Surveillance of Afro-Americans*, xii.
- <sup>91</sup> Ibid., 198, note 7.
- <sup>92</sup> Ibid., 200.
- <sup>93</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>94</sup> Carol Anderson. "Bleached Souls and Red Negroes: The NAACP and Black Communists in the Early Cold War, 1948-1952," in *Window on Freedom: Race, Civil Rights, and Foreign Affairs 1945-1988*, edited by Brenda Gayle Plummer, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 94.
- <sup>95</sup> Ibid., 95.
- <sup>96</sup> Krugler, *1919*, 191.
- <sup>97</sup> Ibid., 198.
- <sup>98</sup> Ibid., 199.
- <sup>99</sup> After the war, "bureaucrats [were] by then convinced that Black loyalty could no longer be taken for granted and that Blacks were highly susceptible to the approaches of subversive alien agitators." Ellis, *Negro Subversion*, 197.
- <sup>100</sup> Kelley, "The Negro Question," 39.
- <sup>101</sup> DuBois, "Socialism and the Negro Question," 4.
- <sup>102</sup> Ellis, *Negro Subversion*, 182.
- <sup>103</sup> Ibid., 189.
- <sup>104</sup> Oliver Cromwell Cox, "The New Crisis in Leadership Among Negroes," *The Journal of Negro Education* 19 (1950), 464.
- <sup>105</sup> HUAC, "Subversive Organizations and Publications," x.
- <sup>106</sup> "In October 1947, Moscow revived the Comintern with 9 member nations, only 2 of which—Italy and France—were outside of the so-called Iron Curtain. The revival constituted, in effect, a declaration of economic and political war against the United States. Moscow's major problem of foreign policy began in March 1947, when the United States canonized a doctrine of 'containment' of the Soviet Union by military and economic aid to Greece and Turkey. The following June, the Marshall Plan for European reconstruction was announced. On July 3, in Paris, 16 nations proceeded on Europe's part in the Marshall plan without their eastern neighbors." HUAC, "Organized Communism in the United States," 138.
- <sup>107</sup> Ibid., 148.
- <sup>108</sup> Alan Rogers, "Passport Politics: The Courts and the Cold War," *The Historian* 47 (1985), 508: According to Supreme Court Justice Tom Clark: "...our congress and the Administration have concluded that the Communist International is a foreign and domestic enemy' with whom we are at war."
- <sup>109</sup> HUAC, "100 Things You Should Know," 89
- <sup>110</sup> HUAC, "Organized Communism in the United States," 95



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<sup>111</sup> Ibid., 13-96: These include the American Continental Congress for Peace (September 5-10, 1949, Mexico City): “Another phase in the Communist ‘peace’ campaign, aimed at consolidation anti-American forces throughout the Western Hemisphere;” American League for Peace and Democracy: “The largest of the Communist ‘front’ movements in the United States is the American League for Peace and Democracy, formerly known as the American League Against War and Fascism, and, at the time of its inception, as the United States Congress Against War... the league contends publicly that it is not a Communist-front movement, yet at the very beginning Communists dominated it. Earl Browder was its vice-president.” “An examination of the program of the American League will show how that the organization was nothing more nor less than a bold advocate of treason;” American Peace Crusade: “part of Soviet psychological warfare against the United States... seek[ing] to paralyze America’s will to resist Communist aggression by idealizing Russia’s aims and methods, discrediting the United States, spreading defeatism and demoralization... specializing in this field... have been such organizations as the American Peace Crusade;” National Labor Conference for Peace: “The Communists’ ‘peace’ movement in the United States also made special efforts to drum up support in the vital field of American labor. In this phase of the campaign, Communist-controlled unions and Communist labor figures played an important role. With their aid a new, nation-wide ‘peace’ front was organized—the National Labor Conference for Peace. The first National Labor Conference for Peace was held in Chicago October 1 and 2, 1949. Thereafter, locals and the national office ‘waged an incessant propaganda campaign in behalf of the Soviet Union;” Northern California Peace Crusade: “...All of these misnamed ‘peace’ organizations continue to have a common objective: The dissemination of Communist propaganda aimed at discrediting the United States and promoting a dangerous relaxation in the ideological and military strength of our country;” Peace Information Center: “Cited as an organization which was described in the Worker, of June 11, 1950, by the Communist Party’s Peace Committee as one that was making available the Stockholm peace petition. On February 9, 1951, this organization and five of its officers were indicted by a Federal grand jury for failing to register under the Foreign Agents Registration Act;” and the World Peace Congress: Cited as being among Communist ‘peace’ conferences which ‘have been organized under Communist initiative in various countries throughout the world as part of a campaign against the North Atlantic Defense Pact.’ The first Congress was held in Paris, April 20-2, 1949 and the Second World Peace Congress was originally scheduled to be held in Sheffield, England, November 13-19, 1950 but, upon denial of visas to many delegates by the British Government, was held in Warsaw, Poland, November 16-22, 1950.”

<sup>112</sup> Rogers, “Passport Politics,” 500-501.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 505.

<sup>114</sup> In 1955, Judge Charles Fahy ruled that, “A passport was essential to the lawful departure from the United States by an American citizen. Therefore, when the secretary denied a citizen a passport he caused ‘a deprivation of liberty that a citizen otherwise would have.” Ibid., 503.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., 507.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 500.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 505.

<sup>118</sup> HUAC, “Organized Communism in the United States,” 29.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 121

<sup>122</sup> HUAC, “100 Things You Should Know,” 22.

<sup>123</sup> HUAC, “Organized Communism in the United States,” 122.

<sup>124</sup> St Clair Drake, “The International Implications of Race Relations,” *The Journal of Negro Education* 20 (1950), 278: According to Dr. Charles S. Johnson, after WWII there was a “...significant transfer of the issue of race relations from segmented minority struggles to the realm of universal concern;” this could be attributed in no small part to the immanent decolonization of the world.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 277.

<sup>126</sup> Anderson, “Bleached Souls and Red Negroes,” 104.

<sup>127</sup> David Harvey, “Crises in the Space Economies of Capitalism: the Dialectics of Imperialism,” in *The Limits to Capital*, (New York: Verso, 2007), 413-445. Here we are using imperialism in the Marxist sense, following Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman. eds., *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 2, to mean: “The globalization of the capitalist mode of production, its penetration of previously non-capitalist regions of the world and the destruction of pre or non-capitalist forms of production.” It has been responsible for capitalism’s “spread throughout the globe to the point where it now constitutes a truly global economy.”

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- <sup>128</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>129</sup> Ibid., 275.
- <sup>130</sup> Nigel Harris, *The End of the Third World: Newly Industrializing Countries and the Decline of an Ideology*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 1986).
- <sup>131</sup> Drake, "The International Implications," 276-277.
- <sup>132</sup> "After 1917, Leninist-Marxism proscribed racial discrimination in the new multi-national state, and its leaders began to manipulate racial sentiments of subordinated groups aboard toward the dual end of fomenting world revolution and implementing the foreign policy of the U.S.S.R." Drake, "The International Implications," 263.
- <sup>133</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>134</sup> Manning Marable, "History, Liberalism, and the Black Radical Tradition," *Radical History Review* 71 (1998), 20.
- <sup>135</sup> Ibid., 24.
- <sup>136</sup> Drake, "The International Implications," 267-268.
- <sup>137</sup> Ibid., 272.
- <sup>138</sup> Marable, "History, Liberalism, and the Black Radical Tradition," 21.
- <sup>139</sup> Drake, "The International Implications," 269.
- <sup>140</sup> Carol, "Bleached Souls and Red Negroes," 93.
- <sup>141</sup> Ibid., 107.
- <sup>142</sup> Ibid., 98.
- <sup>143</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>144</sup> Drake, "The International Implications," 263.
- <sup>145</sup> Ibid., 265.
- <sup>146</sup> Ibid., 270.
- <sup>147</sup> Ibid., 270.
- <sup>148</sup> Ibid., 277-278.
- <sup>149</sup> Ibid., 264.
- <sup>150</sup> Ibid., 267.
- <sup>151</sup> Ibid., 265.
- <sup>152</sup> Ibid., 266.
- <sup>153</sup> Gerald Horne, "Black Thinkers at Seat: Ferdinand Smith and the Decline of African American Proletarian Intellectuals," *Souls: A Critical Journal of black Politics, Culture, and Society* 4 (2002), 38.

## Chapter Three

### Case Studies in Anticommunist/Antiblack Antiradicalism

The migration of African descendants from the South and the West Indies to the industrialized North; the Great Depression; and the move toward social democracy and welfare capitalism throughout the world-system provided the context for the proliferation of Black radical thought<sup>1</sup> in the United States. The U.S. was forced to contend with Civil Rights for Blacks in the U.S.; balancing non-European nationalist claims to self-determination with the exigencies of European economic reconstruction; and securing its market interests in the context of Cold War competition with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.). The increased presence of West Indians in the United States radicalized struggles over these issues.<sup>2</sup> According to W.A. Domingo, “it [was] they (West Indian intellectuals) who largely compose[d] the few political and economic radicals in Harlem... without them the genuinely radical movement among New York Negroes would be unworthy of attention.”<sup>3</sup> According to Claudia Jones:

There are over 100,000 West Indians in New York City alone. The West Indian community in the States plays an active political, economic, and social role in the life of the nation and particularly lends its strength to advancing the struggles of the Negro people in the USA for full equality and freedom. Numerous West Indians are among the most active trade unionists in industry... As a whole West Indians in the USA constantly express concern and support of the liberation of struggles of the people in the West Indies, for freedom from colonial exploitation and slavery, for dignity and self-government.<sup>4</sup>

In this way, “[r]ace and the colonial issue formed a potent amalgam in the domestic and foreign policies of the United States.”<sup>5</sup> West Indians tended to add the dimension of class to the dominant mode of racial struggle. Perry Mars writes, “White colonial domination and plantation society had already set the stage for comprehending the racism in Caribbean society where a racial hierarchy prevails and is at the same time based on economic ownership patterns and class considerations.”<sup>6</sup> Additionally, “Caribbean intellectuals [came] to an understanding of class and race relations within more internationalist terms, in which colonial capitalism around the globe ha[d] constructed complex inegalitarian and hierarchical social structures, and in which class and racial differences both intertwine[d] and cut across each other through the region.”<sup>7</sup> Given this analysis that combined race, class, domestic, and international concerns, Black radicalism became an important site of surveillance and discipline because it challenged the authority of U.S. domestic and foreign policy, and because it was constituted by the danger of foreign-inspired subversion. The threat posed by the influence of West Indian radicalism on Black struggle was evident in the ultimatum delivered by Special Assistant Attorney General Robert L. Van in 1934: “If You West Indians don’t like how we do things in this country, you should go back home where you come from; we Americans will not tolerate your butting into our affairs. We are good and tired of you... There should be a law deporting the whole gang of you...”<sup>8</sup> In some ways, Van’s wish came true; Black radical intellectuals and activists became the targets of deportation, incarceration, and other forms of violence, while leaders that capitulated to U.S. hegemony were accommodated and managed by state power.

Domestic and foreign policy concerns came to be mediated through the effort to contain communism and all forms of radicalism because, “in the discursive formation of anti-Communism, dissent was conscripted as an expression of mental illness [or deviance], so much that the terms became practically interchangeable... As if in reaction to such diagnoses, the US State Department engaged in the practice conventional for both the treatment of mental illness and the threat of Communist contagion: confinement [or containment].”<sup>9</sup> Accordingly,

The perception of American policymakers since 1945 that the United States is the guarantor of stability in the international system, and ultimate guardian of the perimeters of the non-Communist world—best articulated as Containment—has been the central pillar around, and upon, which American post-1945 foreign policy has been elaborated. The preeminence of containment in American foreign policy after 1945 created a situation in which practically every other element of policy became a function of containment. Inevitably the American response to decolonization became an integral part of the wider strategy of American foreign policy.<sup>10</sup>

Prior to the Cold War, the United States was equally concerned with the containment of subversion and threats to national security, especially in the form of Germanism and Fascism internationally, and Black demands for citizenship and equality domestically. Prior to communism, Germanism (WWI) and Fascism (WWII) were the eminent threats to democracy and freedom. With the increasing military defeats of the British by Germany in 1940, the U.S. was concerned with curbing German influence in Europe and precluding German acquisition of colonies in the Americas.<sup>11</sup> Black agitation against segregation and racism, which was often perceived to be German-inspired, likewise presented a formidable threat to the social order and capital accumulation. Black Marxism was thus less menacing before WWII than because the Soviet Union had yet to become a global superpower and the primary threat to U.S. empire. However, Black struggle was always a target of surveillance insofar as it created the possibility for disruption and agitation.

It is against this backdrop that several U.S. and West Indian Black radicals will be discussed to theorize the multitudinous ways in which the U.S. state mobilized anticommunism to reproduce and reify regimes of antiradicalism grounded in antiblackness.<sup>12</sup> The entanglement of anticommunism, antiradicalism, and antiblackness came to constitute the defining technology of U.S. state and empire, which ultimately constructed Black radical thought as fundamentally incompatible with loyalty to the country. This was because “the entire history of the Negro people has been one of radical solution to sorely oppressed status... the finest patriots of the Negro people... those who have been assailed as radicals—are the staunchest fighters against slavery and Jim Crow, for freedom and equality.”<sup>13</sup> As Taj Frazier writes,

...one of the most essential aspects of the U.S.’s Cold War culture of containment was its domination and regulation of meaning and mobility. Anticommunism worked to subjugate and domesticate American minds through particular arguments about race, citizenship, and U.S. interventions in Foreign countries, as well as through repression of outlooks that did not correspond with dominant U.S. political orthodoxy. This suppression of antiracist leftist dissent was one factor among many that drove... [Black] radical critics to formulate alternative politics and ideologies of opposition that transcended national barriers...<sup>14</sup>

Anticommunism/antiradicalism/antiblackness was deployed in myriad ways to: combat nationalist struggles that leaned too far to the left or that defied American “political orthodoxy”; undermine racial struggles that challenged dominant modes of accumulation, labor relations, and social hierarchy; impose developmentalism on the Global South through coercion and/or incentive; discredit non-Western ideological formations as undemocratic, totalitarian, and/or authoritarian to rationalize intervention; and conscript the decolonizing world into the U.S.-led mode of accumulation. Forms of mobilization that challenged the hegemony and authority of the U.S. was niggerized as “Communist,”<sup>15</sup> and were confronted through military, political, and economic violence. Through the deployment of anticommunism/antiradicalism/antiblackness, the United States was able to occupy ambivalent, contradictory, and perfidious positions by construing its targets as dangerous, undesirable, insurgent, and/or seditious. As such, from the Truman to the Nixon administrations, U.S. foreign and domestic policy expended untold resources on the containment of constructed and perceived threats to its hegemony.

### **“Communism”/communism**

Anticommunism was arguably the defining instrumentality of post-WWII American domestic and foreign policy. The ascendancy of the U.S. to international economic and military power inaugurated a preoccupation with any gain made by communist forces. Concomitantly, the unprecedented level of prosperity within the United States was haunted by the specter of internal communist subversion. Thus, the U.S. state perceived communism as the dominant threat to the prospect of an American world order, and this warranted the full attention and force of American power. The Cold War Consensus, which had more or less taken hold by 1948,<sup>16</sup> developed in the context of immense growth, production, and rises in standards of living in the United States that would be threatened if European economies failed to recover. In addition, if European economic conditions remained dismal, there was a good possibility that the Communist Parties in countries like France and Italy would take over and that Soviet influence would spread across Central and Eastern Europe. In the U.S. official imaginary, this would ultimately lead to a Soviet-dominated world.<sup>17</sup> The worldview of the Truman Doctrine—that the United States represented a democratic force battling for freedom against the global forces of authoritarianism, aggression, and backwardness—was imbedded in U.S. national consciousness through techniques of propaganda, policing, and crisis politics.<sup>18</sup> This production of a culture of American anxiety was predicated on “the specter of Communism, anti-Communism, nuclear annihilation, the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan in the guise of White Citizen Councils... and the rise of the National Security State.”<sup>19</sup> International campaigns against purported Soviet expansionism, hostility, and imperialism were complimented by domestic campaigns against those accused of being Communist agents. Justice Department mandates, including the Federal Employee Loyalty Program, the Attorney General’s List, and the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) harnessed the legal institutional framework to State anxieties about the spread of communism. Furthermore, “the explicit labeling... of opponents of Cold War foreign policy as subversives and communists, tended to create very effective constraints upon political activities of a dissident nature.”<sup>20</sup> The conflation of loyalty and security placed severe economic, legal, and political restraints on radical activists, immigrants, and citizens.

In Cold War anticommunist culture, “discourses of difference were articulated with those of treason... Communism... and blackness and their articulation became key elements in a semiotics of disloyalty.”<sup>21</sup> The collapsing of traditional American values into internal security concerns by J. Edgar Hoover and other Cold Warriors in the government distinctly subjected

Black communists in the United States to suspicion and repression. This was because the definition of Communism “was tailored to swee[p] in its ambit just about all who were not conservative” and to target those who had a particular investment in the reorganization of the American social, political, and economic order—that is to say, those racialized as Black.<sup>22</sup> According to Richard M. Freeland,

‘the proposed criteria [for determining ‘communism’ or subversion’] are designed to be elastic and flexible’ ... In general, the criteria involved the advocacy of political, economic, and social ideas that were ‘hostile or inimical to the American form of government’ or tended to ‘promote the ideas and serve the interests of a foreign government’ or ‘indicate lack of bona-fide allegiance to the government of the United States.’ The criteria involved no reference to specific acts. They made no reference to specific connections between domestic organizations and foreign governments. ‘Communist’ organization was not defined as a group that took orders from the Soviet government or the American Communist Party, but one that advocated Marxist ideas, or supported the policies of the Communist Party while advocating democratic ideas, or followed policies ‘in accord with the governmental policy of Soviet Russia and opposed to that of the United States.’<sup>23</sup>

Inasmuch as “the produced crisis culture [underwrote] the postwar racial capitalist practices of the U.S. at home and abroad,”<sup>24</sup> anticommunism/antiradicalism/antiblackness effectively targeted and disciplined Blacks and their sympathizers that challenged Cold War domestic and foreign policy with these vague criteria. As the previous chapter discussed in detail, Blacks were on the constitutive outside of the state; challenged the government’s white supremacist and racially discriminatory practices; mobilized beyond the boundaries of the nation-state through Pan-Africanism, Garveyism, Black cosmopolitanism, and other means; and stood to benefit most from the redistribution of wealth and resources. The threat posed to the U.S. state by the entanglements of Blackness and radicalism is evident in a letter written to the U.S. Attorney General by the Jamaica Federation of Trade Unions in regard to the incarceration of Claudia Jones:

We cannot reconcile these actions with your government’s continued protestation of being the champion of freedom of expression and thought. On the contrary your department’s action in the case of Miss Jones seems to reflect the official policy of your government to stifle and suppress not only freedom of action, but freedom of thought and expression as well. The freeing of Miss Jones and other victims of the notorious Smith Act would do more to promote America’s goodwill throughout the West Indies, where Miss Jones is a native, and the world over, than the ‘goodwill’ broadcasts over the ‘Voice of America.’<sup>25</sup>

The fact that Claudia Jones was Black/West Indian, as well as radical, made her case of particular interest to racialized people in the Third World. Because her treatment put America’s racial and democratic hypocrisy on display, it had the potential to undermine the State’s imperial ambitions. As the National Committee to Defend Negro Leadership pointed out, “Neither U.S. State Department authorities nor Congress itself can close their eyes to the fact that colonialism and racism are on the way out. But they dare not forget that colonial peoples, struggling for

national independence, are not unaware of the fact that racism is one of the characteristic features of the so-called ‘American way of life.’”<sup>26</sup> It was the Black/radical/communist that brought this “characteristic feature” into sharp relief for colonized and racialized persons.

The instrumentalization of anticommunism/antiradicalism/antiblackness was especially manifest in the case of the Civil Rights Congress (CRC). It was a multiracial, radical organization that was in existence from 1946-1956 until it was disbanded due to pressure from the Subversive Activities Control Board.<sup>27</sup> The CRC, which combated “the twin evils of the era,” anticommunism and racism, defended both Blacks and communists. Their activism made the following connection between the denial of civil rights to Blacks and the denial of civil liberties to communists: “The open reign of terror of the White Citizens Council in Mississippi and other parts of the South not only reflect official tolerance of anti-negro attacks. It proves that the alleged ‘Communist Danger’ which the leaders of the White Citizens Council raise as justification of their abuses is a cloak screen behind which white supremacists are violating the economic, political, and social rights of the Negro people.”<sup>28</sup> In other words anticommunism and antiblackness were mutually constitutive technologies of state-sanctioned white supremacy, discrimination, and repression. Ben Davis made a similar argument thus:

...The business of charging the Communist Party with force and violence was one of the very strangest things in the world to me. To tell me as Negro about practicing force and violence, as a Communist, when all my life I had been hounded by this both as a Communist and as a Negro well, that just didn’t make sense; and [this] charge—force of violence—usually comes from fascist sources and [it] is usually uttered against the Communist Party, in order to hide the real forces of force and violence, who are the Ku Kluxers, the terrorists and the lynchers and the police brutes who attack Negro people and who attack other sections of the working class in this country.<sup>29</sup>

In other words, both anticommunism and antiblackness mobilized terror and fear for the purposes of exploitation, and this was manifested in the “continuing abuse of the rights of colored people by the use of anti-Communist hysteria.”<sup>30</sup>

In the 1948 “Statement by Negro Americans to the President and Attorney General of the United States,” Paul Robeson wrote, “It is clear that Negro Americans will lose even our right to fight for our rights unless an aroused American people puts a halt to the government’s hysteria-breeding attacks upon Communists. The recent ‘round-up’ of national Communist leaders reminds us all too much of the first step fascist governments always take before moving to destroy the democratic rights of all minority groups.” The writers of the Statement “agree[d] fully” with the following “declaration” of Henry A. Wallace: “Defense of civil rights of Communists is the first line in the defense of the liberties of a democratic people. This history of Germany, Italy, Japan and Franco Spain should teach us that the suppression of the Communists is but the first step in an assault on the democratic rights of labor, national, racial and political minorities, and all those who oppose politics of the government in power.”<sup>31</sup> The CRC recognized that Jim Crow was the Achilles heel in U.S. foreign policy that revealed its contradictions to the world, and “saw racism itself as having ‘ideological purposes,’ not most negligible of which was making for a cowed underclass of low-paid labor.”<sup>32</sup> The advocacy of social progress for Blacks, workers, and those who suffered from political persecution resulted in the organization being red-baited and painted as a communist front. According to Gerald Horne, “Not only did the CRC fail to go along with the prevailing anti-Soviet consensus but it deigned

to place stress on deprivation of Black rights when this was the most obvious embarrassment to the U.S. abroad.”<sup>33</sup> Because “the Negro people occupy a unique position in the front of struggle against American imperialism” and “Everywhere they are the first targets of the growth of fascist reaction and chauvinist nationalism... [and] they are resisting and fighting back,”<sup>34</sup> the CRC’s combination of radicalism and struggle for Black rights had to be eradicated.

Black Americans and immigrants from the Caribbean (and to a lesser extent Africa) were inimical to the sanctity of the U.S. Cold War state because the former were deemed susceptible to subversion, and the latter were considered to be inclined to radicalism. As such, both were considered to be “aliens,” irrespective of their citizenship status. And, as CLR James argued, “an alien is not a human being... [and is] entitled to no consideration whatever... [A]liens... had no human rights... [and] if [they] didn’t like it [they] could leave.”<sup>35</sup> This status justified their deportation and/or the circumscription of their movement:

...the practice of deporting aliens to rid the country of subversive ideas had a long history of sporadic usage... The association of American radicalism with immigrants and aliens is one of the classic traditions in American politics... contain[ing] a high percentage of immigrants and aliens... applied to the American Communist Party following its formation in 1919. In these circumstances, efforts in Congress to combat radicalism frequently took the form of amendments to the immigration laws... at the end of World War II, the Justice Department possessed broad... powers to deport aliens engaged in subversive activities.

The threat or reality of deportation, “suggested to [black] Americans that opposition to the Administration’s policies was an alien concept, to be associated with deportable criminals,”<sup>36</sup> and was underscored by their incarceration and/or denial of free movement. In other words, deportation and incarceration were twin instrumentalities of constructing the Black radical as “alien.” This “Department of Justice... policy... aim[ed at]... the extermination of the alien as a malignant pest”<sup>37</sup> was meant to expunge radical organizations that heavily depended on immigrants, aliens, or racialized citizens whose rights were severely restricted. It was also meant to silence dissident voices that not only challenged the pedagogy of the Cold War state, but also exposed the ways in which U.S. policies were inherited in white supremacy, racism, imperialism, and exploitation. In 1948, Attorney General Clark Tom C. Clark admitted that political activity that was “derogatory” to the American “way of life” was a threat to national security and justified detainment and/or deportation.<sup>38</sup> Thus, communism/radicalism—whether overt or filtered through “front” organizations—always-already amounted to subversion, and was especially threatening when articulated by the Black because it had the potential to disrupt the fundamental organization of American society. Given this threat, Black “subversives” were subjected to deportation, surveillance, denial of passports, banishment from public speaking activities, and smear campaigns<sup>39</sup> with particular vitriol and malice.

### **The Deportation of Claudia Jones**

Claudia Jones was born on February 21, 1915 in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, but moved to Harlem, New York in 1924. In 1936, inspired by the Communist defense of the Scottsboro boys, she joined the Young Communist League; by 1945 she had joined the Communist Party USA, and in 1948 she was elected to the National Committee.<sup>40</sup> Her Communist affiliation resulted in the denial of her application for U.S. citizenship in 1940.<sup>41</sup> She was first arrested and sent to Ellis



Island in 1948 because of her political affiliation, and in 1950 at a deportation hearing, the Immigration and Naturalization Service found her guilty of being an alien that joined the Communist Party.<sup>42</sup> The Federal Bureau of Investigation arrested her again in 1951 under the McCarran Act, along with sixteen other Communists, for violating the Smith Act.<sup>43</sup> Her specific offense was that she had written an article on the role of women in the struggle for peace, which violated the conditions of her bail.<sup>44</sup> The crimes for which she was convicted included, “teaching and advocating the overthrow of the US Government by force and violence... help[ing] to organise the Communist Party whose aim was the same; and ... issu[ing] a directive to this effect which was circulated in the Party’s theoretical journal *Public Affairs*.”<sup>45</sup> After the Supreme Court refused to hear her appeal, she was imprisoned in 1955 and deported on December 9<sup>th</sup> of that same year. Jones was part of a growing trend in Cold War policy to deport immigrant and aliens that were affiliated with the Communist Party; by February 1947, 124 persons had been deported because they were communists. In 1948, around 150 people accused of advocating or teaching the overthrow of the government were arrested—all immigrants—including CLR James and Ferdinand Smith.<sup>46</sup> The crackdown on radical immigrants was a result of the fact that the Communist Party had increased significantly in membership since the 1930s, and thousands of those who actively participated in the Party’s activities were immigrants. Since the U.S. was focused on neutralizing the American Communist Party immediately following WWII, a major deportation drive ensued.<sup>47</sup>

Jones’s deportation was not anomalous, inasmuch as, “over 91 per cent [of American communists] were either immigrants or the children of immigrants or married to someone in one of these two categories. In short, almost all communists were vulnerable directly or indirectly to punishment through deportation proceedings.”<sup>48</sup> However, her “additional penalty of being foreign born and Negro in the United States”<sup>49</sup> posed an immanent threat that required the immediate action of the U.S. state. When she was slated to be deported to London, the governor of Trinidad warned the colonial office that “she might become a source of infection amongst all Colonials in Britain;”<sup>50</sup> this attests to the ways in which her race (and “Colonial” identity) made her ties to Communism all the more treacherous. Jones asserted that the Smith and McCarran Acts were “racist immigration laws, directed especially against West Indians...”<sup>51</sup> “that came into being as a result of the whole reactionary drive against progressive ideas in the United States [and] encourages immigration of fascist scum from Europe but restrict West Indian immigration... to 100 persons per year from *all* Caribbean islands.”<sup>52</sup> In addition, “...the immigration laws of the United States impose[d] special hardships upon West Indian people not only with respect to the national origin quota system. They uph[e]ld characteristic features of the immoral system of slavery practiced against coloured people for three hundred years. They [were] terroristic, inhumane and anti-Negro. They combine[d] all the oppressive features of discrimination in the persecution of Claudia Jones.”<sup>53</sup> These “foul and unconstitutional statute[s]... [would] go the way of the Alien and Sedition laws of Jefferson’s day; just as the fugitive slave codes had to go... because... the struggles of American people for peace, democracy, and equal rights [were] growing.”<sup>54</sup> According to the *Daily Worker*, at a court hearing in 1948, Jones proclaimed, “Instead of prosecuting the Ku Klux Klan, the anti-Semites and the reactionaries, the government is arresting anti-fascists. I will take the stand at the proper time... I will defend my political views when the atmosphere is not filled with hysteria.” Later that day she continued, “I have become ‘dangerous’ to the Truman administration because, as a Negro woman, I have dared to challenge the civil rights lip-service cry of his reactionary admiration which is yet to lift a finger to prosecute the lynchers, the Ku Klux Klan or the anti-

Semites.”<sup>55</sup> Jones’s statements underscore that it was a combination of her Communism/radicalism; advocacy of civil rights and antiracism; position as alien/immigrant/outsider; and Blackness that made her a prime target of the U.S. government.

The intensity of the deployment of anticommunism/antiradicalism/antiblackness as a technology to discipline and punish rendered it even more dangerous than fascism. The latter, of course, was much more compatible with the policies of the United States than was Black radicalism. According to Jones, in Hitler Germany, the fascists destroyed democratic rights and gains made by labor, outlawed the Communist party of Germany, and murdered and jailed numerous Communists and anti-fascists; these policies were akin to the McCarthyite “wars” predicated on “anti-labor, anti-Negro, anti-foreign born legislation” that deemed “A ‘Communist’ [one] who holds ideas McCarthy and the present GOP administration and other reactionaries do not like or agree with.” Thus, McCarthyism amounted to American Fascism, especially in its targeting of Black intellectuals and freedom fighters (many of whom were not communists), including Eslanda Goode Robeson, Ralph Bunche, Langston Hughes, Doxey Wilkerson, Mary McLeod Bethune, Mordecai Johnson and Coleman Young.<sup>56</sup> In 1950, Jones, Ferdinand Smith, and four of their comrades sent a letter to the Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee of the United Nations to challenge their detainment. They wrote:

Our devotion to the life, liberty and happiness of the American people is attested by our participation in the struggles for the labour movement, in the fight for Negro rights, against discrimination and lynching, in the fight for democracy, on our behalf of peace and security of the people. And that is our great crime. That is why we are threatened with concentration camps. That is why our human rights are abrogated, our freedom of conscience violated and our right to think outlawed.

We charge the United States with crass and cynical violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights...It is mandatory that the United Nations, on the basis of its character investigate the manner in which immigrants in the United States are being treated by agencies of the United States Government. If we can be denied all rights and incarcerated in concentration camps, the trade unionists are next; then the Negro people, the Jewish people, any foreign-born, and all progressives who love peace and cherish freedom will face the bestiality and torment of fascism. Our fate is the fate of the American democracy. Our fight is the fight of all opponents of fascist barbarism, of all who abhor war and desire peace.

The position in this letter is supported by Jones’s answer as to why she was deported, given in an interview by George Borwin: “I was a victim of the McCarthyite hysteria against independent political ideas in the USA—a hysteria which penalizes anyone who holds ideas contrary to the official pro-war, pro-reactionary, pro-fascist line of the white ruling class in this country.”<sup>57</sup> Jones’s “opposition to Jim Crow racist discrimination,” work for “unity of Negro and white workers,” and “struggles to change the foreign and domestic policy of the United States,”<sup>58</sup> proved more destabilizing than the virulent racism that was embarrassing the U.S. on the world stage; the repression of civil rights and civil liberties that was undermining U.S. claims to be the democratic leader of the free world; and fascist revanchism in Europe that threatened to result in another World War.

In 1949, two years before her trial and deportation, an article by Jones entitled, “An End to the Neglect of the Problems of Negro Women!” was published. The danger she posed to the U.S. government is manifested in the article’s Marxist analysis of race, class, and gender. She started by outlining the imperatives of the Negro liberation movement: peace, civil rights, and economic security.<sup>59</sup> In that year, advocacy for peace had come to be inexorably linked to subversion due to what anticommunist politicians and intellectuals dubbed the Communist “peace offensive.” The U.S. administration was suspicious of the Soviet Union’s attempt to mobilize world sentiment against nuclear war and armament.<sup>60</sup> “Peace” became especially treacherous when articulated by the Black because it was internationalist, and therefore threatened to expose the virulence of U.S. racial violence; interracial, and thus challenged the racial order of the United States; and, most problematic, it was advocated by communists that castigated racist and imperialist policy and practice. Agitation for civil rights was considered seditious when it moved beyond the liberal, gradualist position of the United States because it invalidated the antiracist and democratic image the U.S. attempted to project as the leader of free world. Demands for economic security were especially radical because they contested income, wealth, and class disparities; racialized and gendered forms of superexploitation; and the global axial divisions of labor. It was this challenge to capitalist accumulation that was perhaps the biggest threat, especially because, as Jones pointed out, exploitation had increased as part of the “postwar reactionary offensive.”<sup>61</sup> In other words, the unprecedented prosperity experienced in the U.S. since the end of the war was fundamentally predicated on the increased oppression of Black people globally.

Jones’s argument in the article for social equality among the races gave credence to U.S. state fears that interracial cooperation would result in an increased political consciousness, leading to a “struggle against Wall Street imperialism.”<sup>62</sup> She asserted,

It is this consciousness, accelerated by struggles, that will convince increasing thousands that only the Communist Party, as the vanguard of the working class, with its ultimate perspective of Socialism, can achieve for the Negro women—for the entire Negro people—the full equality and dignity of their stature in a socialist society in which contributions to society are measured, not by national origin, or by color, but a society in which men and women contribute according to ability, and ultimately under Communism receive according to their needs.<sup>63</sup>

Concomitantly, Jones contented that anxiety about interracial social intercourse was directly related to the entrenchment of Black women at the bottom of the economic ladder. It perpetuated white chauvinism and bourgeois social logics that undermined a genuine fight for equality. For Jones, it was essential to

...ri[d] ourselves of the position which sometimes finds certain progressives and Communists fighting on the economic and political issues facing the Negro people, but ‘drawing the line’ when it comes to social intercourse or intermarriage. To place the question as a ‘personal’ and not a political matter, when such questions arise, is to be guilty of the worst kind of Social-Democratic, bourgeois-liberal thinking as regards the Negro question in American life; it is to be guilty of imbibing the poisonous white-chauvinist ‘theories’ of a Bilbo or a Rankin.<sup>64</sup>

This argument for social equality and interracialism as a political matter was not just about intermarriage; it was about a challenge to property rights; segregation; and the very organization of American society. It dispelled with the idea that racism and discrimination were acts of individual choice, and stressed that they were forms of structural domination that needed to be eradicated if liberation for all people was to be achieved.

Jones went on to advocate for the end of the neglect to Negro women's problems because this group of persons was the most militant and therefore the most essential to ending exploitation. She wrote, "The bourgeoisie is fearful of the militancy of the Negro woman, and for good reason. The capitalists know, far better than many progressives seem to know, that once Negro women undertake action, the militancy of the whole Negro people, and thus the anti-imperialist coalition, is greatly enhanced."<sup>65</sup> This was because Negro women were oppressed as women, as Negroes, and as workers, and therefore represented the most subjugated population.<sup>66</sup> Though the experience of Black women was constituted by all forms of oppression, race was the primary mode through which their triple oppression was experienced:

...the Negro question in the United States is *prior* to, and not equal to, the woman question; that only to the extent that we fight all chauvinist expressions and actions as regards the Negro people and fight for full equality of the Negro people, can women as a whole advance their struggle for equal rights. For the progressive women's movement, the Negro woman, who combines in her status the worker, the Negro, and the woman, is the vital link to this heightened political consciousness.<sup>67</sup>

It was because of their Blackness that they were overrepresented in the labor market; confined to the lowest-paying jobs and excluded from all but the most menial fields of work; and earned lower wages than all men and white women. As the most degraded of the races and sexes, Black women were portrayed not as breadwinners and protectors of the family, but as "backward, inferior, and the natural slaves of others."<sup>68</sup> Jones contended that Black women's responsibility as partial or sole breadwinner, along with their treatment in the labor market, explains their active participation in the social, political, and economic life of the Black community; to exclude or relegate their role and experience was to reproduce the conditions of black marginalization generally inasmuch as Black women were "the real active forces—the organizers and the workers."<sup>69</sup> Furthermore, the failure of progressive unions to organize Black domestic workers—who were unprotected by social and labor legislation—or to support the Domestic Workers Union, continued the subjection of the most vulnerable groups of workers to exploitation and chauvinism.<sup>70</sup> The unequal relationship between Black domestic workers and white workers of both genders perpetuated and normalized hierarchical relationships; precluded organization for equality across race, class, and gender lines; and discouraged Black women from joining progressive and radical organizations

In the case of Claudia Jones, anticommunism/antiradicalism/antiblackness converged with "attacks on the foreign born... [that made] it possible for citizenship to be taken away at any time,"<sup>71</sup> to criminalize her "subversive" ideas, and to deport her. As Davies writes, "In the case of immigrants... advocating the overthrow of the U.S. government by force or violence, orally or otherwise, is a basis for denial of an application for naturalization. Communism was defined in that period as doing just that... So active membership in the Communist Party became criminalized and therefore the basis of exclusion and removal of all aliens..."<sup>72</sup> Jones became a "deportable subject" because her ideas, activism, and political orientation constituted a

destabilizing threat to the Cold War state. This “conferring of statelessness” through the deportation, incarceration, and repression of Black communist/radicals continued in the treatment of Black militants to come.<sup>73</sup> Anticommunism/antiradicalism/antiblackness was modified, reconstituted, and reified over time to niggerize all forms of Black mobilization that fell outside the pedagogy of the U.S. state.

### **The Containment of Paul Robeson**

Paul Robeson, one of America’s greatest Black leaders and Renaissance men, was also one of the most egregious victims of anticommunism/antiradicalism/antiblackness. The Federal Bureau of Investigations wrote in a July 25, 1945 report that Paul Robeson “continue[d] to be active in Council on African Affairs and [was] working for Communist front organisations. Subject [was] reported to be a member of the CPA under name of JOHN THOMAS by informant of this office.” It also noted,

Confidential Informant whose identity is known to the Bureau, reported on April 17, 1944 that the birthday party of Paul Robeson’s on April 16, 1944.... The subject spoke and said that he had ‘traveled all over the world and has learned that not only negroes were suffering, but that refugees whom he had met, had proved to his satisfaction that all races were suffering in one part of the world or another.’ Further the subject is reported to have said that freedom could not be obtained in this country while people were oppressed in other countries... The subject further said that the liberated people of the Soviet Union were enjoying rights and privileges of freedom. In this connection, Confidential Informant advised that ROBESON asserted that a comparatively limited few persons controlled the destinies of the people and that the 150 million people in Africa could not be held down. The subject is reported to have pointed out that history showed cases of people who were oppressed and who, in desperation, revolted and overthrew the oppressors.<sup>74</sup>

Starting in 1946, Robeson was continually called before HUAC, and in 1949, after a speech he made at the World Conference of Partisans for Peace, the American state and press systematically targeted him, and his career and public image suffered irreparably.<sup>75</sup> There was even an effort to remove Robeson from American history, including the banning of his biography, written by Shirley Graham DuBois, from public libraries and the removal of his name from the College Football and All-American list of players.<sup>76</sup>

Though he was an American citizen, Robeson’s Blacklisting resulted in the denial of his civil rights, the surveillance and restriction of his movements, and the cancellation of his passport in August 1950. This “le[ft] him, at one point ‘the only living American against whom an order has been issued directing immigration authorities not to permit him to leave the continental confines of the United States.’”<sup>77</sup> Robeson’s passport was cancelled a week after he refused to surrender it to the State Department because his travels abroad were not considered to be in the interest of the United States.<sup>78</sup> It was argued that he should not be allowed to “travel around the world and malign [America] with falsehoods and even more vicious half-truths.”<sup>79</sup> On August 4, 1950, the Council on African Affairs charged in a news release that the invalidation of Robeson’s passport was “another blatant example of the Administration’s efforts to silence the demand of Negro Americans for their full rights as citizens,” and that banning him from traveling abroad was a violation of his personal rights, human rights, the universal freedom of

art, and his democratic right “against police state tyranny.”<sup>80</sup> In December 1950, Robeson filed a complaint against the invalidation of his passport, stating that it deprived him of his property rights. In 1952 Robeson’s lawyers argued that he had not only been deprived of his property rights, but also due process of law which violated his Fifth Amendment rights, and freedom of speech, thought, assembly, petition, and travel, all of which violated his First Amendment rights.<sup>81</sup> The *New York Times* reported on August 7, 1952 that the case was ordered thrown out by the U.S. Court of Appeals with the instructions that it be sent back to District Court and dismissed.<sup>82</sup> It wasn’t until 1958 that Robeson had his passport restored: “Robeson and his wife were able to obtain passports in view of a decision by the United States Supreme Court, on June 16, 1958, in the case involving ROCKWELL, KENT, WALTER BRIEHL, and WELDON BRUCE DAYTON in which it was held that under existing statutes governing travel, the secretary of the State lacks the authority to withhold a passport because of an applicant’s present or past membership in or association with the Communist Party (CP).”<sup>83</sup> However, eight years of banishment from overseas speaking engagements and concerts and refusal by U.S. concert halls to book him for appearances meant that Robeson had lost the bulk of his income and his stature as an international leader. The “red brand of McCarthyism” persisted even after his passport was reissued.<sup>84</sup>

Robeson’s “Communism,” antiracism, and internationalism, coupled with his fame and influence throughout the world, made him the most dangerous man in (and to) the Cold War state because his politics challenged the image and the liberal economic interests that the U.S. was trying to export abroad.<sup>85</sup> Robeson was considered a hindrance to national defense and a threat to national security because he revealed the entanglements of U.S. racist domestic policy, imperial foreign policy, and anticommunism; and he refused to cease doing so even as other Black leaders aligned themselves with the Cold War state. Robeson realized that the American state was using his communist affiliation not only to proscribe his freedom, but also to discredit the legitimacy of his anticolonial, antiracist politics. On April 16, 1948 it was reported in the *New York Post-Home News* that when a Black reporter asked him if he was a communist, he responded, “It is none of your damned business... The last person in the world I would expect to ask that question would be a Negro and a representative of the Negro press. This is no longer a matter of Communism. It’s a matter of civil rights.”<sup>86</sup> Elsewhere he is reported to have replied to the same question, “That question has become the basis of the fight for civil liberties, and until that fight is won, I refuse to answer it. That is the only reason I have for not answering it.”<sup>87</sup> Robeson’s position on the issue of communism demonstrated his belief that antiblackness, anticommunism, and the denial of civil rights were intimately connected, and that Black Americans, of all people, should understand that. Like Claudia Jones, Robeson was disciplined by the U.S. State for his politics, which included a combination of agitation for civil rights, workers rights, redistribution, anticolonialism, and world peace.<sup>88</sup> Robeson’s most egregious offenses were his support for the merits of the Soviet Union and its “propaganda” that racism and discrimination were alive and well in the United States; his founding of the Council on African Affairs (CAA) and its petitioning of the U.S. State Department and the United Nations for an end to colonialism; and his pacifism and international work for peace, which the U.S. State deemed Communist-inspired subversion.<sup>89</sup>

One of the primary aims of restricting Robeson’s movement was to prevent his speeches, organizing, and activism that exposed American racism and imperialism as a matter of policy. The threat Robeson posed was conveyed in an article he wrote for a Polish newspaper in 1949, in which he asserted,

One of the problems that is confronting America today is the so-called Negro problem. Even this problem is connected with the fight for peace and progress, not only in America but throughout the world. I would like to stress that the Negro problem is only one phase of the labor problem. Ninety-five per cent of the Negroes in America and other countries are laborers. The emancipation fight of the Negroes is closely connected with the fight of the labor class, because discrimination against Negroes is a desire to insure cheap labor. That is why the majority of the Negroes—except those few who are in the service of the imperialists and are enacting in Negro society the same role that the rightist union leaders are enacting in the entire labor movement—is in the camp for peace and progress.<sup>90</sup>

Here, Robeson was asserting that contrary to the rhetoric of the U.S. State, there persisted a “Negro problem,” constituted by the exploitation of Black labor and the co-optation of the Black bourgeois class, which undermined peace and progress. Thus the fight for racial justice was inextricably linked to the international fight for labor rights. Robeson’s position contravened the attempts of the U.S. to export a rehabilitated image of itself abroad by repressing Black radicals and promoting leaders that were willing to move to the right, like Walter White, Edith Sampson, Max Yergen, and Ralph Bunche. The latter were willing to present African-American life in a positive light because, “by agreeing to the fallacious permit of U.S. moral authority and world domination, they might win concessions on the domestic racial front.” Unlike Black Cold War liberals, Robeson was not willing to break his “previous ties with other oppressed people.”<sup>91</sup> Robeson recognized that being a Negro aligned him not only with racialized peoples all over the world, but also with the exploited working classes. Black liberal desires for inclusion were inhered in imperial aggression, while Robeson’s commitment to international solidarity demanded an end to economic exploitation, racial domination, and neocolonial warmongering. As such, he was not willing to compromise his internationalist views for the promise of full citizenship in the United States—a promise that was predicated on anticommunist repression.

Robeson’s leftist politics became highly developed during his time in London in the 1930s. While studying at the University of London, he became acquainted with anticolonial leaders and intellectuals including George Padmore, CLR James, and Jomo Kenyatta; developed a friendship with Jawaharlal Nehru and support for Indian independence and the Indian National Congress; traveled to the Soviet Union in 1934 and 1937; and ventured to Spain in 1938 in support of the Republican cause of the Spanish Civil War. All of this contributed to the development of Robeson’s anticolonial, leftist, and internationalist politics<sup>92</sup> and to his founding of the Council on African Affairs (known as the International Committee of African Affairs until 1942) in 1937. The CAA was one of the most forceful antifascist and anticolonial African-American organizations with international influence,<sup>93</sup> and for that reasons it was named a “communist front” organization in 1943.<sup>94</sup> It was initially founded by a coalition of liberal, progressive, and radical Blacks, however many of the liberals and progressives, including Ralph Bunche, resigned due to pressure from HUAC given the organization’s close association with the Communist Party and communist-leaning organizations like the National Negro Congress.<sup>95</sup> With the resignation of the liberals, the CAA adopted a militant, anti-imperialist, anticapitalist internationalism that emphasized the political independence for African nations, advocated for improved economic and social conditions on the Continent, and began lobbying the U.S. government for African decolonization.<sup>96</sup> The CAA also lobbied the United Nations for African causes, a prominent example being the South African miner workers strike of 1946; they believed that “the issue [was] unlikely to come before the bar of world opinion at all unless

Negro Americans and colonials raise it in the United Nations Assembly.<sup>97</sup> The CAA linked the fight for Black rights in the U.S. to liberation movements in the Caribbean and in Africa,<sup>98</sup> and published extensively on trade union and political organizing throughout Africa.<sup>99</sup> Especially in the 1940s, the CAA was increasingly focused on labor and political economy.<sup>100</sup>

The CAA's call for an end to colonialism and reconciliation with the Soviet Union was particularly worrisome to the U.S. and other Western governments.<sup>101</sup> As such, the organization began to be targeted by anticommunism/antiradicalism/antiblackness. In 1947, Attorney General Tom Clark listed the CAA as a subversive organization,<sup>102</sup> and this precipitated a split between Max Yergan and Paul Robeson: "Max Yergan, founding father of the CAA, shifted from being a trusted comrade to cooperating fully with the FBI and attorneys general in their anti-communist prosecutions."<sup>103</sup> In an April 5, 1948 article in the *New York Post-Home News* it was reported that Yergan, who was moving to the right and becoming an uncompromising anticommunist,<sup>104</sup> charged Paul Robeson with being part of a Communist plot to take over the Council on Affairs. Yergan insisted that the Council was not a Communist group. Robeson believed that Yergan was capitulating to reactionary forces and was determined to keep the CAA on a leftist course.<sup>105</sup> On April 7, 1948, the *Herald Tribune* reported that Robeson replied that "You can't fight the struggles of Africa by being non-partisan or being a Red baitor [*sic*—Someone has to point out that things are not beautiful here in America, in Africa and other parts other world. If that makes me a Communist, then I'm proud to be one."<sup>106</sup> Yergan also accused Robeson and his "faction" of trying to push him out of the CAA because he was trying to rid the organization of Communist influence.<sup>107</sup> On September 29, 1948, Yergan resigned from the Council.<sup>108</sup>

Along with his advocacy on behalf of Africa, Robeson was an unrelenting proponent of peace. For the United States, peace "became identified with a condition of anti-Communist stability. In this narrow sense, peace depended on keeping the military strong and keeping the public reconciled to a state of tension for a long time."<sup>109</sup> For the United States, peace and freedom were predicated on anticommunism. It represented "Communist totalitarianism and expansionism" as the biggest threat to world peace. To defend against this threat, the United States advocated for: strength, prosperity, progress, and defense of freedom by any means necessary.<sup>110</sup> In other words, peace could only be achieved through militarism and armament. Thus, Paul Robeson's dedication to both world peace and peace with the Soviet Union proved problematic to the U.S. State. His dedication resulted in his attendance of the World Peace Conference in Paris in 1949. His attendance at the World Peace Conference underscored his dedication to an internationalist vision of peace. His speech at the conference, where he advocated for his version of peace, contributed to his rapid decline as a Black public figure and leader in the face of a vicious American retaliatory response: "the response to his 1949 comments initiated what would be, for him, over a decade of continuous FBI surveillance, mob violence, and blacklisting..."<sup>111</sup> The *World Telegram* reported that in his speech, Robeson stated that the United States was the focal point of world fascism; that Truman's program for African development meant 'new slavery' for the Africans, and that there needed to be a fight for friendship with the Soviet Union. However, the issue for which Robeson was most attacked was his alleged statement that American Negroes would never go to war for the United States against the Soviet Union.<sup>112</sup> As James Meriweather explains, "Robeson ended his remarks by declaring that the wealth of America had been built on the backs of Black and white workers and vowed, 'We resolved to share it equally among our children. And we shall not put up with any hysterical ravings that urges us to make war on anyone. Our will to fight for peace is strong. We shall not make war on anyone. We shall not make war on the Soviet Union.'"<sup>113</sup> A similar critique by



Robeson was reported by the *Daily Worker* in its May 25, 1949 issue where he indicated that once Africans learned the meaning of socialism, they could not be made to fight the Soviet Union; and that the U.S. would sacrifice every European and Negro in its fight against Socialism.<sup>114</sup>

On June 22, 1949, Robeson wrote an article entitled “Negroes in the Ranks of the World Front Fighting for Peace and Progress” for the Polish newspaper *Trybunu Ludu*. He asserted,

Ask the Negro workers from the cotton plantations in Alabama, the sugar cane plantations in Louisiana, the tobacco districts of the South, the banana plantations of the West Indies, the African peasants who have been deprived of land in South Africa, and ask all Negro inhabitants of the African continent if they want to fight for peace and cooperation with the Soviet Union and national democratic countries. Ask them whether they desire friendship with the Soviet Union, where the definition of ‘backward colored nations’ is just a hallow sound, where former colonial nations within the Soviet structure were able during one generation to rise to an incredible level of cultural and economic development. Ask the Negroes whether they want to join these forces of peace, or if they will allow themselves to be hurled into the abyss of a new war in the interests of those who are denying them the elementary rights of citizenship. Ask them if they desire to join the modern slave dealers, or whether they desire to fight for peace and progress. Obviously they will fight for peace and progress.<sup>115</sup>

An Associated Press (AP) dispatch, misquoted Robeson as saying, “It is unthinkable that American Negroes would go to war on behalf of those who have oppressed us for generations against a country [the Soviet Union] which in one generation has raised our people to the full dignity of mankind.” This misquote was meant to further undermine Robeson’s prestige and influence by portraying him as an un-American supported of the Soviet Union. The AP also reported that Robeson compared the U.S. government to that of Hitler and the Nazis. This misrepresentation was reprinted throughout the U.S. and “became the basis for the ensuing national furor... ‘the white press rushed to inveigh against him as a traitor; the black leadership hurried to deny that he spoke for anyone but himself; agencies of the U.S. government excitedly exchanged memos speculating about possible grounds for asserting that he had forfeited his citizenship.’”<sup>116</sup> The campaign against Robeson resulted in “many organizations—peace and civil rights... keep[ing] their distance from Communists, adopting exclusion clauses and policing local groups to prevent ‘infiltration’; they also muted their criticism of U.S. policies that aggravated Cold War tensions.”<sup>117</sup> It also intensified his estrangement from Black liberals that had begun in the previous year with Yergan’s attacks. HUAC summoned Black leaders to declare their own loyalty and that of Black Americans generally; these special hearings were meant to “give ‘members of [Robeson’s] race’ the ‘privilege’ of ‘the expression of contrary views’ to the ‘disloyal and unpatriotic statements’ Robeson had uttered, indicating both that blacks now bore the responsibility of denying that his views were representative and that American power structures feared that they were.”<sup>118</sup> This resulted in attacks on Robeson as a leader, the questioning of his politics, and an articulation of Black struggles in purely nationalistic and patriotic terms.<sup>119</sup> Robeson was condemned as a “Kremlin stooge,” “Moscow’s No. 1 Negro,” and by Walter White, as a bewildered man who should be pitied rather than damned.<sup>120</sup> Some of his opponents even “link[ed] his alleged madness and status as an actor with his Communist sympathies and activism for civil rights and anticolonial movements.”<sup>121</sup>

Robeson's sympathy to communism and advocacy of world peace threatened U.S. hegemony because it linked the conditions of Black workers throughout the world and suggested that they had more to gain from cooperation with the Soviet Union than with the United States. It demanded reconciliation between the USSR and the USA to prevent further global conflict and attributed antiracism and cultural and economic development to the Soviet Union as opposed to the United States. It also linked progress with peace and internationalism, and the denial of citizenship to the oppressed with parochial Cold War nationalism and state-sanctioned violence. Robeson was essentially describing capitalism and American imperialism as "modern slave deal[ing]," and arguing for communism/socialism and internationalism as forces of progress. This was the basis for his claim that if Black and oppressed people believed in peace and progress, they would align themselves with the Soviet Union—or at least with a system of cooperation between the Soviet Union and the United States—otherwise they would be complicit in their own oppression and exploitation. The label and charge of communism penetrated all aspects of his life and anticommunism, as a disciplining technology, proved to be his undoing.

### **Anti-Imperial Anticolonialism**

Given its colonial history vis-à-vis Britain, resulting in the American Revolution, the United States has historically articulated itself as an anticolonial nation. However, economic interests have always been the driving force of American anticolonialism. Prior to WWII, the United States was predominately concerned with eradicating market barriers in Western European empires that precluded trade relationships with the colonies and that excluded American goods.<sup>122</sup> American anticolonialism was, in effect, a response to mercantilist regimes governing international commerce that had detrimental consequences for American international trade.<sup>123</sup>

Throughout the 1930s, the American response to the colonial issue was shaped by the desire for the restoration of an international trading order that would help to ease the painful consequences of the Great Depression on the American domestic political economy. Of primary concern were efforts to dismantle trade barriers to contain the spread of European mercantilism and to prevent the establishment of a Japanese-led economic community in Asia. In brief, American concerns with access to markets and opportunities for investment were critical factors influencing the American demands for an end to imperialism.<sup>124</sup>

In denouncing colonialism and imperialism, the United States was in reality advocating for its own economic concerns through discourses of peace, stability, and justice. This was evident in President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points speech, delivered on January 8, 1918. The third point in the speech advocated for, "The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance."<sup>125</sup> This was followed in the fifth point by a call for: "A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined."<sup>126</sup> Here, the end—or "impartial adjustment"—of formal colonial administration was imperative to shifting terms of trade in favor of the United States. Thus, imperialism and colonialism were only undesirable to the U.S. insofar as they impeded free trade, infringed upon the sovereignty of nations to open their markets, and

threatened international peace<sup>127</sup> (and often for the U.S. “world peace” meant its national security).<sup>128</sup> These elements continued to constitute American anticolonialism as it ascended to the status of global superpower.

U.S. anticolonial discourse and practice, especially prior to WWII, largely excluded race and racialized populations. It abstracted its anticolonial ideology from its domestic racial practices. Demands for an end to formal colonial administration and mercantilist imperialism necessarily evaded the United States’ own colonial practices against racialized peoples. American settler colonialism took on the form of intra-Continental expansion rather than the acquisition of noncontiguous territories. It was accomplished through massive internal displacement of the native population. This allowed the U.S. to make the claim that it was neither colonial nor imperial, and to erase the fact of the near eradication of native populations, the subjugation of Blacks, and the marginalization and relegation of other racialized and ethnicized populations. Thus, Black anticolonialism, which resulted from the connection of their oppression in the United States to the subjugation of formally colonized peoples by Western European powers., was fundamentally incompatible with the anticolonial pedagogy of the U.S. state, which emanated from pragmatic economic concerns.<sup>129</sup> Notwithstanding its history of genocide and the continuation of violent forms of racism, the U.S. was able to make a case against colonialism in keeping with its economic and strategic interests.<sup>130</sup> While the U.S. did have overseas possession, including Guam, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico, it rationalized its colonial territories by dubbing them “responsibilities,” and making the claim that, over time, it was moving to decrease as opposed to enlarge, its overseas territories.<sup>131</sup> Inhered in this was the historicist, developmentalist, and progressive narrative that came to constitute not only U.S. anticolonial discourse, but also its racial narrative. Just as the United States claimed that it was on a path of progress toward an empire-free existence, so too would its society, overtime, evolve into one free of racism.

This gradualist and developmentalist position came to characterize the American approach to decolonization in the Third World, especially given the Cold War context. Because the United States and the Soviet Union had emerged after World War I as the rhetorically anticolonial powers, the decolonizing world turned to one or the other for support of its strategies to procure independence.<sup>132</sup> This created the conditions for decolonization to become a site of ideological struggle:

Inevitably, the issue of decolonization became one of the areas of competition between the Communist countries and the members of NATO. As a consequence of this active courtship of nationalists by the Communist states, the United States under the Eisenhower administration began to demand a renunciation of ties with, or support from, the Communist countries as evidence of legitimate nationalism... Anticommunism in all of its forms was now a fundamental principle of legitimate nationalism in American eyes.<sup>133</sup>

As the Soviet Union began to supply nationalist movements with arms and economic assistance, thus heightening anticommunist tension,<sup>134</sup> the United States began to demand orderly evolution instead of revolution. Moreover, the ascendance of Fidel Castro to power in 1959 after the Cuban Revolution, and his subsequent alliance with the Soviet Union, compounded U.S. fears about the rapid decolonization of the Caribbean. It heightened its fear of revolutionary or militant nationalism because it might lead to alignment with or sympathy to communism.<sup>135</sup> The U.S.

pragmatically supported agitation for independence because, as an agent of anticolonialism, its role would be to help Third World countries obtain political stability, economic viability, and self-respect among the family of nations.<sup>136</sup> In the American view, this was a process that would unfold over time. A viable economic and political foundation needed to be laid (in other words, market capitalism and “democracy” needed to be adopted) before independence could be granted, in order to preclude Soviet penetration.<sup>137</sup> Given its assumption that colonized subjects, especially those in Africa and the Caribbean, inherently lacked the capabilities to govern themselves, gradualism became appended to antiblackness/antiradicalism/anticommunism. It assumed that a slow decolonization process was more viable than radical revolution because it was through the former that the Western model could be learned and emulated. The U.S. believed that without proper Western tutelage, including the adoption of developmentalism and democracy, these countries would ultimately capitulate to communism.

Cary Fraser writes, “the American response to non-European nationalism became intrinsic to the debate on the mechanics or tactics of implementing containment. There was no blanket endorsement of non-European nationalism or self-determination for non-Europeans. Endorsement was done on a case-by-case basis and as a response to the perceived ideological coloring of nationalist factions.”<sup>138</sup> Support for self-determination in the Global South became an instrumentality for combating communism, which rendered any nationalist struggle sympathetic to Marxist-Leninism fundamentally incompatible with independence. Since containment was the ultimate concern, any state that threatened to spread communism throughout the international system was not fit for decolonization.<sup>139</sup> In effect, readiness for decolonization was measured by the extent to which a country supported U.S. Cold War policy.<sup>140</sup> Concomitantly, American anticolonialism was “the product of its considerations of which side to support, at what point of time, and for what purpose, given the imperatives of wider American concerns, particularly the fear of the spread of communism.”<sup>141</sup> It followed then, that, “the American commitment to [decolonization] depended to a considerable extent upon both what they believed was the degree of the Communist threat and its proximity to the United States. Thus, Black Africa has never figured as prominently in American strategic calculations as Latin America and South East Asia.”<sup>142</sup> National security and containment trumped self-determination and equality as American anticolonial imperatives, and as such, forms of non-European nationalism that moved beyond a liberal, gradualist agenda, and that articulated anti-imperial anticolonialism that targeted and challenged capitalism, neocolonialism, and relationships of dependency and underdevelopment were deemed illegitimate, irrelevant, and/or dangerous. In this way, of radicalism was read as communism, or communist-inspired. Especially during the “hot” period of the Cold War, anticommunism/antiradicalism/antiblackness became an instrumentality to undermine, proscribe, and essentially outlaw this form of anti-imperialism, which ultimately came to be conflated with anti-Americanism.

### **Eric Williams and Pragmatic Anticolonialism**

Scholar, historian, and statesman Eric Williams is a pivotal figure in the study of the vicissitudes of Black radical thought in response to the foreign policy of the United States. He arrived in the United States on August 7, 1939 to teach social and political science at Howard University.<sup>143</sup> At Howard, he became increasingly radical under the influence of Abram Harris, chair of the Department of Economics, Alain Locke, and Ralph Bunche. It was Harris most of all who encouraged his move to the left.<sup>144</sup> While in the United States, he started to develop strong anti-imperial anticolonial interests, especially on the West Indian question. His anti-imperialist

thought propelled him, as an intellectual, to be considered as one of the fathers of Caribbean radicalism.<sup>145</sup> Over time, he underwent a profound change, and by the time he emerged as the leader of postcolonial Trinidad and Tobago, his ideological position had shifted to pragmatic anticolonialism. As a scholar and intellectual, he was not perceived as threatening to the U.S. state. His critique of colonial capitalism was not fundamentally destabilizing to U.S. interests. His thesis that the colonial powers were impeding development and progress dovetailed with U.S. anticolonial pedagogy. Indeed, his critique of colonialism supported the vested interests of the United States in bringing an end to direct colonial administration. This was particularly the case for radical critiques of racial/colonial capitalism prior to WWII. However, U.S. tolerance for such critiques diminished as the geostrategic importance of West Indies increased in the context of the Cold War. This produced a shift in U.S. policy and outlook. As U.S. imperialist interests in the region intensified, its practice shifted to threats of invasion and tactics of destabilization to ensure the commitment of countries and territories in the region to market capitalism. As a result, articulations of radical political economy were replaced by the developmentalist ideology of U.S. empire. Williams's intellectual production around economics and history; political life; and ultimate capitulation to global capital as the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago are illustrative of the fickle inconsistency of the U.S. state toward Black radicalism. What is revealed in the narration of his shifting ideological position is the connection among Black dispossession, the economics of colonialism, the politics of imperialism, and the ways in which anticommunism was used as a technology of domination, discipline, and punishment. It is through the figure of Eric Williams that the limits to U.S. tolerance for antiracism and anticolonialism can be understood; if the latter became anti-imperial and anticapitalist, they could no longer be countenanced.

Williams's radicalism becomes evident in his scholarly writings more so than in any of his other endeavors. For him, analysis of the colonial relations of production rooted in exploitation, particularly of labor, was integral to understanding the Black condition in the Caribbean and in the imperial world generally. This was because the Black condition was constituted by "a common heritage of slavery, a labor base essentially the same."<sup>146</sup> His dedication to economic analysis, even in the face of moralist/Culturalist articulations, became evident in his B. Litt supervisor's (V.T. Harlow) critique of his work:

...your thesis contained important new material and was well written. At the same time, it (quite unconsciously) presented a distorted picture, because it attempted to treat the economic factors in isolation... The same danger applies to your present work. You must endeavour, even though you yourself may be out of sympathy with it, to understand the tremendous dynamic force of the Evangelical Revival. Which dominated the minds and thoughts of a such a large section of the Nation during this period... It is not merely a question of accepting their sincerity, but of getting into their skins. If you fail to do that, your economic facts, however true in themselves, will not be sound history...<sup>147</sup>

What is evident in Harlow's criticism was Williams's dedication to upending the myth of white benevolent abolition by uncovering the economic imperatives of the slave trade and system. This formed the basis of perhaps his most important intellectual endeavor. Rather than presenting a "distorted picture," Williams's intent was to correct the distortions of British historical narratives that failed to acknowledge how essential the contributions of Africans and Black labor were to the development and expansion of the capitalist world-economy. This was the foundational

argument of his PhD dissertation (he was awarded his doctorate in history in December 1938), entitled *The Economic Aspects of the Abolition of the West Indies Slave Trade and Slavery*, which ultimately developed into his seminal work, *Capitalism and Slavery*, written in 1944.<sup>148</sup> C.L.R. James, who actually suggested the topic, heavily influenced Williams's analysis and research.<sup>149</sup>

*Capitalism and Slavery* made a fundamental contribution to both the historiography of slavery and radical pan-African thought because it challenged the traditional British narrative of abolition by establishing the link between Negro slavery, early (British) capitalist exploitation, and accumulation in the West. It made the convincing and foundational argument that profits earned from the slave trade and industries connected to slave labor financed the industrial revolution, and that slavery was essential to the development of British capitalism. Williams's position that, "The commercial capitalism of the eighteenth century developed the wealth of Europe by means of slavery and monopoly,"<sup>150</sup> revealed the role of capitalism in the domination and exploitation of Black people. It also elucidated the role of exploited Black labor in the proliferation of capitalism. In doing so, it challenged the racist erasures of British historians. Williams made the further assertion that the demands of industrial capitalism were incompatible with slave production and used this to explain the impetus for abolition.<sup>151</sup> He asserted that the attack on slavery was part of a larger attack on mercantilism and monopoly, consistent with industrial capital's imperative demand for free trade. This challenged the dominant narrative of British historians based on notions of morality and rights. Such arguments, from Williams' perspective, made it appear "almost as if Britain had introduced Negro slavery solely for the satisfaction of abolishing it."<sup>152</sup> There were condemnations of his work from notable historians, like Frank Tannenbaum who accused him of having "a strongly flavored faith in the economic interpretation of history, given strident enthusiasm by a visible notion of Negro Nationalism."<sup>153</sup> To be sure, his challenge to the idea of scholarly neutrality did nothing to mitigate his critics. By his own admission he had "taken a political line in the book, which West Indians more than anyone else need to understand."<sup>154</sup> In other words, while the book was factually sound and grounded in a mountain of archival data, Williams rejected the scholarly dictum of neutrality. Instead, his scholarship was intended to expose and criticize the racist exploitation of the institution of slavery and to correct the narratives of chauvinistic white historians. To this end, *Capitalism and Slavery*, was a radical work of anti-imperial anticolonialism.

Following in the footsteps of imperial British scholars whose work influenced the attitudes of British society and governmental policy, Williams's intellectual work was geared toward influencing attitudes and policy in the Caribbean. His work made the case for political activism by providing a political economic critique of colonialism as an explanation for existing problems. It was a corrective to the historical record that had distorted the contributions Black people had made to the construction of the modern world.<sup>155</sup> Moreover, it was inhered in an anti-imperialist anticolonial critique that revealed the fallacies in British claims of benevolent antislavery activism, American assertions of democracy and freedom, and imperial myths about the inability of the Caribbean to effectively govern itself. As David Hinds writes, "Williams's scholarship falls into the radical Caribbean tradition. His *Capitalism and Slavery* remains a classic in black and Caribbean historiography. He was arguably the pioneer of a new approach to the history of the African diaspora."<sup>156</sup> Much of his work, especially *The Negro in the Caribbean*, helped to shape nationalism in the region. In it, he identified foreign domination as the source of the detestable social conditions, the maldistribution of wealth and income, and of

the political underdevelopment of the masses in the majority of West Indians.<sup>157</sup> By lambasting the colonial elite, he asserted the humanity and right to self-determination of West Indian people.

His radical criticism of the economic policies of the imperial powers was highlighted in his paper entitled, "The Economic Development of the Caribbean up to the Present," written in 1943. Among other things, he criticized the domination of the sugar industry—"king" in the Caribbean—by foreign powers; the impact of increasing economic nationalism in the metropole on the decline of economic and social well-being of Caribbean populations; the impediments to land redistribution due to the sugar industry's demand for large land-holding units necessary for profitable production; and the ways in which the concentrated and exclusive emphasis on agriculture for the production of export crops and the importation of food foreclosed the possibility of Caribbean self-sufficiency. He also argued that colonialism's failure to develop forms of interdependence among the islands had impeded independence in the West Indies.<sup>158</sup> Williams's critique was directed at British colonialism as well as at increasing imperial presence of the United States. He felt that both obstructed the possibility for sovereignty and self-determination in the Caribbean. His challenge to colonialism and imperialism based in political economy critique led, naturally, to support for the interests of the working classes: "As a historian, Williams was undoubtedly sympathetic with the working class and understood the vicissitudes of workers under the yoke of colonialism."<sup>159</sup> His radical critique opened him to attacks and suspicions of being a dangerous leftist in the United States.<sup>160</sup> This came to be reflected in decisions made by the U.S. administration to manage him, particularly as these related to his role in a reformulation of the administration of the region.

On March 1, 1944 Williams was officially invited to join the Caribbean Research Council of the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission (AACC) as Secretary of its Agricultural Committee. He had had been previously associated with the Commission since 1942 as a research consultant.<sup>161</sup> Established on March 9, 1942 in the context of the lend-lease agreement between the U.S. and Great Britain, the AACC was negotiated and established by Britain and the United States for the two powers to jointly administer the British West Indies in the face of the possibility of German intervention and claims. Ostensibly, it was established "for the purpose of encouraging and strengthening social and economic co-operation between the United States of American and its possessions and bases in the area known geographically and politically as the Caribbean, and the United Kingdom and the British colonies in the same area."<sup>162</sup> Under the aegis of maintaining stability, its intent was to facilitate cooperative economic reform in the Caribbean to stave off communism; to protect American commercial interests; to increase U.S. influence in the region; and to ensure Caribbean loyalty during the War. In December 1945 it was reformulated into the Caribbean Commission intended to serve in an advisory role to support and facilitate social and economic development in and provide technical assistance to the Caribbean. The metropolitan involvement was expanded to include France and the Netherlands.<sup>163</sup> Williams was asked to serve as the Secretary of the Caribbean Research Council, which was based in Washington, and was organized "to prevent duplication of research and to promote the work of the Commission in the scientific and technical field."<sup>164</sup> His appointment, in part, was meant as a palliative response to outrage that the Commission had no West Indian members. Organizations such as the West Indian National Council (WINC) and the American West Indian Association on Caribbean Affairs excoriated the Commission for excluding Caribbean intellectuals; they argued that, "the Commission is not serious about its statements. It cannot benefit the West Indies so long as it excludes men of the Caribbean who know the conditions of the Caribbean, and who have had the benefit of European and American

education.”<sup>165</sup> These demands, coupled with Williams’s stature and credentials as a West Indian intellectual and scholar of the region and his prior role with the AACC assured his appointment. His organization of a conference on the “Economic Future of the Caribbean” at Howard University in 1943, which was attended by prominent members of the Commission, solidified his role as a leading scholar and expert on the Caribbean. His race and Caribbean provenance had to be overlooked.<sup>166</sup>

By 1948, Williams had risen to Deputy Chairman of the Council. He relocated to Port-of-Spain, the capital of Trinidad, on the advice of physicians because of exhaustion, stress, and “friction” that demanded a change of climate and environment.<sup>167</sup> During his tenure, the AACC/Caribbean Commission was considered by many to be a tool of imperialism and a remnant of colonialism. Williams sought to transform the Commission. Instead of capitulating to the imperatives of the United States and Britain, he used his position to effectively contest the agendas of the two countries. To do so he focused his attention on their colonial and imperial objectives. As early as 1945 he had begun to mount challenges to U.S. and British agendas for the region and to expose their intent. He began giving public lectures, initially on the issue of Jamaican independence, to the objection of the British, and on the role of the United States in the region. He published a paper on “Race Relations in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands,” that was highly critical of the United States.<sup>168</sup> His relationship with his superiors was, according to Colin Palmer, “acrimonious” because he was “[e]motionally committed to improving the conditions of the Caribbean peoples, sensitive to their need to assume responsibility for their own destiny, and conscious of his intellectual superiority over his white bosses. Williams refused to be silenced or to modify his critique of colonial rule in accordance with their wishes.”<sup>169</sup> He wrote an unpublished pamphlet on the AACC that was an unabashed challenge to white colonial and imperial domination by asserting that, “The Black man will stand no nonsense from the white merely because he is white. Jealous of his legal freedom, he is ever ready to remind you that he is no longer a slave.”<sup>170</sup> For him, colonialism and imperialism represented an extension of the social and economic relations of enslavement. And in making the case that he was “no longer a slave,” he used every opportunity to challenge and contest the continuation of colonialism, the imposition of American imperialism in the region, and racial injustice and racial privilege afforded to whites at the expense of Black colonial subject. His position allowed him to travel throughout the Caribbean and he used the opportunity to educate the masses about colonialism, to come into “close contact with present problems in territories,” and to “associate with representatives of the metropolitan governments [which] enabled [him] to understand... the mess in which the West Indies [found] themselves.”<sup>171</sup> Williams’s anti-imperial anticolonialism was met with hostility from the British and the Dutch, who actively worked against his appointment as Deputy Chairman. They accused him of communist leanings because of his intransigence. For Williams, this represented the resistance of metropolitan powers to the appointment of Caribbean people to senior positions.<sup>172</sup> The accusation of communism used as a means of resistance and hostility to Williams serves to illustrate the ways in which anticommunism, entangled with antiblackness, was deployed to police and discipline any form of radicalism that challenged the coloniality of power.

While at the AACC/Caribbean Commission, Williams began to grow increasingly critical of the United States’ imperial presence in the region. He saw the the proliferation of the US dollar in the economy as problematic. He was also concerned by the replacement of British culture with US culture in Trinidad.<sup>173</sup> He began to mount “a charge against colonialism [and imperialism] with an energy and pugnacity that the territory had never witnessed.”<sup>174</sup> In



retaliation, Howard University made the decision to rescind an offer of full professorship that was made to him.<sup>175</sup> The decision, which was a considerable blow to his academic prestige, came after he had been offered a full professorship and the directorship of a newly-created Division of Social Sciences. The offer was made, ostensibly, in an effort to get him to return to work at Howard.<sup>176</sup> The excuse used was his ongoing conflict with the Dean over the issue of his leave. What this underscores is the power of the state to act through ostensibly independent institutional frameworks such as universities to discipline and punish, and the manner in which the sovereign power of the state penetrates all institutional arrangements in a system of governmentality.<sup>177</sup>

On May 1946, Dean Price informed Williams that the Board of Trustees had voted that all wartime leaves of absence taken by the teaching staff needed to be brought to an end by June 30, 1946, and that the University needed to be advised of Williams's plans.<sup>178</sup> On July 8, 1946, Williams informed Dean Price by letter that he was interested in returning to Howard as the head of Political Science and at the level of full Professor because, "had [he] not gone on leave of absence, it would have been natural for [him] to have been appointed acting head of the department of Political Science in Professor Bunche's absence. [He] was fortified in this belief by the fact that, in view of the creation of certain professorships last year, the offer of one of these was made to [him] by [Dean Price] in the Spring." Williams had been unable to accept the Professorship at that time because of troubles he was experiencing at the AACC.<sup>179</sup>

In response to Williams's July 8 letter, Dean Price informed him that the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees had approved him to be reinstated as Assistant Professor of Political and Social Science at a salary of \$2,650 for the term of September 1, 1946-June 30, 1947.<sup>180</sup> In a subsequent meeting with Dean Price, in which the Dean informed Williams that he would recommend that Williams be promoted to the rank of associate professor at full salary and the next year be promoted to the rank of full professor, Williams expressed his view that he was being penalized for his war service. He "pointed out to Price that all this was at variance with the discussions [they had] had for the last year, and that it looked to [him] as if powerful pressure was being brought to bear by someone, inside or outside the university, who the university feared to offend, to interfere with hierarchy normal in all institutions and organizations."<sup>181</sup> The "troubles" with the AACC Williams referenced in his July 8, 1946 letter, and Howard University's about-face on his appointment in the period between May 1945 and July 1946, were undoubtedly backlash in retaliation for publishing the article on race relations in the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico; the lectures he had given on Jamaican independence; and his persistent anti-imperial position. In a letter to Mordecai Johnson, President of Howard University, Williams intimated that his absence from the University had resulted in him becoming a "victim of unfortunate circumstances" and that his treatment implied that he was somehow unfit for the position of head of the political science department, notwithstanding the fact that he was the senior faculty member.<sup>182</sup> Ultimately Williams was promoted to the rank of Associate Professor for the period of September 1, 1946-June 30, 1951;<sup>183</sup> he received neither the directorship of Political Science nor the rank of full professor that he had been promised in 1945.

Williams was fired from the Caribbean Commission on June 21, 1955 after his contract was not renewed. As he moved toward termination, he became even more critical of the Commission, pointing out its "failure and even refusal to deal with fundamental Caribbean realities,"<sup>184</sup> and their censorship of him when he attempted to do so. In his opinion, he had come under increasing censure and "persecution" because of his writings and an adult education campaign that he was conducting, which the Commission considered to be involvement in Trinidadian politics. It was considered by the Commission to be in violation of the terms of

service.<sup>185</sup> Williams asserted: “I endured tortures at the Caribbean Commission, where I had to tolerate all sorts of metropolitan upstarts who thought my ideas for the future of the West Indies too extreme. Everywhere I went I met suppression... [the issues were] not personal but political; they involve not a single individual but the West Indian people.”<sup>186</sup> Out of concern for what he considered to be an impending neocolonial imposition by the United States, he ventured into party politics and began to mobilize the Black population against U.S. capitalist imperialism.<sup>187</sup> In early 1955, in preparation for his political campaign, he intensified his adult political education campaign and began giving a series of nationalist (defined in regional terms) and anticolonial lectures. On the same night that he left office, he gave a public lecture at a popular public venue called Woodford Square entitled, “My Relations with the Caribbean Commission, 1943-1955” in which he promised to fight for the intellectual freedom of the Caribbean denied by colonial powers and imperial presences.<sup>188</sup> The speech was particularly important in signaling his conversion into a nationalist leader of the oppressed masses. In it, “he was able to present his personal conflict with the Commission as a symbol of the struggle of all colonial peoples with their metropolitan overlords. He persuaded the crowd that this struggle was part of a larger struggle in which they were all involved.”<sup>189</sup> Furthermore, he “boldly presented himself... as a martyr in the anti-imperialist struggle... his dramatic narrative of his vicissitudes within a quasi-colonial establishment [served] to project the image of one who had suffered in the anti-colonial cause.”<sup>190</sup> He was able to effectively turn his conflict with the Caribbean Commission into an issue with which all colonized West Indians could identify;<sup>191</sup> he convinced them that he had been sacrificed at the alter of colonialism because he had struggled tirelessly for the wellbeing of the Caribbean people.

Williams’s heightened political consciousness and profound interest in politics was developed while he was working for the Caribbean Commission. His firing was the catalyst to effectively launch his political career in Trinidad and in the Caribbean. He formed a political party called the People’s National Movement (PNM) organized around his assertion of a militant nationalism. His party won national elections held in 1956 under a reformed constitution that granted limited “self government” to Trinidad and Tobago, and he became the colony’s first Chief Minister.<sup>192</sup> The U.S was concerned that the PNM, established by Williams and his supporters on January 15, 1956 after his break with the Commission,<sup>193</sup> was susceptible to communist infiltration because of the growing importance of Trotskyite C. L. R. James (discussed later) within the PNM. They felt that Williams was falling under the James’ influence and “flirting” with Communism. Indeed, in 1955, Williams had requested that the radical George Padmore (see discussion later) put him in touch immediately James: “tell him that for obvious reasons [he was] not writing” and ask him to get any advice or materials that could be used in the “present circumstances.”<sup>194</sup> His relationship with James and Padmore rendered him a fundamental threat to U.S. interests. Williams could no longer be accommodated, however reluctantly, as he had been at the Caribbean Commission. James was quite open about his Trotskyite ideological proclivities, and as a result became the target of conservative elements in the West Indies sympathetic to the U.S. His relationship with Williams painted the latter as a radical. The American Consul General in Trinidad asserted that, “James [was] a particularly vulnerable target... Although the Consulate General has no evidence, there [was] always the possibility that James [was] under international communist discipline, and continue[d] to use his Trotskyite identification as a cloak. It [was] rumored locally that James has access to communist money.”<sup>195</sup> Since James was seen as a threat, his close relationship with Williams became a source of concern because it opened up the possibility, in their estimation, for Trinidad to align

itself with international communism. Given his friendship with James, his increasingly anti-American stance, and his radical nationalism, Williams and the PNM began to be red-baited to in an effort to discredit his leadership.

Williams's challenge to American domination of the British West Indies was based on his fear that the United States was replacing Britain as a neocolonial power. In July 1957, he launched an attack on the United States because it refused to evacuate a large military base that it had established in the colony named after Chaguaramas where it was located in the East tip of the island. He accused the U.S. of disregarding Trinidadian views on the issue and insisted that the U.S., Great Britain, and Trinidad and Tobago negotiate on equal footing on the status of the base and on any other issue concerning the twin-island nation. By transforming Chaguaramas into an issue of West Indian and Trinidadian nationalism, Williams was directly confronting the United States, much to the chagrin of more moderate Caribbean leaders like Norman Manley and Grantley Adams.<sup>196</sup> According to Cary Fraser, "The thrust of his campaign was to embarrass the United States and the United Kingdom through the portrayal of their stance as an attempt to maintain the colonial order in the West Indies. Given the alacrity with which his domestic opponents had seized upon the issue, Williams also sought to exploit the Chaguaramas issue to consolidate nationalist sentiment in Trinidad behind the PNM and to target the opposition as traitors."<sup>197</sup> Indeed, in a speech to the Special Convention for the 1961 General Elections, Williams continued to identify the issue of Chaguaramas in terms of an anticolonial, nationalist, mass struggle. He represented the 1961 agreement of a seven year moratorium on the base closure as a victory over colonial domination: "Revision of the Anglo-United States Agreement of 1941 in respect of Chaguaramas—that was our first demand in 1957 when we first began to realise the full implications of that colonial imposition on our people, and we marched in the rain April 22, 1960 and achieved our demand when the new Agreement was signed on February 10, 1961."<sup>198</sup> Unlike other leaders in the Caribbean, such as Grantley Adams of Barbados and Norman Manley of Jamaica, whose involvement related to the reconstitution of the West Indies into a Federation that included Trinidad, and who capitulated to the Anglo-American insistence that negotiations over the base be tabled and the issue be revisited ten years later, Williams continued to assert a "militantly nationalist platform on Chaguaramas."<sup>199</sup> He demanded compensation from the US for its use of the base for twenty years and the immediate withdrawal of troops from Trinidad.<sup>200</sup> He placed a ban on the use of Trinidad's airport by U.S. military aircrafts and organized a march and demonstration on the American consulate.<sup>201</sup> In making Chaguaramas an issue of nationalism, Williams was asserting his anti-imperial anticolonialist position by posing a direct challenge to both Great Britain in the United States. He was challenging British colonial policy that created the conditions for the military base to be established, and United States imperial policy that was predicated on using Trinidad and the rest of the Caribbean for its own geopolitical and commercial interests.

During the struggle with the United States over Chaguaramas, Williams delivered a famous "Massa Day Done" speech in March 1961 in which he indicted not only colonialism, but also the "stooges" that perpetuated the colonial mentality and colonial relations in the Caribbean. For Williams, "Massa" was not only a racial concept, but also a symbol of the domination of formal colonial administration. It referred to a class of persons and an orientation that transcended race and ethnicity. It represented the foreign domination of enslaved Blacks and indentured Chinese, Indians, and Portuguese that constituted Trinidadian racial and ethnic milieu. The term "Massa" was a figurative representation of a backward political ruler who oppressed workers, foreclosed them from rights and recognition, and imposed a barbarous

system of colonial commandment that dispossessed the indigenous population to facilitate accumulation in the metropole. “Massa” imposed social control, monopolized political power, precluded economic development, and punished workers. “Massa Day Done” was thus a cry for social revolution for the entire Trinidadian society irrespective of race.<sup>202</sup> The challenge to American imperialism that it invoked became part and parcel of the Black radical critique that contested and rejected U.S. discourses of development, democracy, and freedom. Williams’s radicalism, coupled with his affiliation with C.L.R. James (his advisor) elicited an anticommunist/antiradical/antiblack response of discipline by the U.S. state.

The U.S. response was quite successful as a technology of discipline. It came with the threat to Williams’s survival as the country’s political leader. As a result, he began to systematically distance himself from communism and radicalism in his quest to retain power, prevent the destabilization of his government, and avoid economic interference. The survival of his regime was, to a considerable degree, contingent on his willingness to acquiesce to the demands of powerful international actors and to cater to their political, economic, and security needs<sup>203</sup>—especially the United States. With this realization, Williams ultimately made a series of compromises that signaled a shift from radical anti-imperial to pragmatic anticolonialism. He remained firmly anticolonial in his unrelenting belief that the role of the PNM was to protect Trinidadian sovereignty against foreign administration. In a 1961 speech he argued,

In the final analysis the national dignity and national right to self determination... depend on the will of the people and the readiness of the people not only to assert their right to self determination, but to ensure that that right to self determination is not infringed upon or impaired by external pressures which never end and whose disappearance on the achievement of independence it would be the height of folly to ever imagine... it is we of the PNM who set them free and it is only we of the PNM who can keep them free.”<sup>204</sup>

The PNM embarked on a “West-Indianisation” of all levels of public service in a policy that was emblematic of this position. Williams reiterated his firm belief in sovereignty for Trinidad and the rest of the Commonwealth Caribbean in a statement he made at a 1964 press conference in New York. He insisted that if Trinidad were to join the Organization of American States, “there must be no interference whatsoever in the affairs of any countries in the hemisphere. We insist that there must be—if that was still necessary—some guarantee against invasion... Do not interfere with us and we do not interfere with somebody else.”<sup>205</sup> He echoed this sentiment in a 1968 speech in Canada, asserting that, “Our stand on international issues remains clear and unambiguous... we necessarily oppose intervention of any sort from any quarter in the domestic affairs of the countries of the world—whether in the Caribbean or Latin America or the Balkans or the Far East or Central Asia... A state’s right to determine its internal structure, a people’s right to choose their own government, cannot under any circumstances be abridged, circumscribed, infringed, or abrogated by another individual states.”<sup>206</sup> Williams’s opposition to racism was also framed by his anticolonialism inasmuch he connected the former with the legacy of colonialism. As he understood it, “the world has worked out the curious hybrid of juridical equality of States and racial inequality of peoples... the contemporary slogan is “keep Britain white,” the very Britain which was built up by African and Asian labour in Africa, Asia, and the West Indies. Whatever the Commonwealth may be in theory, it is in practise being increasingly gained with a racial limitation. Viewed in historical perspective the Civil War in the United States is still raging.” He berated Western democracies for expecting racialized peoples to accept

the oppression of the Black majority by a white minority.<sup>207</sup>

Williams's anticolonialism was also highlighted in his advocacy of intellectual decolonization. He continued to publish books that were aimed at eradicating the effects of colonialism on the mentality of African descendant peoples and were intended to "emancipate his compatriots who historical writings... sought to deprecate and to imprison for all time in the inferior status to which these writings sought to condemn them."<sup>208</sup> As he stated in his lecture on "Intellectual Decolonization": "It is one thing to get rid of colonialism... but if you colonial nationalists think that it is as easy as that, I am afraid they have another thought coming to them. I go a little further than that. A lot of the colonial attitudes are not dead at all."<sup>209</sup> He worked to develop universities in Africa and the West Indies and to develop forms of intellectual exchange between the two regions.<sup>210</sup> Williams also became actively involved in anticolonial struggles internationally. This was particularly true in Southern Africa where he supported an anticolonial position on the Southern Rhodesia question and white minority rule. He asserted, "Our general line [is] in support of the unanimous African demand for the implementation of the principles of majority rule and 'one man, one vote' as soon as possible, for the convening by the United Kingdom of a constitutional conference to work out the basis on which Southern Rhodesia might proceed to independence, and for the release of detained African leaders so that they could participate in the [Prime Ministers'] conference."<sup>211</sup>

Notwithstanding his strong and unwavering anticolonial position, he, like Arthur Lewis, conceded to American imperialism and his country's reinscription into global capital by his introduction of American-brand developmentalism into Trinidad and Tobago. In doing so, he abandoned the anti-imperialism and anti-Americanism that had characterized his earlier position. The cost of challenging the new hegemon was too high, especially because Williams realized he needed the West for foreign aid and political and economic support. His regime was dependent upon it. He was forced to capitulate to the anticommunist and antiradical thrusts of American Foreign policy. According to Percy Hintzen,

Private investors are quite reluctant to do business in a country that is not overtly capitalist and pro-Western unless it has natural resources that can be exploited for enormous profit... Similarly, unless a country's resources are highly strategic to Western interests, bilateral and multilateral economic assistance from the West can come tied to political and ideological considerations—namely, a regime's expressed willingness to align with and protect the interests of donor countries. Given that the supply of critical economic resources comes primarily from the industrialized West or from agencies under Western control, the choice may very well be alignment with West or economic chaos."<sup>212</sup>

Williams began to receive substantial compensation from the United States for continued use of Chaguaramas and to obtain foreign investment to develop the oil industry in exchange for his policies aimed at circumscribing the power and influence of trade unions and his entrenchment of neocolonial economic relations. As Malika Sherwood asserted, "the economic power structure remained unchanged: the economy remained mainly in the hands of Whites."

Williams's pivot toward the United States and away from radicalism became evident in his position on the Castro regime of Cuba and his position on the radical Jagan government in British Guiana in 1963-1964. He made the following statement in 1965:

This is the Latin American society to whose problems Castro's Cuba claims to have found the answer. What is that answer? Revolution organised against the existing order of foreign capitalist domination by a handful of middle class misfits directing guerrilla bands, operating a campaign of terror and sabotage, and claiming to act in the name of the workers and farmers.

The reality does not match the promise. The Cuban revolution has taken the sugar economy which was dependent on the United States market through a special preferential quota, given it a more dominant and entrenched position, and made it even more dependent on the Russian market through a special preferential trade agreement. The trade unions are totally subordinated to the state, the workers' wages are cut, and worker discipline ruthlessly enforced. The land is not given as was promised to the landless peasants; instead it is organised into vast state-owned collective farms. Instead of importing American manufactures, the new Cuba imports Russian raw materials for its factories. It has to pay for the latter as it paid for the former; while the accumulation of Cuban credits in unconvertible rubles makes it difficult for the country to finance its essential imports from Western sources. Planless planning, Castro has called it.<sup>213</sup>

In effect, Williams repeated much of the propaganda the U.S. levied at Cuba, insisting that Castro had implemented an undemocratic, totalitarian regime dependent on the Soviet Union that oppressed its population and lacked the potential for development.

Williams also developed a keen interest in British Guiana because of its racial constitution, which resembled that of Trinidad, and because he feared that Cheddi Jagan and the People's Progressive Party would establish a one-party communist state.<sup>214</sup> He thought that a second communist center would be developed in British Guiana because potential "subversives" were being trained in Cuba and Communist Europe. He opposed independence for British Guiana on those very grounds. When Williams visited Africa in February-April 1964, he discouraged African leaders from supporting the Jagan administration, and he actively worked to undermine Jagan's reputation with Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Ben Bella of Algeria, and the Afro-Asian group.<sup>215</sup> Williams took the side of the United States against Guyana, expressing that he "wanted the U.S. State Department to inform him about the extent of Soviet support for the Jagan government." He also continually requested information from the State Department about communism in British Guiana so that he could use the information against Jagan.<sup>216</sup> In the context of the worsening political and racial climate in his country in 1964, Jagan invited Williams to mediate the situation, but the two failed to come to any consensus on resolution. In July 1964, Williams reported to the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations in the United Kingdom that, "There is no basis or reasonable hope for any accommodation between the political parties [the People's Progressive Party and the People's National Party], for any resolution of the political deadlock or for any agreement on the rational and stable foundation on which the independence of British Guiana must necessarily be built." As such, he suggested that the United Nations intervene and assume responsibility for the government to insure political democracy.<sup>217</sup> That same year, Williams told the American ambassador R.G. Miller that British Guiana was not fit for independence because it would only make trouble for the region.<sup>218</sup> This "trouble" was undoubtedly related to Jagan's ideological position, and his opinion that Guiana was "far removed" from the "ideal basis of national independence"<sup>219</sup> echoed the U.S. position that any country that was not staunchly anticommunist was not fit for independence.

On the domestic front, in a June 14, 1956 speech he “emphatically” denied that the PNM was “either communist, Fascist, Jaganist or Poudjast,” and in subsequent weeks he sought to distance the PNM from communist and left-wing organizations, including the Oilfield Trade Worker’s Union (OWTU) in his country.<sup>220</sup> He complied when the United States dictated that he get rid of C.L.R. James. On May 30, 1960, Williams officially broke with James in a speech entitled, “Perspectives for the West Indies,” using it to declare his alignment with the United States and its anticommunist foreign policy: “The world is divided into two camps; the hot war will follow the cold. Where do we, a new nation of three million people stand? If the Iron Curtain is the great divide separating the two camps, then it is axiomatic that we are West of the Curtain and not part of it.”<sup>221</sup> The United States made it clear that it would not cooperate with Williams economically or on the Chaguaramas issue if James remained his advisor. His newfound pragmatism conflicted sharply with James’s radicalism, making the break a relatively simple one.<sup>222</sup> The break signaled an even more profound shift in Williams’ position that extended to a departure from global anti-imperialist currents signaled by “rejection of a nonaligned position, in favour of the USA and its retention of the Chaguaramas Naval Base.”<sup>223</sup> According to Fraser,

C.L.R. James was purged from the PNM as part of the general settlement of the Chaguaramas issue. Again, the American hostility to non-Western ideology had emerged and once more, even a militant nationalist like Eric Williams, bowed to the pressures from the United States. The rigidity of American policy on the ideological limits of West Indian nationalism had become a major factor determining American policy. C.L.R. James represented only the most recent casualty of American fixations on the authenticity of West Indian nationalism, in which non-Western influences would not be tolerated.<sup>224</sup>

Williams’s split with James was concretized in 1965, when he placed James under house arrest because he sided with the left and with the radical trade unions opposed to the PNM.<sup>225</sup> He began to tie James to “subversive elements of society.”<sup>226</sup> By 1966, Williams was vowing to crush all Marxist movements in Trinidad, and by 1977, he had arrested thirty-seven members of the radical United Labour Front for organizing a march against his administration.<sup>227</sup> His turn to the anticommunist, antiradical, antilabor politics of suppression and repression was complete.

In 1965, the PNM passed an Industrial Stabilization Act meant to combat the ostensible Marxist organization of sugar workers.<sup>228</sup> The act curtailed the right to strike. This signaled his turn away from the working classes and his abandonment of the Black masses that had supported him and that he had previously championed. In an effort to coopt and control mass mobilization, he began to insist that the leadership of grass root organizations come from the intelligentsia. To maintain power, and with international resources at his disposal, Williams abdicated his commitment to workers: “When protests among the oil and sugar industries occurred in 1975, Williams called out the defense force and police to ensure that sugar, gasoline, and petroleum products were available to the public.” He terrorized the radical OWTU by arresting its officers, seizing its documents, and attempting to destroy its headquarters.<sup>229</sup> This was a far cry from the Williams who had championed the rights of the colonized and the oppressed. The longer he remained in office, the more his legitimacy declined among the Black working classes. His support from the Black masses began to plummet especially in the face of a sinking economy and negative growth rates that became particularly problematic in the beginning of the 1970s. He

was forced to turn directly to coercion and effective control of political behavior to maintain power. As a result, in elections held in 1971, only 28% of the electorate turned out to vote.<sup>230</sup>

With Williams's shift away from anti-imperial anticolonialism rooted in his critique of political economy, he became increasingly dependent on Culturalism as an instrumentality of control and domination and as a condition for the survival of his regime. According to Gordon Rohler, "'Culture' as perceived by Williams as 'commandment' of the intellectual ruling class became a manipulable lever in an elaborate machinery of patronage on the part of the controlling elite and clientism on the part of the common folk."<sup>231</sup> He used the state to assimilate folk culture into nationalist identity in order to challenge growing Black Power counterculture and to undercut the latter's political potency.<sup>232</sup> According to David Hinds, "Williams, through a combination of pragmatism and circumstances beyond his control, opted for an open dependency in which the state retained some degree of influence, and therefore he did not alienate the local business class or the forces of international capital. But this came with a price: he became the target of the gathering Black Power Movement, which charged him with neglecting his nation's poor."<sup>233</sup> Ken Boodhoo adds, "by the late 1960s, Williams had severely moderated his original position on black nationalism and the upliftment of the ordinary people, and had acquiesced to pressures from the business sector. He firmly believed that it was up to him to determine the cultural direction, and that he knew what was best for the society."<sup>234</sup>

Williams's strategy for governance and his economic policies resulted in the dispossession of the masses—the very dispossession that, as an intellectual, he revealed and criticized. On March 4, 1970, the Black masses staged an uprising against him. The rebellion was organized as a Black Power movement formed in response to a spike in poverty and against his suppression of leftist politics.<sup>235</sup> Leaders of the movement challenged what they saw as Williams's capitulation to white imperialists and his rejection of radical leaders like CLR James and Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Turé), a Trinidadian-born civil rights activist in the United States who was one of the leaders of the radical Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and who was credited with the call for Black Power.<sup>236</sup> Urban demonstrators were joined by members of the the Trinidad and Tobago Regiment who staged a revolt and refused an order to deploy against protestors. Williams retaliated against the movement in a campaign of incredible coercive force and repression.<sup>237</sup> He used the accusation that the movement was trying to overthrow the government to arrest its leaders and to charge 87 soldiers and 54 militants with treason and sedition.<sup>238</sup> His regime was forced to rely on the government's absolute control over the coast guard and the police to retain power. Armed with weapons supplied by the U.S., the two security agencies managed successfully to restore political order.<sup>239</sup> Williams's ability to retain power was predicated on his ability to convince the population that the United States would intervene on behalf of his regime and provide him with military support:

The regime also called upon international allies to shore up its coercive power. In response, there was a veiled threat of US military intervention in support of the Williams government. On the very day of the mutiny, a United States naval task force appeared offshore amid reports of its declared willingness to come to the regime's assistance. This highlights the role of actual or potential international coercive intervention as a major factor in the conditions which determine whether a regime survives or not. International alliances can, therefore, come with the guarantee of protection in a crisis.<sup>240</sup>



This alignment with imperial capitalist forces, coupled with the arrest of Black Power leaders and the declaration of a state of emergency, served to expose a reality of the postcolonial state's role in serving and protecting the interests of international capital that are pitted against the masses. With its transition to independence under Eric Williams, Trinidad had become the ideal example of this. The powerful foreign interests against which Williams had mobilized in his early political career had become transformed under his leadership into the regime's most important constituency. His treatment of the Black Power rebellion signaled his abandonment of anti-imperial anticolonial politics for pragmatic anticolonialism in the successful deployment of regimes of discipline and control by the United States. A form of bourgeois nationalism, typical of Caribbean postcolonial practice, was instituted that demanded the sacrifice of the Black masses to white international capital, and the country's submission to foreign interests. In that way, antiblackness became appended to Williams's antiradical anticommunist politics.

### **W. Arthur Lewis and Developmentalist Anticolonialism**

Sir William Arthur Lewis is considered to be one of the fathers of development economics. Born in Castries, St. Lucia on January 23, 1915,<sup>241</sup> Lewis went on to teach at the University of Manchester and Princeton University (where he was the first black professor),<sup>242</sup> advise the Ghanaian government on economic policy; serve as the Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies and the founding President of the Caribbean Development Bank; and to be knighted by Queen Elizabeth in 1963.<sup>243</sup> Lewis grew up as part of the Black educated urban middle stratum that preferred the tastes, aspirations and opinions of Europe.<sup>244</sup> This preference continued for the duration of his life, and became evident in the Culturalist—albeit anticolonial—logics of his development policies. According to Lloyd Best, “[Lewis] was epistemologically an Englishman; he was brought up by Ricardian and Smithian theories and he was Stanley Jevons professor in the University of Manchester. He had to be an Englishman. And his great achievement was that he was an English economist who understood what economic transformation had been in England, and he developed a model that was suitable to most countries in the world. The country it was not suitable for was the Wet Indies, the Caribbean.”<sup>245</sup> His aversion to radical politics and belief in meritocracy, intellectual discipline, and humanism<sup>246</sup> was very much compatible with the liberal and pragmatic anticolonialism of the United States.

Like U.S. anticolonial policy, Lewis preferred gradual reform to radicalism or confrontation.<sup>247</sup> Lewis found colonialism to be immoral given its barbaric pursuit of economic gain; its hypocritical racialist ideology that could combat Nazism on the one hand, but subjugate and discriminate against people of color on the other; and its disingenuous discourse of ‘civilizing the natives’ that served to rationalize greed and dispossession.<sup>248</sup> He found colonialism particularly odious because it fomented racial hatred, barred and allocated employment and opportunity based on color instead of merit, and undermined prosperity in the territories.<sup>249</sup> Colonial administration precluded class-based confraternity across racial lines; neglected the public sector based on the idea that those who would benefit from these services were inferior and underserving; racialized differences in wellbeing; and resulted in the internalization of inferiority by the subordinate group.<sup>250</sup> Lewis asserted: “Every educated African and colonial knows that he can get the highest qualifications and competence, but he cannot get the highest jobs. He is bound to have to work under a white man who may be even inferior in ability.”<sup>251</sup> In other word, colonialism undermined liberal ideas of a basic social safety net merit, equality of opportunity, and meritocracy.

However, the biggest problem with colonialism was its impediment to development. Akin to the United States, Lewis's anticolonialism was based on economic concerns, especially impediments to market development. Colonial policies discouraged the spread of new techniques, technology, and seeds to peasants; opposed land settlement and precluded land redistribution; dispossessed peasants of their land; impoverished the subsistence/agricultural sector; forced proletarian labor; imposed taxes that induced work in the capitalist sector; and implemented economic policies that were biased in favor of colonial planters, colonial officials, mineral magnates.<sup>252</sup> These were exacerbated by the closed nature of overseas markets to, and protectionism against, tropical products. Furthermore, directly following World War II, the colonies in Africa and the Caribbean were expected to export whatever they were able to in order to secure foreign exchange for the Metropole.<sup>253</sup> These policies undermined the possibility of diversification, development, industrialization, and growth in colonial territories. Lewis was anticolonial inasmuch as he believed that states of the Global South, in the absence of colonial imposition and under the proper economic conditions, could compete with developed states and participate on equal footing in the capitalist world-economy. It was the colonial relationship that destroyed and hampered the productive capacity of the former colonies. Lewis attributed inequality to colonialism, but not to capitalist accumulation itself. In that way, his anticolonial developmentalism was fundamentally compatible with that of the United States. It was also compatible with the U.S. position inasmuch as it foregrounded growth and other economic concerns. This is underscored in his explanations as to why postcolonial countries needed foreign aid for development in keeping with their need for a "big push." He pointed to the incapacity of developing countries to save despite high rates of world trade in the 1950s-1960s. He advocated for higher rates of growth to be achieved through higher investment ratios in keeping with the demands stemming from a population explosion and the expensive cost of rapid urbanization.<sup>254</sup> In other words, his was a developmentalist logic rooted in a neoclassical notion of economic growth that was used to explain and support the need for foreign aid. This notion reproduced a Culturalist understandings of development based on meritocracy, asceticism, and efficiency. In other words, it demanded the adoption of the cultural underpinnings of the West. According to Norman Girvan "Lewis regarded himself as an anti-imperialist... his... was... an anti-imperialism of self-confidence and self-responsibility."<sup>255</sup> This form of anticolonialism emphasized liberal narratives of capacity, performance, and modernization, that foreclosed the possibility of endogenous forms of development and economic organization.

This form of anticolonialism, rooted in Western liberalism became embedded in his postcolonial policy. In its reproduction of Western racial and cultural assumptions Lewis made a link between democracy and development. He believed that postcolonial African leaders lacked the capacity for democratic leadership, and this explained, in part, the failure of their countries to develop. In their method of governance, they made their economies incapable of savings and accumulation and unsafe for investment. In a 1965 article, he wrote that the vast majority of West African presidents and premiers preferred hatred, violence, and charismatic appeal and had no commitment to or experience of democracy. This he attributed in part to the fact that most of these politicians were not acquainted with European history, and therefore "kn[e]w no better." This is not withstanding his acknowledgment that these leaders modeled themselves after European Governors and district commissioners, and that they were simply reproducing the "autocracy" of the British and French colonial administration.<sup>256</sup> This is where his contradiction rests, and where the American appeal is vested. Because the United States was not a colonial power (ostensibly), it was not tainted by autocracy. In other words, Lewis assumed the

development of democratic practice in Europe was what was to be emulated given its relationship to European development; it was democracy that separated it from its colonial project. Lewis's logic implied for Africans a (cultural) predisposition to autocracy. He advocated for education as the only means of overcoming this predisposition, and for the process of modernization to unfold, partly spurred on by increased agricultural production in Africa.<sup>257</sup> Without (Western) education, Lewis assumed that the African state would continue its sole reliance on coercion, manipulation, and suppression.<sup>258</sup> He assumed that democracy would allay "tribal consciousness," overcome the politicization of regional economic difference, reduce over-centralization, and ameliorate the authoritarian African personality, the latter consistent with the African leaders' "journey through the Communist movement."<sup>259</sup> In this, he effectuated a link between communism and Black traditional culture consistent with the similar link made in the anticommunism/antiradicalism/antiblackness discourse in the United States. In effect, Lewis attributed the failure of economic development and modernization in most West African countries to the failure of democracy, "too much politics," inefficiency, and corruption.<sup>260</sup> In his opinion, this combination of deficiencies was peculiar to Africa. Lewis put the onus wholly on inadequate African leadership, evading the role of the former colonial powers, the United States, and the Cold War in shaping, sustaining, and manipulating the political conditions of "democracy." He argued that Africans passively "inherited" this tradition, deftly linking African culture (Blackness) with colonialism and communism in a way that was consistent with the American agenda for an imposed and negotiated neocolonialism. Lewis's understanding of West African politics, which was the object of his analysis, was predicated on the Culturalist logic that the African way of being (personality, method of organization, lack of education, etc.) was antithetical to development, which he assumed should be the ultimate goal of political organization.

Along with democracy, Lewis was a staunch advocate of federalism. For the Commonwealth Caribbean, he argued for federation to "economize the cost of infrastructure," and to offset small market size by manufacturing products primarily for export on a regional basis.<sup>261</sup> He argued that international financial agencies would be more willing to lend to a large regional bloc rather than to several small islands. But even here, he made a link between democracy and development since federation was the condition that would ensure good governance. He wrote, "The only safeguard against [corruption] is Federation... The Federal Government must be responsible for law and order, and for redress of financial or other abuses. Thus the Colonial Office could not in good conscience make each little island independent on its own. To do so would be to betray the liberties of the West Indian people."<sup>262</sup> For West Africa, federalism and its inevitable practice of democracy was a means to overcome tribalism and the undemocratic imperatives of "family, village and tribe [that] are West Africa's primary social units" and of single-party nationalist autocracy.<sup>263</sup> Federalism would facilitate power sharing among tribes and small states in a central government. It would also prevent the practice of imposing heavy taxes on richer regions of a state in order to subsidize the poorer regions engaged in inefficient economic practices.<sup>264</sup> Lewis's model amounted to what Arend Lijphart termed "consociational democracy," which was effectively elite domination facilitated through co-operation at the upper echelons of society to counteract disintegrative tendencies within the state. This included cooperation among political and economic elites and labor leaders who come together out of "political necessity for economic development."<sup>265</sup> Lewis's idea of federation, predicated upon Western modes of political organization, departed significantly from the latter's representative form because of its advocacy of power sharing among a minority elite that would

dictate and determine the economic and political organization of society for the majority of people. Lewis's conception of federation was not predicated on the "modifi[cation] and adapt[ation] [of] indigenous consensual cultures to suit the requirements of modern government,"<sup>266</sup> but rather on the type of government that would create the conditions for developmentalist economic policies. In the case of both the West Indies and West Africa, his advocacy for federation was meant to check inherent proclivities for corruption, instability, and political abuse. Like his advocacy for democracy, Lewis's belief in federalism was predicated upon Culturalist/racist assumptions about Africans and African descendants.

Lewis's belief in developmentalism arose in the context of the Great Depression, in which faith in economists and the free market had been destroyed. There was an intensification of anti-imperialism and a flourishing of nationalism. These were the conditions that produced the Cold War contentions.<sup>267</sup> Lewis was a product of the time, with all the contradictions of Fabianism that influenced his politics evident in his ideas. These included his advocacy for planning and state intervention in the Third World and his Culturalist assumptions about the necessity for authority and rule by the morally and developmentally superior over their colonized inferiors. For him, the former became translated into the postcolonial elite. Such translation was consistent with the demands of development economics that proliferated in the immediate aftermath of WWII, and that emphasized the severing of colonial ties. Lewis's definitive work, "The Theory of Economic Growth," written in 1955, helped to rekindle interest in development economics.<sup>268</sup> He was primarily concerned with the problem of growth in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean, and the ways in which these newly independent nations could become developed through state planning that would strengthen their weak and failing participation in international markets.<sup>269</sup> As a development economist that advocated a national development model, he believed the role of the state was to create the conditions for stability, full employment, and industrialization. It was meant to correct market failures, discover new markets, support infant industries so that they could develop the means to compete globally,<sup>270</sup> to make the free market more rational, and to make newly independent nations more competitive. It was also meant to provide basic social services to keep industrial workers in urban areas and to create a healthy and productive workforce.<sup>271</sup> In addition to a state that increased the capacity to accumulate, industrialize, and produce, an educated local elite was essential to the successful implementation of development because, "[t]he only people that [could] transform the colonies into anything worthwhile [were] the educated Natives, intelligentsia."<sup>272</sup> A class of modernizing industrial capitalists was necessary to implement internal policies that conditioned favorable responses to opportunities provided by trade, and to sustain growth through technological change.<sup>273</sup>

Lewis's belief in a Black elite pertained not only to development in the Global South, but also to Black Power in the United States. He believed that "the measure of whether we are winning our battle is how many of us rise to the middle and to the top."<sup>274</sup> He believed that Blacks should strive to reach the top of corporations and other institutions through higher education (at elite white universities); make inroads in skilled, foreman, supervisory, and white collar positions; become top members of the integrated establishment; and compete with whites on their terms since Blacks were a perpetual minority in America.<sup>275</sup> Furthermore, Black Studies and separate Black institutions within white colleges and universities, according to Lewis, were a disadvantage because employers would not hire "students that emerge from this process," and dedicating study to overcoming a racial inferiority complex was antithetical to the development of relevant skills.<sup>276</sup> His historicist assertion that, "a vigorous people, on the way up, has visions of its future and cares next to nothing about its pasts," applied the modernization,

developmentalist, and meritocratic logics inhered in his Global South development economics to the African-American context. Furthermore, his belief that Blacks in America would not be saved by Black capitalism or by a Marxist revolution, and therefore should focus on “climbing the ladder” in the dominant society,<sup>277</sup> complimented his policy that the Third World could not develop outside of the capitalist world-economy, and therefore must rely on multinationals, foreign investment, and technology of the developed countries; and must increase production through improvements in productive efficiency in order to be competitive in the global market.

Lewis rejected the idea of a socialist transformation of Third World economies, proposing instead a strong drive toward industrialization that would make these economies competitive in the global market. His concern was less with cultivating trade between postcolonial countries than with enhancing the terms of trade between developed and developing countries.<sup>278</sup> He advocated comparative advantage, economies of scale, industrialization by invitation modeled after Puerto Rico (which came to be known as the “Lewis model”),<sup>279</sup> economic diversification, and the provision of incentives to developed countries by developing countries to attract investment in the pursuit of growth. He believed strongly that reliance on foreign entrepreneurship and investment was positive for developing economies because it could drive growth, especially in the manufacturing sector where multinational corporations were in the position to provide sophisticated technology; provide access to domestic markets in the industrialized countries through export promotion; and most crucially, create the conditions for the exports of manufactured goods to overseas markets. He wrote, “I have never felt that LDCs should hold back the diversification of their manufacturing sectors from fear of multinationals, since in independent countries they operate on the country’s terms or not at all.”<sup>280</sup> He understandably received “much criticism for this stand” because multinational corporations would only be interested in investing in the Global South under conditions of exploitation where they could derive increased profits.<sup>281</sup> Corporate profits derived through increases in productivity and stagnant or incommensurate rises in wage rates were more important, in Lewis’s conception, than high wages and domestic demand and consumption. While Lewis’s developmentalism challenged colonial assumptions that Black and formerly colonized people needed direct European governance to develop, it also represented an instantiation of capitalist imperialism by giving precedence to international capital and technology and foreign investment in its drive toward modernity and in a quest for approximation of the capitalist West.

Lewis’s most important contribution to development economics was his “dual sector thesis,” which theorized growth (synonymous with development in this case<sup>282</sup>) in the context of unlimited supplies of labor.<sup>283</sup> He argued that, contrary to dominant economic theory that held that the West Indies should export primary products and import manufactured goods, the islands should industrialize based on the export of labor-intensive manufacturing, given their condition of unlimited supplies of labor.<sup>284</sup> The premise of his thesis was that “long-term economic growth [was] possible at the current wage anchored down on a subsistence level, due to the unlimited supplies of labour from the subsistence sector... economic growth was desirable, and... unlimited supplies of labour available at a subsistence wage ma[de] rapid capital accumulation possible.”<sup>285</sup> Unlike dominant neoclassical theorists, Lewis considered agriculture to be the dominant non-capitalist/subsistence sector that could reallocate labor to the “modern” sector until the turning point was reached. This would result in equilibrium where labor surplus became transformed, producing increases in the agricultural sector and transformation to industrial capitalist agriculture.<sup>286</sup> According to Lewis, “An ‘unlimited supply of labor’ [would] keep wages down, producing cheap coffee in the first case and high profits in the second case. The

result [was] a dual (national or world) economy, where one part is a reservoir of cheap labour for the other. The unlimited supply of labour derives ultimately from population pressure...<sup>287</sup> The Caribbean, especially, had a large pool of surplus labor, or redundant laborers with zero marginal productivity that effectively disguise unemployment and that cannot be absorbed. Lewis believed that low productivity workers in the agricultural subsistence/traditional sector should be moved to the commercial/industrial sector to increase efficiency and comparative advantage in labor-intensive goods. In other words, they could outcompete capital intensive labor in the industrialized countries with some increases in efficiency due to education. Those who remained in the subsistence/traditional sector were expected to increase their hours to maintain levels of food production in the context of a decreased labor supply<sup>288</sup> until they were forced to become more efficient. Lewis believed that this exploitation of massively underutilized labor would create the conditions for a self-sustaining process of industrialization.<sup>289</sup> The basis of Lewis's model was that "capital accumulation in the industrial sector is the engine of growth,"<sup>290</sup> and "economic development is best understood as the expansion of the modern capitalist sector at the expense of the traditional sector."<sup>291</sup>

Lewis was interested in transitioning from a dualistic to a one-sector, "modern" economy based on technology and industrialization as the engine of growth.<sup>292</sup> Thus inherent in this model of development was the Eurocentric and Culturalist understanding that the traditional/subsistence sector was an obstacle to sustainable growth that needed to be overcome and overhauled. This was because a state "which [was] ruled by peasants may be happy and prosperous, but it [was] not likely to show such a rapid accumulation."<sup>293</sup> In other words, the "well being" and "prosperity" of the majority of the population and the subsistence sector would be vastly improved through a move from the traditional sector. He determined "well being" by the fact that they would be able to produce much more cheaply, and would be more competitive working in labor intensive industries that would have a comparative advantage over capital intensive industries that demanded more investment in technology, capital, and education. This model had racialized implications because it pertained specifically to the Global South, where there was heavy population pressure on scarce productive land.<sup>294</sup> Racialized subjects—the group that largely constitutes the subsistence sector—were deemed less valuable and important than (white and elite) groups who have the capacity and wherewithal to accumulate. The former way of life was basically disposable because it did not lend itself to capitalist accumulation. Thus the assertion that "given the fact that the balance was utterly against sustained growth of food production in Africa and in other tropical colonies, [Lewis's] policy prescription for those regions had to be decisively that of 'agriculture-first,' and more precisely, 'peasant-first,'"<sup>295</sup> was misleading. Agriculture and the peasantry came "first" insofar as they were harnessed to the proliferation of the industrial sector, thus creating the conditions for the eradication of traditional/indigenous economic forms because the traditional forms were based on subsistence. Lewis's asserted that in "any programme for [post]colonial development agriculture must come first [because] an increased output of foodstuffs should be one of the principal objects of economic policy,"<sup>296</sup> and this would only occur with increases in agricultural production and productivity imposed by declining supplies of labor in the sector. This attests to an understanding of the traditional sector as being relevant only in its relationship to the modern economy, for its capacity to provide food and inputs for the industrial sector, and in its capacity to be mobilized on behalf of the development effort. In other words, as relatively labor intensive agro-industrial production.

The peasant was also important insofar as s/he was able to supply the demand for workers in the capitalist sector thereby counteracting the need for higher wages.<sup>297</sup> Labor surpluses in the agricultural sector moved terms of trade in favor of industry by supplying cheap labor and cheap inputs lowering costs of production, particularly through lower wages.<sup>298</sup> Higher wages retarded capital accumulation, so the rural/agricultural sector was important for urban bias by maintaining a pool of cheap labor and providing cheap food and other goods to the urban workers and manufacturers. Relatedly, the entire population of developing countries was expected to endure an increased national and international maldistribution of income as “labor shift[ed] from an equally distributed agricultural to a less equally distributed non-agricultural sector,” which would lead to a worsening of income gaps until the turning point was reached and wages rose. A logical implication stemming from Lewis’s position is that Black/racialized subaltern populations in the Global South were valued primarily for their cheap labor in the service of industries organized around technology and innovation produced in developed countries. This was the sole rationale for the restructuring of postcolonial economies. In effect, Black/racialized populations had to be willing to accept the terms of their immiseration in the name of development.

Arthur Lewis’s liberal anticolonialism and development economics reflected and respecified the central role played by the Black in global capitalist accumulation and the cultural justifications for the axial division of labor necessitated by it. Such justification served to elide and render invisible the true causes of Black material dispossession, and to negate the possibility of endogenous forms of economic organization. This developmentalist logic was asserted on cultural grounds of development inferiority rooted in traditionalism and inefficiency. For Lewis, it was through these culturally specified conditions that the Black would be transformed into a modern subject.

### **Anti-Internationalism**

In the 1930s and the 1950s—two of the most tumultuous decades of American hegemony—international solidarity proved especially threatening to the colonial and imperial world order. A fundamental crisis of capitalism emerged in the 1930s with the onset of the great depression that raised doubts about the ideological and practical legitimacy of colonialism<sup>299</sup> stemming from the inordinate suffering experienced by colonized and racialized subjects engendered by the crisis. In response to the breakdown of the international trading and monetary system, there were mass destabilizing labor riots throughout the Caribbean and Africa, including in British Guiana, Trinidad, Jamaica,<sup>300</sup> South Africa, Rhodesia, the Gambia, Madagascar and Nigeria.<sup>301</sup> The vulnerabilities of colonized subjects to the effects of the Great Depression were forged in the economic organization of colonialism where surpluses earned in the colonies through the production of one or a few commodities were repatriated back to the metropolises. This left colonial economies undiversified, underinvested, and lacking infrastructure necessary to create a cushion to support the needs of the colonial subjects in the face of economic collapse.<sup>302</sup> The effects were devastating to a colonized population whose welfare was already severely compromised by colonial dependency. The depression also had the effect of curtailing migration to the United States and Europe that had served as a safety valve. Increased population pressure, mounting unemployment, and diminishing access to much-needed remittance income aggravated the already harsh conditions of colonial dependence.<sup>303</sup> In the United States, depression-induced unemployment impacted Black workers greater than it did whites, given their occupational status “as a proletarian race.” They were concentrated in “unskilled and ‘marginal’ jobs, in domestic

and personal service, and in the ‘prince and pauper’ industries.” Additionally, the “precarious” Black bourgeoisie began to atrophy during the Depression in the face of the appropriation of “Negro jobs” by whites as a result of the initiative of employers, workers, unions, legislation, and in the face of racial violence.<sup>304</sup>

Against this backdrop, a cadre of colonial elites in Africa and the Caribbean, and Black elites in the United States, began to mount critiques of imperialism, colonialism, and racial hierarchy.<sup>305</sup> They argued that imperial rule had resulted in economic decline, political decay, and social dislocation,<sup>306</sup> and that “because most black people were workers, their subjugation had its moorings in relations of economic exploitation as well as racial domination... [and] African [people] across class suffered racial-national oppression.”<sup>307</sup> They “agreed on a platform of anti-colonialism, working-class focus, black vanguardism in struggle, and international orientation.”<sup>308</sup> The elite status and cosmopolitanism of these Black intellectuals and leaders allowed them the opportunity to come together through conferences, meetings, and various methods of correspondence to discuss their common condition and to come up with ways to challenge domination and oppression. Such collaboration became a source of empowerment for African descendants in the metropolises and in the periphery. This did not go unnoticed, and it became the object of surveillance and discipline, particularly by the United States. According to Lisa Brock, “[I]ssues of internationalism [were] seen as a dangerous site of struggle, [and] the State Department moved rapidly to undermine radical international labor linkages and the terms of solidarities between African-Americans, Africans and other oppressed peoples.”<sup>309</sup> The danger of Black internationalism in the 1930s was compounded by the support and advocacy of the Comintern, starting in 1928, for full equality for African Americans, the right to self-determination for Blacks in the U.S. South, and the increasing influence of Blacks like Cyril Briggs, Richard B. Moore, and Otto Huiswood in the CPUSA.<sup>310</sup> Because Blacks from the United States represented, in the eyes of those in power, a “far more advanced Negro proletariat,”<sup>311</sup> their identification with other workers of African ancestry throughout the world was seen to threaten and to subvert not only the racial order of the United States, but also the imperial and colonial system as a whole.

Similarly, given the context of the Cold War and increasing agitation for decolonization in the 1950s, the U.S. state began police what they perceived to be linkages between Black internationalism, radicalism, and Communist subversion. On April 27, 1957, Vice-President Richard Nixon prepared a report for President Dwight D. Eisenhower, entitled, “The Emergence of Africa.” Nixon concluded the report with the claim that Africa was growing increasingly important to the future of the United States and the Free World, so developing relations with that area needed to be assigned a higher priority.<sup>312</sup> Nixon noted that one of the impediments to increased U.S. influence in the region was “the skillful propaganda... [of] enemies of freedom” about the treatment of minority races in the United States. African leaders had a “false impression” of racial prejudice in the U.S. that resulted in “irreparable damage to the cause of freedom which is at stake.”<sup>313</sup> He recommended that the administration get at the root of the problem by taking the necessary steps to ensure “orderly progress” toward the eradication of discrimination in the U.S., and do a more effective job of “telling the true story” of the progress that was being made toward that end to give the Africans “a true picture of [domestic] conditions as they really [were].”<sup>314</sup> This position elucidates the administration’s position on internationalism, radicalism, and race. For Nixon, it was the Communists (“enemies of freedom”) that were using race to embarrass the United States on the international stage. Thus, the U.S. needed to address racism domestically—albeit gradually—and impress the virtues of



progressivism upon the Africans in order to combat the spread of radicalism. In other words, the transnational reach of the Communist Party, and the construction of American racism as an international problem posed a fundamental problem for the United States in the Third World. Directly addressing communism, Nixon asserted that Africa was a prime target of the international communist movement, which was asserting itself as the true champion of independence, equality, and economic development. He continued,

The communist threat underlines the wisdom and necessity of our assisting the countries in Africa to maintain their independence and to alleviate the conditions of want and instability on which communism breeds. The importance of Africa to the strength and stability of the Free World is too great for us to underestimate or to become complacent about this danger without taking every step within our power to assist the countries of this area to maintain their effective independence in the face of danger.<sup>315</sup>

Nixon was essentially making the argument that if African states allied with Communist countries, this would not only undermine their sovereignty, but it would also destabilize the “Free World”—that is, countries allied with the United States. International cooperation between Communists and Africans/Blacks came to be viewed as dangerous and potentially destabilizing. This was the rationalization for a policy aimed at the containment of communism on the one hand, and intervention into African politics and economics on the other. The entrance of African countries into the international community of nations required extensive surveillance and control because if they went in the wrong direction, U.S. national security could be in jeopardy. According to Nixon, one way to ensure that Africans wouldn’t be seduced by radical internationalism was to “familiarize” them with the culture, technology, ideals, aspirations, traditions, and institutions of the “American character.” Africans could be brought to the United States for study and travel so that the United States could get to know them, and they could get to know the United States.<sup>316</sup> His suggestion of cultural indoctrination underscored the racist, antiradical, and anti-internationalist assumption that supported an understanding that Africans could only resist radicalism and Communism by becoming culturally American, or by taking up American methods of organizing their state and society. Because Africa was of geostrategic importance in the 1950s, the United States had to make every attempt to ensure that Black radical internationalism and its emphasis on antiracism, socialism, self-determination, etc. did not take root there. Nixon’s report to Eisenhower was indicative of the anxieties that shaped U.S. statist practice in the 1950s: the government’s apprehension about decolonizing (Black) nations and their (in)ability to resist communism and radicalism, and the perception that Black internationalists and their “propaganda” needed to be surveilled, controlled, and counteracted.

### **George Padmore and Pan-African Internationalism**

Malcolm Nurse arrived in the United States from Trinidad in 1924 to study medicine. By 1934, George Padmore—the name Nurse assumed in 1928 after joining the Workers Party (the Communist Party of the United States) in 1927<sup>317</sup>—had been barred from re-entering the United States. A preeminent internationalist, Padmore had lived in Vienna, Hamburg, and Moscow; traveled on behalf of the Communist Party and the International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers (ITUC-NW); and organized the first Conference of Negro Workers in Hamburg, Germany in 1930.<sup>318</sup> In 1934, he was formally expelled from the Communist Party and moved to London. In the course of his travel, Padmore developed extensive contacts on all continents.

Such contacts were particularly well developed in West Indian and African migrant communities in the United States and Europe. Internationalism/transnationalism became the defining feature of Padmore's politics:

Padmore considered the importance of his life in transnational terms—he believed that what was most important about his life was his experience of two major transnational ideological movements of the twentieth century: communism and pan-Africanism. Political citizenship was never confined to the nation-state for Padmore. He displayed no strong national allegiances at any point in his life, yet remained highly political. This was undoubtedly the combination of his sense of 'citizenship' in a black diaspora, and partly his training within the international communist movement.<sup>319</sup>

Given this cosmopolitanism, Padmore's political and intellectual influence was enormous. He became one of the top "comrades" in charge of "supervising the activities of the world's Black peoples."<sup>320</sup>

For Padmore, communism and Pan-Africanism had similar foundational principles, including anticolonialism, internationalism, anti-imperialism, and organization around the issue of exploited laborers.<sup>321</sup> He "was an internationalist and his ability to effectively intervene in the movement for decolonization was based on principles that had been shaped by his Marxist education and activism in the Communist International... his links with the British Labour Party and British socialists, and the political experience... working with the international trade union and anti-colonial movements."<sup>322</sup> His embrace of communism, Marxism, and leftist politics provided the foundation for his move beyond the narrow confines of Black nationalism toward a theory of Pan-Africanism that welded together the issues of race and class.<sup>323</sup> While communism provided him with an ideological framework to work for Black emancipation, antiracism and Black liberation were the driving forces of his praxis:

Padmore joined the Communist Party because he felt that this organisation would better facilitate the liberation of all persons of African descent from the savaging of capitalism, colonialism and racial discrimination. As a communist, Padmore clearly understood the primacy of the class struggle; however, he was not the typical doctrinaire communist, because he recognized the uniqueness of the African struggle and the need to emphasize the racial dimensions of this struggle to highlight some of the problems confronting persons of African ancestry. Indeed, he seemed to be suggesting 'that racial oppression involves issues and systems that cannot be submerged in a critique of class exploitation alone.'<sup>324</sup>

Padmore believed that "the first revolution was a racial one aimed at white imperialists" and the second revolution "was a class-based one to be organized by the [Communist] party shortly after the first revolution had put local rulers in power."<sup>325</sup> He considered race to be the essential factor in the eradication of imperialism. It was his confrontation of the racial problem that made Padmore a source of consternation for the United States and the Soviet Union alike. It drove him to mobilize Black people worldwide against structures of domination.

As a Leninist dedicated to "the struggle for liberation and social emancipation of the Colonial and Coloured peoples,"<sup>326</sup> Padmore was highly critical of imperialism and colonialism.<sup>327</sup> "From the 1920s... he showed that he could build a Pan-African platform with

large or limited resources, [and] could work with people from different ideological, racial and class backgrounds.”<sup>328</sup> He was able to turn the sense of disillusionment brought on by the turmoil of the Great Depression and the devastation it wrought on racialized and colonized peoples into a basis for mobilization. Indeed, when he assumed the editorship of the *Negro Worker* in 1930, he explained that his objective was to “discuss and analyse the day-to-day problems of the Negro Toilers and connect their struggles with the international struggles and problems of workers.”<sup>329</sup> And, according to CLR James, he also aimed to develop an awareness among Blacks that their struggle against exploitation was an international movement.<sup>330</sup> Padmore believed that it was the job of African youth, workers, toiling masses, revolutionaries, and intellectuals to establish unity among Black peoples throughout the world and to adopt a platform of struggle.<sup>331</sup> If they did not, they would continue to be slaves who were “despised, humiliated, and denied justice and human rights,” to be used as “cannon fodder to all the quicker hasten racial extermination.”<sup>332</sup>

Padmore organized the International Conference of Negro Workers in 1930 to create a forum for the discussion of the problems confronting the African world due of the Great Depression. The topics included: “trade unionism, the expropriation of land by the imperialist bandits in Africa, the imposition of Head and Poll Taxes, the enslavement of toilers through Pass Laws and other anti-labour and racial legislation in Africa, lynching, peonage and segregation in the United States and unemployment among Africans worldwide.”<sup>333</sup> Delegates from South Africa, the Gold Coast, Gambia, Nigeria, the West Indies, and the United States attended.<sup>334</sup> The sense of threat that this Black internationalist conference posed to colonial/imperial powers became evident when some delegates were denied visas; some were arrested; and the British Labour government banned the conference from being held in London.<sup>335</sup> In the United States, meetings organized for the election of delegates to the conference were raided, the police intimidated workers, and spies infiltrated gatherings to harass participants and to gather names of elected or nominated delegates so that they could be blacklisted.<sup>336</sup> The conference, like Padmore’s politics generally, was particularly threatening because of its international scope:

The Conference in no uncertain terms declared that the struggle of the Negro toilers was part of the international revolutionary class struggle, it declared its solidarity with and interest in the Indian revolution, the Chinese revolution, the revolutionary movement in the capitalist countries. No compromise was made on any class political issues. Resolutions were discussed and adopted on the ‘Economic Struggles of the Negro Masses,’ ‘Forced Labour’ ‘The Negro and the War Danger,’ ‘Lynching’... ‘International Solidarity,’ [and] ‘Colour Laws.’<sup>337</sup>

International solidarity challenged, among other things, formal colonial administration, Jim Crow, labor exploitation, and racial hierarchy, all of which provided the basis for the white supremacist world order.

In the 1930s, the threat of communism in Eastern Europe and of socialism in Western Europe had not yet become inexorable polarities in global capitalist discourse. As such, for the United States, Padmore’s communism as such was not the problem; the issue was that, given his international scope and influence, he had the ability to mobilize the sentiment of the dispossessed masses against the racialized capitalist order. Black responses to the Great Depression raised concerns regarding the possibility of Black national and domestic assertions of equality to destabilize racial hierarchies within nations and the racialized division of labor among nations. Thus, the danger Padmore posed rested in his intention to “help the Negro toilers liberate

themselves from the imperialist yoke,” to “fight against racial barriers and white chauvinism that still divide the workers to the advantage of the oppressors and exploiters,” and to “develop a spirit of internationalism among the Negroes.”<sup>338</sup> Padmore’s internationalism was also problematic because he linked the empowerment of Black people to the liberation of Asian peoples. He drew inspiration from the struggles for independence in Asia, especially India, and encouraged Afro-Asian solidarity. According to James R. Hooker, in 1930 “Padmore asserted that negro struggles were connected with the revolutionary movements in Asia. Both demonstrated the growing awareness of coloured peoples that they could control their own destinies.”<sup>339</sup> This transracial and transcultural internationalism was especially threatening to the U.S. because it attacked and discredited “racial arrogance” and white supremacist rationalizations for exploitation and domination.<sup>340</sup>

The Soviet Union responded similarly to Padmore’s Black internationalism, underscoring that communism and capitalism had not yet become polar opposites, and that the powerful countries, irrespective of ideology, found mobilization on behalf of Black empowerment and solidarity undesirable and threatening. For the U.S.S.R. the linkage Padmore made between Black self-determination, internationalism, racial solidarity, and anti-imperialism—in other words, his Pan-Africanism<sup>341</sup>—was problematic, chauvinistic, and improper. When the Comintern insisted that he condemn Japanese imperialism instead of that of the United States, France, and Britain, Padmore considered this to be essentially a demand that he ignore the links between white supremacy, racism, imperialism, and colonialism—something that he was not willing to do. The Negro Trade Union Committee was shut down in August 1933 without explanation in what he believed was a move to appease the Western powers, and specifically “not to offend the British Foreign Office which has been bringing pressure... because of the tremendous indignation [the work of the Committee had] aroused among the Negro masses in Africa, the West Indies, and other colonies against British Imperialism.”<sup>342</sup> Padmore accused the Soviet Union of changing their image “from advocates of revolution and colonial revolt to cautious proponents of European security.” The country “had become a reluctant partner in the ‘united front of white Europe against Black Africa’” in order to cultivate relationships with imperial governments and to avoid offending them.<sup>343</sup> He argued,

...the Communist International wanted us to close down our activities in order to appease the British Foreign Office, which was raising hell because Blacks in Africa were beginning to wake up. This was the second time they came along with this sort of stuff—first it was the Negro film, which was given up in order not to offend American imperialists and now it was not to offend the English... today Stalin has given up the idea of support to those who are still under the yoke, in order to win capitalist support. The next move will be to drag the U.S.S.R. into the League of Nations.”<sup>344</sup>

The Comintern accused Padmore of being a racist and a petty bourgeois nationalist<sup>345</sup> because of his dedication to the liberation of Africa, racial justice, and the organization of Black workers. This precipitated his break with the Comintern and the development of his anti-Stalinism.<sup>346</sup> He was officially expelled from the Party in February 1934 because, among other things, he “worked openly for national bourgeois organisations on behalf of Liberia, argued for Negro unity on race rather than class lines, and in general displayed an incorrect attitude towards the nationalities question.”<sup>347</sup>

Thus, Padmore's commitment to the international cause of Black liberation led not only to his expulsion from the Communist Party, but also to the refusal of the United States to allow him return. Since Padmore's residence in the United States was part of a foreign quota allocated to different countries, there were contingencies attached to his ability to remain in the country. His travel to the Soviet Union in 1929 to head the Profintern's Negro Bureau and to lecture at the University of the Toilers of the East—a center of advanced education for students from Asian and Africa<sup>348</sup>—created the conditions for the barring of his reentry into the United States.<sup>349</sup> His attempt to return on October 15, 1934 to finish his last year at Howard University was stymied when he was denied a re-entry permit.<sup>350</sup> In 1938 he was again denied a visa to enter the United States on the grounds that he was a threat to national security. He wrote in a letter to Alain Locke: "Were I a man given to vanity, I would consider it a great compliment, but my egotism is not so inflated as to make me believe that my sojourn in the United States would endanger the liberties of 330 million Americans."<sup>351</sup>

### **W.E.B. DuBois and the International Struggle for Peace and Racial Justice**

As early as 1918, W.E.B. DuBois was the target of surveillance by the U.S government for possible subversive activities. Because he demanded equal rights for Blacks during wartime, his Americanism was questioned. The Government believed that truly loyal citizens would have withheld their criticism of American society until after the Germans had been defeated. As the editor of *Crisis* magazine, which was identified as a radical publication during WWI,<sup>352</sup> DuBois had written many articles critical of the war department and condemning the treatment of Black soldiers. This incurred the displeasure of officials in the Justice Department's Bureau of Investigation<sup>353</sup> because it threatened to undermine Black loyalty for the war effort. Even though Major Joel Spingarn, military intelligence agent and board member of the NAACP, found Black grievances legitimate—not subversive—and sought to get DuBois appointed to an army commission so that he could work in military intelligence on racial issues,<sup>354</sup> DuBois's public demands for Black equality continued to be a source of suspicion for the U.S. Justice Department. This early suspicion of DuBois's loyalty to the United States would become more acute as his activism became more international and radical. Even his conciliatory "Close Ranks" editorial, in which he encouraged Negroes—much to the consternation of many Black leaders—to "forget [their] special grievances and close our ranks shoulder to shoulder with [their] own white fellow citizens and allied nations that are fighting for democracy... gladly and willingly with [their] eyes lifted to the hills,"<sup>355</sup> failed to mitigate his previous writings that had exposed the fragile racial situation to the world.

Although DuBois was offered a commission by the War Department shortly after the publication of the editorial,<sup>356</sup> and notwithstanding his role in assisting the Military Intelligence Branch (MIB) in "handling the Negro problem," MIB leaders continued to question his loyalty given his role as "the leader of a faction of his race which believes... in its equality with the white race and insists upon a recognition of this alleged right."<sup>357</sup> He was believed to be a radical with "rather extreme views on the race problem" that provoked riots and caused discontent among Blacks.<sup>358</sup> Captain Harry A. Taylor, who was generally in charge of "Negro Subversion" matters, found that articles in *Crisis* were antagonistic and radical in tone, and were meant to incite Blacks to engage in acts of violence against whites.<sup>359</sup> Eventually, this distrust of DuBois (and to a lesser extent, Spingarn) led the "proposed special propaganda programme for Blacks" to be dropped. The failure of the program—aimed at studying racial issues and encouraging Black support of the War—to materialize can be attributed to the MIB's distrust of DuBois and

their belief that his radicalism conveyed his disloyalty. DuBois came to be considered part of the problem of, and not the solution to, Black subversion because his allegiance to the United States was considered dubious at best. Even various attenuations of his militant racial position, including “Close Ranks,” could not overcome their equation of his advocacy of Black equality with anti-Americanism.

DuBois was also considered to be antagonistic to the U.S. government because of his pacifism. During WWI, pacifism and antiwar sentiment, like agitation for civil rights, was considered to be inspired by foreign propaganda, antithetical to the American war effort, and therefore seditious. Many activists who promoted peace became objects of government surveillance, were jailed, or were exiled. Black pacifists were especially targeted because historically their view of international conflicts was shaped by their assessments of whether it would bring freedom to Black people.<sup>360</sup> The injustice inherent in war inspired Black opposition to it and spawned Black pacifism that came to be considered subversive because it was seen to contain the seeds of sedition. According to Robbie Lieberman, “the government saw voices for peace and freedom, especially those of black leftists, as a serious threat to national security. It was their critique of U.S. foreign policy, the most significant dividing line among activists in this era, which set them apart. They did not ask why we were fighting for democracy abroad when we don’t have it at home—instead, they argued that the United States was not fighting for democracy at all.”<sup>361</sup> This hostility toward pacifism was even more acute during the Cold War because, “the Communist Party emphasized peace above all else during the early cold war years, years in which the Soviet Union was at a clear disadvantage in the arms race and the two superpowers fought for influence in the colonized world.”<sup>362</sup> DuBois was arrested for his advocacy of pacifism in 1950, after which he criticized the U.S. government, stating that it was “a shameful proclamation to the world that our Government considers peace alien, and its advocacy criminal.”<sup>363</sup> DuBois’s antiracism, pacifism, and internationalism exposed the contradictions of U.S. policy toward its racialized citizens and to the Third World:

These colored races, the Chinese, Japanese, Indians and Indonesians; the peoples of Africa, many of those of South America and most of those of the Caribbean, with fifteen million Negroes of the United States—these are the vast majority of mankind whose condition and future are the crucial test of the attitudes of those peoples who today demand mastery of the world... We have no time for revenge or for sneering at white men’s’ tragic mistakes. What we want is a decent world, where a man does not have to have a white skin in order to be a man. Where poverty is not a means to wealth, where ignorance is not used to prove race superiority, where sickness and death are not part of our factory system. And all this depends first on world peace. Peace is not an end. It is the gateway to real civilization... With war, we destroy even that which the toil and sacrifice of ages have builded.<sup>364</sup>

This made Black radicals, generally, and DuBois particularly, special targets of anti-pacifist repression.

Pacifism was believed to be a communist plot to undermine United States efforts to defend the world against totalitarianism. This was especially so given its international scope. In his text *Race and Radicalism*, Wilson Record, reflecting on the anticommunist characterization of pacifism, claimed that the communists were successful in persuading DuBois to “support their ‘peace’ and ‘progressive’ slogans enunciated at the outset of the Cold War;”<sup>365</sup> and that the Party

was able to fasten its hold on DuBois to “exploit [his] popularity in their ‘peace’ and race concerns.”<sup>366</sup> In reality, DuBois’s pacifism was not new and did result from communist manipulation; it became more pronounced as a result of the Cold War, particularly when the Korean War became “hot.” To him “war [was] not the method by which [differences] can successfully be settled for the good of mankind,” and “force [was] not reason and beliefs cannot be changed by suppression.”<sup>367</sup> He believed that Peace activism and advocacy was a means by which nations of the developing world could be brought together on equal footing with developed nations, thus challenging racial, colonial, and imperial distinctions that came to be associated with the West. DuBois and other pacifists often linked nuclear proliferation to the emergence of the security state, racial and economic injustice, and the reconstitution of colonialism. Most Blacks succumbed to the pressures of the Cold War and “print[ed] little criticism of the Korean War [because] the idea of peaceful coexistence became associated with communism.” Additionally, governmental suspicion of Black internationalism resulted in “the domestic freedom struggle [becoming] decoupled from foreign policy.” However, pacifists remained radically internationalist and articulated the position that war was antithetical to freedom and justice.<sup>368</sup> Black pacifism inhered in anticolonial analysis and linkage, and fomented international coalition building—both of which threatened the underpinnings of U.S. empire.

For the U.S. State, DuBois’s mobilization behalf of peace meant that he was siding with the enemies of the United States. As DuBois wrote in 1949, “We know and the saner nations know that we are not traitors nor conspirators; and far from plotting force and violence it is precisely force and violence that we bitterly oppose... [we do not] defend Communism nor Socialism, nor the American way of life... [we] promote peace!”<sup>369</sup> The fact that he defended peace over the “American way of life” effectively equated his internationalism with subversion. The Justice Department filed charges against W.E.B DuBois, officially, to determine “whether or not this organization [the Peace Information Center with which was involved] acted as an agent or in a capacity similar to that of a foreign organization or a foreign political power, whether advocating peace, advocating this, or advocating that.” The Center and DuBois were alleged to be acting on behalf of the Committee of the World Congress of the Defenders of Peace and the World Peace Council, and were therefore agents of a “foreign principal.”<sup>370</sup> But the ire of the Department was focused on the “guilt” of DuBois in the act of circulating the Stockholm Peace Petition, also known as the “ban the bomb petition.” The document emerged out of an international consensus that called for the outlawing of atomic weapons, international controls to enforce the measures, and the treatment of any countries that use atomic bombs as war criminals that had committed crimes against humanity.<sup>371</sup> In the *New York Times*, Dean Acheson called the Petition a “propaganda trick in the spurious ‘peace offensive’ of the Soviet Union,”<sup>372</sup> and HUAC accused it of proposing national suicide for the United States, and attempting to confuse and divide Americans.<sup>373</sup> It was considered a ploy to undermine resistance to Communist aggression; the first step of Soviet infiltration and invasion; and a “hoax and fraud” meant to manipulate those “hungry for peace.”<sup>374</sup> Thus, by circulating the Petition, DuBois was ostensibly engaged in spying and the commission of treason on behalf of the Soviet Union.<sup>375</sup> By labeling the Petition communist-inspired, the U.S. attempted to discredit the document in order to legitimate its use of nuclear weapons and aggression; to prevent dissent; and to justify its curtailment of freedom. In response to these official attacks, DuBois asserted that the U.S. government lacked “intimation of a desire for peace, or a realization of the horror of another world war or of sympathy with the crippled, impoverished, and dead who pay for [the]

fighting.”<sup>376</sup> In other words, it was the United States, not the Soviet Union or communism, that potentiated destabilization.

On July 13, 1950, the Peace Information Center issued a “peacegram” indicating that the Petition had received over 1.5 million signatures from forty states.<sup>377</sup> The goal of 2 million signatures was ultimately surpassed, with more than 2.5 million Americans signing it, notwithstanding the fact that many who signed the petition were criticized, arrested, physically attacked, and fired. The civil liberties of DuBois were severely curtailed and his civil rights were violated in a number of ways, including the denial of a permit to hold a peace rally by the mayor of New York—the first time this had occurred in 150 years.<sup>378</sup> Despite the slanderous campaign against it, the Petition may have been signed by more people than any other appeal in the history of the United States.<sup>379</sup> It was seen to be especially threatening to the U.S. government precisely because of the overwhelming international response to it: there were 10 million signatories in France, 60 million in China, 115 million in the Soviet Union, and 3.75 million signers in Brazil.<sup>380</sup> This international coalition posed an enormous challenge to the United States administration that had come to understand its prosperity, defense, and security as contingent upon war and preparation for it. DuBois became especially susceptible to U.S. retribution because “his antiwar organizing was exceedingly effective in the face of a hostile environment and continued to attract adherents.”<sup>381</sup> He proved to be extremely effective in mobilizing antiwar sentiment, and “by helping to formulate Black opposition to Korea, [he] provided an important link between black and white anti-war activists.”<sup>382</sup> Additionally, he was able to garner support internationally, especially in Africa, through the Council on African Affairs. His international influence was evident in the fact that when he was arrested, “protest from white and black arose, and from Europe and Asia and as well as Africa...”<sup>383</sup> His campaign for the U.S. Senate in New York in 1950 was predicated on the link between international peace, civil rights, and freedom.<sup>384</sup> For DuBois, “the war prevented fulfillment of civil rights responsibilities”<sup>385</sup> because it was entangled with support for anticommunism, the violation for civil liberties, and the continued abuse of and violence against racialized peoples and nations.<sup>386</sup>

Shortly after his campaign, DuBois was arrested for being an “unregistered foreign agent” and indicted on February 9, 1951 under the Foreign Agent Registration Act for failing to register the Peace Information Center, of which he served as chair. The organization was only in existence from April to October 1950 because of unrelenting pressure from the government. The trial proceeded even though it was disbanded before his indictment.<sup>387</sup> The government used anticommunist rhetoric in the articulation of its fear of international, antiwar cooperation. It called as one of its witnesses John Rogge, a former member of the Peace Information Center. In his testimony, he claimed that the objective of the Center was not peace, but rather to act on behalf of the Soviet Union’s foreign policy. The government intended to use his testimony to paint the Center with the taint of a “Russian and Communist controversy” so that “current popular hysteria could be aroused against [DuBois and the Center].”<sup>388</sup> The danger that prompted the fear by the government was the broad international appeal enjoyed by the Center and the effectiveness of its peace propaganda. The danger posed by DuBois’s international quest for peace to U.S. interests was underscored in the violence, repression, and manipulation deployed against him. Even though he was subsequently acquitted in the *U.S. v. Peace Information Center* case, his passport was not returned until 1958.



### **Interracialism and Antiracism**

Prior to the Cold War, Black demands for equality were considered a threat to the national security of the United States. However, such demands became accommodated through a racial reordering of society as the United States and the Soviet Union competed over spheres of influence in the postcolonial world. In 1919, the Radical Division of the Bureau of Investigations was established under J. Edgar Hoover at a time when race rioting and unrest were considered to be the result of an increased presence of radicals and radicalism in the country.<sup>389</sup> The link thus became firmly established among radicalism/communism/socialism, civil rights/antiracism/interracialism and subversion/sedition/anti-Americanism. Agitating for racial equality was seen to threaten the reputation and influence of the U.S. to such an extent that passports were denied to many Black leaders who were making arrangements to travel to the 1919 Paris Peace Conference to denounce American racism.

In November, 1918, Black spokesmen and their organisations elected delegates to travel to Paris to persuade the powers gathered to negotiate the peace settlement that racial discrimination was a world-wide problem which deserved the fullest discussion. They also hoped to draw attention to the shortcomings of America democracy. Except for a few carefully vetted individuals, Blacks who wished to travel to Europe in December, 1918, and January, 1919, were prevented from doing so by the refusal of the State Department to equip them with passports.<sup>390</sup>

This denial of passports and restriction placed on the movement of Black radicals became a prominent feature of Cold War repression. It was based on a continuing suspicion of foreign-inspired interracialism and antiracism. The fear of the establishment of a link between demands for racial equality and pro-Germanism during WWI was replaced in the post World War II era by the conflation of the struggle for civil rights with “Bolshevik agitation among the Negroes.”<sup>391</sup> The fear persisted to varying degrees until the Cold War “thawed.” The interracial implications stemming from the social and political intercourse between Black and white radicals and progressives was seen as one of the most significant threat to the American state. Capital accumulation in the U.S. was contingent upon the maintenance and perpetuation of a racial order rooted in the idea of white supremacy that located Blacks at the bottom of hierarchy. Cooperation between the two races came with the potential to upend the system of racial capital. This was particularly the case for cooperation between Blacks and white ethnics who maintained ties to their “home” countries, thus creating possibilities for international exposure of the American race problem. Interracial radicalism, especially communism and socialism, became targeted by the government as seditious, subversive, and especially susceptible to foreign infiltration and influence.

Three events of world-historical significance acted to heighten U.S. anxieties about the racialization of anticolonialism and anti-imperialism, and to intensify its concerns about interracial cooperation, especially in the Third World. The first event was the rise of Mao in the context of the Chinese Revolution in 1949. The second was related to the subsequent Sino-Soviet Split that catapulted Peking (Beijing) to the center of Third World communist/radical critique of and challenge to global capital. The third was the Bandung Conference of 1955, which created the conditions for the emergence of a Non-Aligned Movement based on Afro-Asian solidarity. The centering of white supremacy in critiques of imperialism and colonialism was particularly problematic to efforts by the United States to use anticommunism as a means of undermining

international interracial solidarity, of supporting nationalist struggles that were pro-American, and of addressing its racial issues domestically. As the question of race was brought to the fore in the post-WWII moment, the old imperial powers, and the United States that had inherited their mantle, became subjected to criticism from both the Soviet Union and the decolonizing world. With the rise of Mao and China, nations that had become disillusioned with the Soviet Union could look to another racialized nation for inspiration and support. Race, capitalism, and colonialism became conjoined as targets of critique emanating from the Third World. To the threat of Black and white interracialism came to be added the increasing challenge emanation from Black, Brown, and Yellow interracial solidarity seen as a potential source of destabilization and Communist subversion.

Maoism, emanating from the Chinese Revolution of 1949, was predicated on the idea that the peasantry was a revolutionary force independent of the urban proletariat, and that leadership originated organically from the masses engaged in struggle. For Mao, “true revolutionaries must possess revolutionary will... [that] could be found in the struggles of Third World nationalists.”<sup>392</sup> Additionally, the Maoist concept of “intermediate zones” contained within it the idea of the solidarity of the Third World countries pitted against global capitalist imperialism.

China and other oppressed non-Western countries embodied the intermediate zones between the United States and the Soviet Union... in the struggle between these two governments, the United States and its allies would work to dominate and control the intermediate zones in order to weaken and defeat the Soviets. It was thus necessary for the countries of the intermediate zone to unite and aid one another in decolonization, national liberation, and anti-imperialist struggle, regardless of whether or not these revolutions were led by communists or radical nationalists... the concept of ‘proletarian world revolution’ [was situated] within an explicitly decolonial, antiracist, and anti-imperialist hue that went beyond its common Soviet-centered meaning of global class struggle.<sup>393</sup>

Mao and the Chinese Communist Party began to see their existence as inextricably linked to foreign revolutionary movements, especially those of African-Americans.<sup>394</sup> As a result, Chinese Communism came to be articulated to antiracism and anticolonialism. Black radicals and African nationalist leaders came to see China and Mao as paragons of Third World revolution. Maoism offered a model of Marxism that challenged both white supremacy and Western models of class struggle. According to William Worthy, the first (Black) American to travel to China after the victory of the Chinese Communist Party in 1949 in violation of the State Department’s travel ban, “Chinese communism was [not] simply an ideology that stood in opposition to capitalist and liberalism; Chinese communism was also a historical response to the imperialist, bourgeois-centered, and white supremacist logics that embedded Western domination of the world.”<sup>395</sup> In other words, it constituted an articulation of class rule and white supremacy as essential aspects of capitalism.<sup>396</sup> This form of anticapitalist, antiracist struggle was perfectly suited to be molded into the cultural and political realities of racialized peoples and nations throughout the world. It eviscerated the need for them to wait for “ideal” conditions of revolution.<sup>397</sup> W.E.B. DuBois sums up the attitude of Blacks in the United States and throughout the world toward China from the 1950s-1970s: “China after long centuries has arisen to her feet and leapt forward.” He encouraged, “Africa arise, and stand straight, speak and think! Act! Turn from the West and your slavery and humiliation for the last 500 years and face the rising sun.”<sup>398</sup>

So distinct was the perceived threat of interracial radicalism that even during a “thaw” between the Soviet Union and the United States,<sup>399</sup> in 1959 the State Department continued to impose a travel ban on China.<sup>400</sup> The United States was gravely concerned about China’s refashioning of its international image to gain favor with nonwhite populations.<sup>401</sup> The fact that China was pursuing a foreign policy based on “similar racial characteristics and color” was of considerable alarm to the West generally, and the United States particularly.<sup>402</sup> Peking (Beijing) energetically opposed U.S. foreign policy, condemned American racism, and supported the emancipation of Black people everywhere. In 1963, Mao asserted, “The evil system of colonialism and imperialism arose and thrived with the enslavement of Negroes and the trade in Negroes, and it will surely come to its end with the complete emancipation of the black people.”<sup>403</sup> In the same article, he encouraged “workers, peasants, revolutionary intellectuals, enlightened elements of the bourgeoisie and other enlightened personages of all colours in the world, white, black, yellow, brown, etc. to oppose the racial discrimination practiced by U.S. imperialism and to support the American Negroes in their struggle against racial discrimination. In the final analysis, a national struggle is a class struggle.”<sup>404</sup> Mao not only connected white racism with the United States and with imperialism generally, but he also connected the Black American struggle to global struggle throughout the world and encouraged solidarity and support among oppressed peoples. He effectively mobilized the people of color category as the group that constituted the majority of the world’s population and that, therefore, possessed the capacity to effectively challenge white supremacy and coloniality. Mao shared the sentiment of Indonesian President Sukarno, who stated in 1933 that “if the Banteng of Indonesia can work with the Sphinx of Egypt, with the Nandi Ox of India, with the Dragon of China, with the champions of freedom of other countries—if the Indonesian Banteng is able to work together with all enemies of international capitalism and imperialism throughout the world—ah then the days of international imperialism will soon be numbered!”<sup>405</sup> Mao was positioned among other anticolonial heroes, including Fidel Castro, Patrice Lumumba, and Kwame Nkrumah, because he “dared to look the white community in the face and say: ‘We don’t think your civilization is worth the effort of any black man to try to integrate into.’ This to many Afro-Americans is an act of defiance that is truly revolutionary.”<sup>406</sup> Unlike (white) American Marxists, Mao comprehended the bond between black Americans and other colonial people, so he was able to construct a program that appealed to African descendants in the U.S. As Harold Cruse understood it, “the former colonies were the vanguard of the revolution and at the forefront of this new socialist revolution were Cuba and China.”<sup>407</sup>

Maoism inspired the formation of groups like the Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM), which “attempted to apply Marxism-Leninism Mao Tse-Tung thought” to the Black struggle in the United States, understood as part of the global socialist revolution.<sup>408</sup> The Chinese revolution and Mao’s Red Army inspired Black American radicals to place their efforts for Black liberation in a global context, to develop “revolutionary ethics,” to identify struggle with the masses, and to identify themselves as colonial subjects.<sup>409</sup> “Bandung Humanism” and “[Revolutionary] Black Internationalism” linked the African-American struggle to those in Africa and Asia, including China, Zanzibar, Cuba, Indonesia, and Algeria, and characterized these revolutions as “part of Mao’s international strategy of encircling Western capitalist countries and challenging imperialism.” They considered the defining contradiction of the twentieth century to be the battle between Western capitalist imperialism and the Third World.<sup>410</sup> In effect, Maoism racialized and radicalized anticolonial and anti-imperial struggles by shifting the site of revolution to the underdeveloped countries; linking the struggles of Blacks in the

metropolises with those in the Third World; focusing on the masses/peasants; and firmly linking imperialism and colonialism with white supremacy.

The reaction to the Sino-Soviet split underscored the popularity of Maoism among racialized and colonized peoples. As the Chinese brand of Third World communism increased in prominence among Third World nationalists, the U.S.S.R. became excluded from narratives of African, Asian, and Latin American solidarity, characterized as outside of the political economic context of this tricontinental alliance.<sup>411</sup> As China became explicitly anti-Soviet, it increasingly linked the Soviet Union to whiteness and imperialism. China was making the Soviet Union “aware... of her affinities to the Western nations, be they geographical, historical, economic, or racial, a situation which is clearly causing the Soviet Union some degree of ideological embarrassment.”<sup>412</sup> China worked to exclude the U.S.S.R. from the Bandung Conference in 1955 and the Second Afro-Asian Conference in 1965 based on the latter’s inherent whiteness, orientation toward the West, and imperial ambitions in Africa and Asia.<sup>413</sup> China argued that the U.S.S.R. was trying to control events beyond its sphere of influence, and that there were things that needed to be done only among Afro-Asian countries.<sup>414</sup> Khrushchev responded to this Chinese offensive by claiming that China was “replacing Marxist-Leninist principles of the unification of the proletariat of the world and the oppressed peoples with that erroneous and reactionary thesis which wants to unite the peoples on the principles of skin colour, race, and continents.” He further claimed that the Chinese had “abandoned Communist unity for the division of the world according to race and colour.”<sup>415</sup> The Soviet Union excoriated the Chinese for trying to exclude the U.S.S.R. from Asia and Africa because of race. The Chinese contended that Soviet accusations of racism were meant to conceal the latter’s reticence to support national liberation movements in Africa and Asia. In the *Peking Review*, it was printed that, “When they peddle the ‘theory of racism,’ describing the national-liberation movement in Asia, Africa, and Latin America as one of the coloured against the white race, the leaders of the C.P.S.U. are clearly aiming at inciting racial hatred among the white people in Europe and North America, at diverting the people of the world from struggle against imperialism and at turning the international working-class movement away from the struggle against modern revisionism.”<sup>416</sup> In other words, the Chinese were arguing that the Soviet Union was trying to prevent Afro-Asian solidarity and anti-imperialism by calling it racist in order to advance their imperialist ambitions, reproduce white supremacy, and prevent collaboration that was not centered on Europe.

According to Taj Robeson,

What began as a 1950s disagreement between Chinese and Soviet leadership over the Stalinists socioeconomic development model transformed into a major geopolitical and ideological dispute. The post-Stalin Soviet regime’s criticisms of Stalin’s period in power, as well as China’s abandonment of the Soviet model of economic development, were early indications of an increasing ideological divide between the two governments. The Soviets were also critical of China’s economic policies during the Great Leap Forward... It was the Soviet’s 1956 policy of détente and peaceful coexistence with the United States and later its discussions with several Western governments about instituting a nuclear weapons test ban that drew the ire of the People’s Republic of China... [they believed] that the Soviets were abandoning the international communist movement.<sup>417</sup>

By the early 1960’s, the Sino-Soviet alliance had disintegrated and the two ceased to collaborate on building a world revolution.<sup>418</sup> Instead of strengthening U.S. global influence, the Sino-Soviet

split presented a unique challenge because it brought race to the fore of anticolonial struggles in the Global South. Just as the Soviet Union feared the implications of the idea that “Asian and African peoples [were] brothers sharing the same life-breath and destiny,”<sup>419</sup> so too did the United States fear cooperation between Asia—especially China—and Africa because it provided a means of circumventing economic dependence on the West as a form of discipline and control. Chinese technical and economic assistance to Africa was intended as a means to develop “national democratic revolutionary movement[s]” and to “win or safeguard national independence and [African] desire to attain solidarity and unity in a form of their own choice.”<sup>420</sup> Afro-Asian cooperation reified the communist/socialist/radical threat, and in many ways strengthened it, because it added in an analysis of racial and continental exploitation that resonated with racialized and colonized peoples in the Global North and the Global South. This racial lens heightened feelings of nationalism in the Third World and hostility to foreign (read white) intervention.<sup>421</sup> Moreover, it inspired African-Americans to connect their struggles for racial equality with those in Africa and Asia, making them more radical and militant. While Soviet détente with the United States led the former to support more moderate, non-violent Black struggles for civil rights, the Chinese excoriated the Soviet Union for doing so, and supported militant, armed self-defense.<sup>422</sup> In this way, the Sino-Soviet split was helping to make racial unrest in the United States an international issue, much to the chagrin of the U.S. government. In short, the proliferation of China as the communist/socialist power in the Third World through its condemnation of the Soviet Union strengthened anti-American, anticolonial, and anti-imperialist sentiments among racialized populations and weakened U.S. power and influence in that sphere.

The Asian-African Conference held on April 18-22, 1955—also known as the Bandung Conference because of the location in which it was held—was planned by five newly independent Asian countries: India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Burma (Myanmar), and Ceylon (Sri Lanka). Twenty-four nations, including Japan, China, the Gold Coast (Ghana), and the Central African Federation (the latter two still British colonies) were invited to participate.<sup>423</sup> The entire American continent, the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies, Yugoslavia, and other European neutral nations were excluded.<sup>424</sup> This was because the conference was specifically focused on building solidarity between and self-determination in African and Asian countries, “and gain[ing] and maintain[ing] independence from Cold War politics.”<sup>425</sup> As the first conference of non-European states, it aimed to build a sustained campaign against imperialism and white supremacy, with special emphasis on “nationalism, racialism, and colonialism.”<sup>426</sup> According to President Sukarno, the conference attendees were “united by a common detestation of colonialism in whatever form it appears, by a common detestation of racialism and a common determination to reserve and stabilize peace in the world.”<sup>427</sup> The African and Asian nations in attendance “sought to attain juridical independence, carve out a space of geopolitical autonomy, and provide a critical platform for opposing the development and deployment of nuclear weapons around the world.”<sup>428</sup> The conference represented the emergence of the “Bandung era”<sup>429</sup> in which the Global South would be a significant player in international relations, and the first step toward effectuating the nonaligned movement that allowed decolonizing and postcolonial nations to articulate their position in an increasingly bipolar world.<sup>430</sup> Additionally, “the idea of the Third World crystallized in Bandung... as a unity of Asian, African, and Latin American peoples on the basis of a common experience of colonialism and racism... [and] held together the strains of differing political, national, and geographic perspectives...”<sup>431</sup>

As Richard Wright observed, Bandung was not aligned with left or right politics, nor was it an episode in Cold War politics or a Communist Front.<sup>432</sup> This was evident in the various

strains that were present at the Conference: explicit Communists, allies of Western Powers, states friendly to the West, and states that were “aggressively” neutral.<sup>433</sup> In its declaration on the promotion of world peace and co-operation, Conference participants agreed that “the right of self-determination must be enjoyed by all peoples, and freedom and independence must be granted, with the least possible delay, to those who are still dependent peoples. Indeed, all nations should have the right freely to choose their own political and economic system and their own way of life...”<sup>434</sup> Thus, anticolonialism and anti-imperialism framed the conference, not communism or anticommunism. Paul Robeson wrote that,

...the Convening of the Conference of Asian and African nations at Bandung, Indonesia, in itself will be recorded as an historic turning point in all world affairs... attended by representatives of the majority of the world’s population in Asia and Africa who have long been subjected to colonial serfdom and foreign domination, the Asian-African Conference signalizes the power and the determination of the peoples of these two great continents to decide their own destiny, to achieve and defend their sovereign independence, to control the rich resources of their own lands, and to contribute to the promotion of world peace and cooperation.<sup>435</sup>

The Black Press in the United States characterized the Conference as an overt challenge to white supremacy by the Black, brown, and yellow populations of the world, and an assertion that there was an alternative to the leadership of Washington and Moscow.<sup>436</sup> The Bandung Conference and the position of nonalignment that was adopted created a way of conceiving the world beyond the Cold War and helped to cultivate a unique Third World critique of American foreign policy and practice. In effect, “The Afro-Asian conference was midwife to an international order in which the politics of race was an essential factor in the calculus of power [and in which] The United States had little control over the resolution of the thorny issue of race.... [and] its impact upon the world system.”<sup>437</sup>

This meeting of anticolonial, antiracist “colored” nations presented a challenge to the United States given its abysmal racial record, its tacit support of European colonialism, and its own practices of colonization in the South Pacific and in the Caribbean.<sup>438</sup> The U.S. recognized that its attitude of racial superiority toward the rest of the world could be used against it at the Bandung Conference, so it encouraged Africans and Asians not to reproduce the same error of racial antagonism. The U.S. realized that if racialism was mobilized effectively, it would limit its ability to manage communist China and the international system generally, and it would also compromise its standing in the Third World. They feared that “if the nations invited to Bandung, acquired the habit of meeting from time to time without Western participation, India and China because of their vast populations will very certainly dominate the scene and [one] by-product will be a very solid bloc of anti-Western votes in the United Nations.”<sup>439</sup> Thus, the U.S. was just as concerned about racial solidarity becoming manifest in “anti-Western” geopolitics as it was about the spread of communism. The significant differences in the ideological positions of India and China underscored the threat of the challenge posed by Third World internationalism independent of that ensuing from the spread of communism. According to Cary Fraser, “The emergence of a Third World anticolonial alliance was profoundly unsettling to the Western position. The politics of race deeply informed geostrategic thought in Europe and North America, and the fears of antiwhite sentiment expressed worry that Afro-Asian autonomy would mean loss of control over the international order and the hierarchy of power that informed its

operations.”<sup>440</sup> The fact that the U.S. and other Western powers worked to prevent African countries from attending the Bandung Conference underscores the fact that they saw it as an interracial menace:

...A consensus developed that an effort should be made to restrict African participation to Libya and Egypt... the British had informed Gold Coast and Central African Federation leaders that ‘it would not be desirable for them to attend.’ [They] did not want the meeting to deal with ‘the South African problem’ and hope that joint Anglo-American pressure would persuade Libya, the Gold Coast, the Central African Federation, and Ethiopia to skip the conference... [It was] argued that the United States should prevent the ‘establishment of a precedent that the Africans and the Asians should deal with outside powers as a bloc’...<sup>441</sup>

Africa was especially important because, “if Africa were lost to the West, a more serious blow would be dealt with respect to the supply of essential raw materials and minerals... It was necessary therefore, to do everything possible to keep the African peoples in particular oriented toward Western thinking.”<sup>442</sup> Having a locus of power and leadership independent of the United States and the West would lead to the economic and political autonomy and co-operation of Africa and Asia based on a common attitude toward the white West. The position shared by all of the white/European colonial powers was that:

The real danger to the West in the Conference lies in the fact that it may further a division of the world on the basis of a color line. This... would be extremely harmful to Western interests since the only real prospect of checking the spread of Communist influence... lies in the maintenance and development of ties between moderate Asians [and later, Africans] and the Western powers. Drawing of lines on a color basis would jeopardize these ties and facilitate Communist expansion.<sup>443</sup>

In the Bandung Conference was an entangled threat of the spread of communism with the racialization of anticolonial and anti-imperial struggles in the Global South. Concomitantly, Afro-Asian nationalism and racial solidarity came with the possibility of the cultivation of anti-Western sentiment and the diminishing of U.S. and European influence in the Third World.

U.S. anxieties about the conference led to efforts aimed at influencing its agenda. It tried to convince anticommunist countries that would be in attendance (including Japan, Thailand, the Philippines, Pakistan, and Turkey) to take up a strong pro-Western stance.<sup>444</sup> In establishing a “Pax Americana,” the U.S. aimed to use these allies to contain not only (Chinese) communism, but also to ameliorate the deployment of racialism in efforts to cultivate anti-Western and Third World solidarity. But the focus of American foreign policy on anticommunism blunted its effectiveness in the face of the emphasis placed by the Chinese on anticolonialism. The latter was more in line with the Third World sentiments and aspirations. The U.S. concern was that the Conference would “regularize” relations with “Communist China” and advance their efforts to create divisions between the Third World countries and the United States.<sup>445</sup> As U.S. Embassy Ambassador in Djakarta, Indonesia Hugh Smith Cumming Jr. wrote, “Contrary to earlier expectations of many, Afro-Asian conference is apparently now about to become a reality. From one standpoint Red China has won a real victory: Short of membership in UN they have gained a forum and a potential audience... This is a real gain for Peking...”<sup>446</sup> What was conveyed in his

statement was U.S. anxiety about China's influence and the country's entrapment in a rigid anticommunist position. It was an anxiety about the possibility of undermining the capitalist interests of the United States. The Bandung Conference, by promoting interracial, international, anticolonial, antiracist cooperation, threatened to elevate China into the position of an international leader and to push the United States and the West out of Africa and Asia. This came with the possibility of a continuing global spread of communism and radicalism and the creation and formulation of economic and strategic alternatives to bipolar geopolitics.

Given the reality of decolonization and the ascendance of the Third World and a "third way" in the context of the Cold War, international racial solidarity posed a fundamental threat to global imperial interests organized around U.S. hegemony. The Black was located at the critical center of efforts to move beyond the strictures of a bipolar world, partly because of the strategic position occupied by Black people in the United States and increasingly in the former colonial metropolises. Added to the importance of the Black in the Global North was the economic and geostrategic importance of Africa and the Caribbean for the American imperialist project. This explains the significance of the efforts by the United States to discipline, manage, control, and punish Black radicalism, particularly in its international and interracial manifestations. The threat posed by the emergence China, the Sino-Soviet Split, and Bandung underscore this reality.

#### **\*C.L.R. James and Subversive Antiracism**

Cyril Lionel Robert James, upon the invitation of James P. Cannon, leader of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), arrived in the United States in 1938 to keep the SWP abreast of happenings in Europe, and to help develop a position on Negro struggle.<sup>447</sup> Because he was on a visitor's visa, James was well aware of the prohibitions placed on his public activity and the limitations on the confrontational radicalism that had become typical of his politics in England.<sup>448</sup> But given his radical antiracism, grounded in "the black radical intellectual tradition... [and] a political language reflective of the conditions of the racialized black subject,"<sup>449</sup> it was inevitable that he would become a target of the U.S. state that policed radical thought and actions under the guise of anticommunism. Anthony Bogues explains the threat that Black radicalism posed to the state: "Given the nature of anti-black racism and the racialized object (who is human), the black radical intellectual as critic is first of all engaged with challenging the knowledge regime of the dominant power."<sup>450</sup> James's historical materialism, which fundamentally challenged white and capitalist normativity, constituted a form of heresy<sup>451</sup> that contested the way the U.S. projected and understood itself. He was not a Communist; he was an independent Marxist and a fellow traveler of the "factory-worker left"<sup>452</sup> that believed in democratic rights and the full recognition as Americans for Blacks.<sup>453</sup> This was just as seditious as communism itself, and thus he was considered to be subversive.

From the outset, James's writing and scholarship had the intent of bringing the Black masses to consciousness about their conditions and possibilities. His most influential work *The Black Jacobins*, published in 1937, proved an inspiration for African and Caribbean radicals and revolutionaries.<sup>454</sup> His writings in the United States were directed to the Black American masses with a similar intent. He argued for the inevitability of Black revolt: "The only place where Negroes did not revolt is in the pages of capitalist historians. All this revolutionary history can come as a surprise only to those who... have not ejected from their systems the pertinacious lies of Anglo-Saxon capitalism. It is not strange that the Negroes revolted. It would have been strange if they had not."<sup>455</sup> James's critique, which addressed not only the erasure of Black struggle, but also racist historiography and the distortions produced by racial capitalism, asserted



the entanglement of white chauvinism and capitalist accumulation that inhered in American society. His work aimed to “make clear that black people have a certain historical past...” and “by historical method, [he] tried to show that black people were able to make historical progress, [and] they were able to produce men who could lead a revolution and write new pages in the book of history.”<sup>456</sup> James attempted to write Black people into revolutionary history, to create a usable past for them, and to illuminate their contributions to modernity, which contravened all of the foundational myths of the United States, white supremacy, and Western civilization. In his writing he articulated an implacable faith in the ability and revolutionary capacity of Black people; in 1948 he urged,

Let us not forget that in the Negro people, there sleep and are now awakening passions of a violence exceeding, perhaps, as far as these things can be compared, anything among the tremendous forces that capitalism has created. Anyone who knows them, who knows their history... must recognize that although their social force may not be able to compare with the social force of a corresponding number of organized workers, the hatred of bourgeois society and the readiness to destroy it when the opportunity should present itself, rests among them to a degree greater than in any other section of the population in the United States.<sup>457</sup>

Given U.S. anxieties about antiracism and interracialism, his advocacy of Black popular action overrode his acceptable “praise for bourgeois individualism, democracy, and freedom.”<sup>458</sup> The latter was irreparably undermined by James’s conviction that, “In Africa, in America, in the West Indies, on a national and international scale, the millions of Negroes will raise their heads, rise up from their knees, and write some of the most massive and brilliant chapters in the history of international socialism.”<sup>459</sup>

James was eventually deported as a communist even though he was deeply opposed to the Soviet Union, the Communist Party, and Stalinism: He reflected on this seeming contradiction:

...By reading and instinct, I never for one single moment was anything but an enemy of the Communist Party and the Stalinist regime. I was attracted instead of the ideas of Trotsky. I once caught a glimpse in a United States Immigration Office of a file of papers two or three inches thick dealing with my activities in England... The Trotskyist group I was associated with never at any time exceeded 35 people. It quite often was less than half that number. I was then as I am now, essentially a writer... I worked on newspapers and published books, one of them a large history of the Communist International... During this time I associated with the Trotskyites here and I wrote in their papers... But from 1941 I became known in Trotskyite circles here and abroad chiefly as a bitter opponent of Trotsky’s theory that Russia, despite Stalinist crimes, was a workers’ state. Instead I denounced Russia as the greatest example of barbarism that history has ever known... In 1950 a decision was rendered against me [to remain in the United States]... The writer of the rejection... noted that I had written *World Revolution, The Rise and Fall of the Communist International*; a *History of Negro Revolt, The Black Jacobins*, had translated the life of *Stalin*... He considered that all this looked very suspicious. My attorney had claimed that I was a writer. The founders of revolutionary movements, he said, had been writers.<sup>460</sup>

His case revealed the entangled reality of anticommunism/antiradicalism/antiblackness in American statist practice. The fact of his avowed anticommunism and his renunciation of Trotskyism by 1941 had little bearing on his designation as a subversive by the U.S. administration because he was a foreign Black radical. That he was not engaged in political activism in the United States had little bearing on his designation. His ideas and scholarship were what proved dangerous, particularly when they were appended to his political activism in England: “the governments of Great Britain and the United States c[ould] gather every inch and ounce of [his] activity from 1935 to the present day, multiply it by one hundred, and they could not transform [him] into a clear and present danger to the people of the United States. It [was his] books that... [were] dwelt upon.” James was rendered suspect because he was a writer producing work focused on race, radicalism, and revolution. He was involved in groups that forged close interracial and international ties. And he had the potential, the State believed, to incite—or to found—revolution in the United States given his convictions. As he asserted, “It now appears that such work... on some of the burning problems of the day, have unfitted me to become a citizen of the United States.”<sup>461</sup> CLR James’s case was the quintessential example of U.S. distrust of Black radicalism in any form, and their dedication to expelling it from the nation’s borders.

Along with Raya Dunayevska (also known as Freddie Forest), James (under the pseudonym J.R. Johnson) formed the Johnson-Forest Tendency after splitting with the Trotskyite Socialist Workers Party (SWP) over differences in ideology. In their theorizing, the “Johnsonites,” as they were known, considered capitalism to be an impediment to the autonomy, self-determination, and self-possession of workers and the cause of fragmentation and alienation from the self. They believed that the ensuing estrangement was what produced conflict within capitalist relations of production,<sup>462</sup> and that the most effective means of overthrowing capitalism was the expansion of worker struggle inside plants and factories that would allow them to regain control of their lives and toil.<sup>463</sup> Dunayevska was inspired by Marx’s *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* that, they believed, confirmed their analysis. They believed that the crux of Marxist analysis was that the forces of liberation rested in the human essence of workers, based on the Hegelian idea of self activity, rather than property relations.<sup>464</sup> The dramatic increase in Black factory workers during World War II and the radicalization of a significant proportion of Black Americans brought the “Negro Question” to the fore, consistent with their radical critique. As Grace Lee Boggs, one of the three authors of the tendency along with James and Dunayevskaya, wrote in her autobiography, the Johnson-Forest tendency was fundamentally predicated on “the independent black struggle and [an] attac[k] [on] the alienation of human beings in the process of capitalist production.”<sup>465</sup> James’s conviction that independent Black struggle should be supported because Black uprising for justice possessed the force to upend American capitalism made him one of the most threatening theoreticians and intellectuals in the United States.

The issues of the centrality of race versus class as it relates to whether the Black struggle should be independent or subordinated to the international proletariat struggle; whether there should be an effort to create solidarity between Black and white workers; and whether Blacks constituted an oppressed colony, or a nation within a nation,<sup>466</sup> grew more central as C.L.R. James gained prominence and influence. Based on his analysis of the great revolutions of the past he came to the conclusion that revolutions were initiated by the most downtrodden.<sup>467</sup> As such, Black people were essential to any revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. He argued that

“the Negro struggle, the independent Negro struggle, has a vitality and a validity of its own; that it has deep historical roots in the past of America and in present struggles; it has an organic political perspective, along which it is traveling, to one degree or another, and everything shows that at the present time it is traveling with great speed and vigor.”<sup>468</sup> James believed that workers—especially Black workers—did not need a vanguard or an organization to lead them because spontaneity and “the free creative activity of the proletariat” was the essence of revolution.<sup>469</sup> In an interview with Stuart Hall, James explained, “When I went there [to America] what I took to Trotsky was a document, in ’39. I said... the black people, I know them, and I had known them in the Caribbean. I say, they don’t need the leadership of the Marxist Party... they don’t need the leadership of anybody. The black people in the United States are fully able to organize themselves and produce leaders and carry on. And what we ought to do is to be telling them that. And Trotsky agreed.”<sup>470</sup> Moreover, James was convinced that, through their experiences of oppression, domination, and dispossession, Black people would come to the conclusions of Marxism.<sup>471</sup> This posed a direct challenge to the racial and class order in the United States. And it was even more threatening because its roots in Marxism posed a challenge to capitalist accumulation.

The emphasis on worker self activity inspired the Johnsonites to support the frequent wildcat strikes that were occurring in the mid-1940s. James and the other ideological adherents to the Johnson-Forest Tendency believed that the strikes, as a manifestation of worker self-activity, constituted the struggle by the workers to gain control over what and how they would produce.<sup>472</sup> They represented a struggle against capitalist power that stifled workers and therefore victimized the whole world.<sup>473</sup> For James, seizing control of production would provide Black people with the ability to control their own destiny, and because “Black workers especially were talking about the need to go beyond the union and engage in revolutionary struggle,”<sup>474</sup> the “third layer”<sup>475</sup> radicalism of James and the Johnson-Forest Tendency became especially subversive in the eyes of the U.S. administration. There was agreement between the State and the Johnsonites that an independent Black struggle, especially with an international scope, posed a formidable threat to U.S. power.

Shortly after the War, the immigration and Naturalization Services started to harass James with charges about overstaying his visitor’s visa. Finally, faced with the threat of deportation, he left voluntarily in the spring of 1953 in order to preserve the possibility of returning at a later time that would have been foreclosed had he been deported.<sup>476</sup> He was careful to register with the government every year as required by the Alien Registration Act. His decision to leave was made when his application for the extension of his visa was denied and his appeals were rejected. The choice was either to leave voluntarily or to be deported. The denial was a culmination of state surveillance, intimidation and harassment of James that began in 1948. He was constantly examined by government officials and questioned about his political ideas.<sup>477</sup> On June 17, 1952 during one of his hearings, the Government attorney handed to the Judge a copy of his book on the Communist International that he had written one year before his arrival in the United States.<sup>478</sup> This red-baiting settled the matter once and for all. The 51 year-old James was arrested and detained on Ellis Island on June 10, 1952.<sup>479</sup> He was placed in a special room for political prisoners along with five communists in an act that underscored the imposition of anticommunism/antiradicalism/antiblackness upon any “subversive” activity that challenged statist pedagogy. James was not a communist and was never a member of a Communist Party, nor was he ever associated with one; he was in fact repulsed by them. He had written and translated many books aimed at rejecting and refuting communism. But, as a Black

radical in the United States, he and the communists shared the same space as anti-American “subversives.” This became evident in the decision to reject his appeal under the terms of the McCarran Act that was meant to apply specifically to communists.<sup>480</sup> Given guarantees by the state that, in its fight against communism, the government would not infringe upon the freedom of intellectual thought, speech, or opinion, the imprisonment of James, and other aliens and citizens like him had to be predicated on the assumption that all forms of radicalism were intended to accomplish, assist, and/or encourage an international conspiracy to crush freedom and liberty and to establish totalitarianism.<sup>481</sup>

To the U.S. government, there was no qualitative difference between James’s antiracist and interracial radical politics and that of the communists. Their alleged subversion demanded identical treatment, and they deserved to be punished accordingly. In a description of his treatment while incarcerated, James wrote, “on Ellis Island, in particular, the arbitrariness, the capriciousness, the brutality and savagery where they [thought] they could get away with it, the rapid retreats when they suspect[ed] they may have gone too far, [represented] the complete absence of any principle except to achieve a particular aim by the most convenient means at hand.”<sup>482</sup> That “particular aim” was to criminalize and expel dissident voices—the aliens, mariners, renegades, and castaways<sup>483</sup>—that condemned the racialized and exploitative order and constitution of U.S. society.

### **Cheddi Jagan and the Threat of Interracial Cooperation in British Guiana**

The entanglements of antiracist struggle, decolonization, and Cold War politics in the 1950s elicited identical anxieties by the U.S. state over forms of interracial cooperation that it was unable to control as did its anxieties about Black radicalism. In the view of the United States, communism and anti-American/anti-Western sentiment was more easily spread through cooperation among different ethnic groups and through continental alliances among colonized/racialized peoples elicited or implied by such cooperation. These entanglements and their elicitation of interracial collaboration were preeminent in efforts by the United States to destabilize the British Guianese state, and to depose Cheddi Jagan, Leader of the People’s Progressive Party (PPP) through exploitation of racial antagonisms between Afro-Guianese and Indo-Guianese in the country. In the context of the Cold War, the United States mobilized “anticommunist unity” to convince Britain to allow it to intervene in territories that remained under the latter’s colonial jurisdiction.<sup>484</sup> As the largest colony, the only English-speaking territory in South America, and the area that absorbed the surplus populations of the other islands in the region, British Guiana was one of the most important territories in the British Empire. It also had one of the most developed radical traditions in the world that cut across racial lines.<sup>485</sup> When the PPP was initially formed, Guianese of African and Indian origins worked together to challenge western racial capitalism. Jagan’s time in the United States from 1936-1943 had exposed him to the plight of Black Americans under Jim Crow, and, as a result, he cultivated sympathy for the Afro-Guianese.<sup>486</sup> His sojourn in the United States convinced him that colonialism and racialism were epiphenomena of capitalist exploitation and its relations of production. He came to believe that the solution to racial antipathy in the colony rested with independence and with structural reformulation.<sup>487</sup> A fundamental challenge to western capitalism could be achieved only through an interracial coalition.

In 1946 Cheddi Jagan, his Jewish-American wife Janet Jagan, and Forbes Burnham, a black Fabian socialist, formed the Political Affairs Committee (PAC), an organization aimed at “hon[ing] the principles of socialism through the organisation of a multi-racial, class-based

nationalist movement.” Jagan denounced and rejected “racism and cultism” in favor of radical and progressive politics in a bid to achieve control of the colonial state. The PAC forged and fashioned a strong multiracial coalition of workers into the PPP, formed in January 1950.<sup>488</sup> Forbes Burnham was chosen as the party Chairman because Jagan felt it was important to solidify Afro-Guianese support, and because Burnham enjoyed strong support among the African proletariat and the creole middle class.<sup>489</sup> With the formation of the PPP Jagan was able to create an interracial nationalist movement that effectively mobilized the masses. This provided the basis for mounting a socialist challenge to colonialism and Western capitalism, for which the United States had become positioned at the hegemonic center in the 1950s. The interracialism forged by the PPP to challenge colonial capitalism posed a significant threat to the imperialist interests of the U.S. If the PPP was allowed to come to power, it would have “comforted this population with the reassurance that whatever the racial and ethnic configurations, democracy would reign” in British Guiana. This was particularly pernicious in the territory with the most sophisticated radicals, Jagan and Burnham. The implications of racial unity were “that British Guiana exerted outsized influence within the regional left.”<sup>490</sup> This was unacceptable to the United States and its British ally.<sup>491</sup>

The PPP was elected in 1953 to lead a government with limited powers.<sup>492</sup> It “won an overwhelming victory against formidable opposition mounted by domestic capital and the local petite bourgeois [*sic*].”<sup>493</sup> A mere 135 days passed before the constitution was suspended, the PPP was removed from office, and Jagan and his wife were jailed because their socialism was construed by the British and the Americans as coming with the potential for establishing a communist bridgehead that threatened U.S. national security and the region as a whole. The threat it posed had to be eradicated.<sup>494</sup> The suspension of the constitution and the ousting of the PPP from office was accomplished by British military intervention with American support. It was followed by racial manipulation that would weaken the PPP for good. In September 1954, the Robertson Commission, established by the British Colonial Office, set out to counterbalance the effectiveness of universal suffrage in British Guiana by creating suspicion and animosity among the African and Indian populations.<sup>495</sup> Its goal was to establish a wedge between the two largest racial groups by exploiting supposed African hostility to and fear of the presumed economic, commercial, and educational successes of the Indian population. It was believed that such hostility was the source of heightened racial tension. The British and the Americans sought to exploit what they considered to be the “distrust” of the Africans in an effort aimed at destroying the PPP.<sup>496</sup>

The report prepared by Sir James Robertson, “...identified two factions within the PPP, one Communist, the other Socialist. Fortuitously, [the Jagans] were depicted as the leaders of the Communist faction, while Forbes Burnham was depicted as the leader of the moderate socialists within the party...” Additionally, “the Robertson Commission’s report in seeking to isolate the Jagans from their supporters within the PPP, opened the way for the nationalist movement to fragment into racial blocs. By identifying the two most important leaders of the PPP, Cheddi Jagan an Indo-Guianese, and Forbes Burnham an Afro-Guianese, as following ideologically divergent paths, the report exacerbated tensions in the multiracial alliance that had emerged under the PPP.”<sup>497</sup> The racialist practices of the United States combined with the racial constructs of colonial society and anticommunist hysteria to subvert and cripple the PPP’s radical demands for self-determination, the end of capitalist exploitation, and nationalist solidarity. The ethnic fissures of the colony lay below the surface.<sup>498</sup> West Indian identity and nationalism forged by the Afro-creole population had left the East Indians out of the nationalist equation. East Indians

were not supportive of any formulation of creole nationalism that, unlike Jagan's radicalism, "did not cater to their interest in nationalist inclusion nor in bringing an end to the exploitation of international capital." The East Indian peasantry and proletariat had considerably different cultural, economic, and political interests than the the Africans and creoles, and these differences became the object of manipulation by Great Britain and the United States.<sup>499</sup>

The U.S., in collusion with England, succeeded in splitting the PPP along racial and ideological lines. This led, ultimately, to a resurgence of racial hostility. They sought to isolate Jagan and the British Guianese radicals by throwing their support behind Burnham, who presented himself as more moderate and, unlike Jagan, was willing to denounce the Soviet Union.<sup>500</sup> The moderate Burnhamite "Fabian socialist" faction of the PPP—which eventually became the People's National Congress<sup>501</sup>—effectively put an end to multiracial radical nationalism by concretizing political support based on race: the East Indians for Jagan and the Africans for Burnham. As Jagan explained, "Burnham's alliance with conservative racist elements resulted in the class struggle appearing as Indians against Africans and Mixed and not as Coloured (Indians, Africans, Mixed) against White, as it had [before Anglo-American racial manipulation.] Fears of one kind or another... were generated against the PPP and expressed in racial and anti-Communist terms."<sup>502</sup> The manipulation of racial antagonism,

...eviscerated Jagan's attempt at forging a multi-racial nationalist coalition. With this, the two wings of the party became embroiled in the very racial politics that he had repudiated. 'Race,' and the politics of 'race,' became the basis for political support. By 1956, one year after the split, racial politics had become so entrenched that three of the leading black radicals resigned from Jagan's faction of the party. With their departure, the party lost much of its remaining black support and its ability to sustain itself as a multi-racial movement.<sup>503</sup>

As Duncan Sandys, minister of the British Conservative government in the 1950s and 1960s, asserted, political turmoil in British Guiana was a result of "the development of party politics along racial lines. In the present acute form, this racialism can be traced to the split in the country's main political party in 1955. It was then that the People's Progressive Party, which had previously drawn its support from both the main races, broke into two bitterly opposed political groups, the one predominantly Indian... and other other, predominantly African..."<sup>504</sup> The characterization of Cheddi Jagan as "dangerous" because of his "antipathy to capitalism, his ambivalence about the west, and his insistence on a foreign policy that crossed Cold War ideological strictures," coupled with the fact that he was "almost a mythical figure" among East Indians in British Guiana, allowed the U.S. government to exacerbate racial unrest in the colony by creating the conditions for Africans and creoles to support Burnham.

By the mid-1950s, Cheddi Jagan and the PPP were denounced by nationalist leaders in the Caribbean, including Grantley Adams of Barbados, Michael Manley of Jamaica, and Albert Gomes of Trinidad, while Forbes Burnham and his faction of the PPP were embraced and courted.<sup>505</sup> Despite Burnham's support from the West and the anticommunist Caribbean leaders, in the 1957 election, Jagan won 47% of the votes and nine out of fourteen elected seats. The three seats won by Burnham were in the capital city of Georgetown where there was a large Black working-class population. The outcome of the election underscored the increasing racial polarity in the colony as a consequence of the fracturing of the nationalist movement.<sup>506</sup> As the

predominately Indian PPP continued to consolidate power, the Black and mulatto groups became increasingly agitated:

...Fear and concern about the growing strength of the Indian community in British Guiana's politics intensified ethnic and political mobilization among the other groups. In early 1957, the middle-class United Democracy Party (UDP) was merged with the PNC, creating a single party based upon Afro-Guianese communities. The largely black Trades Union Congress also began to support the PNC... By late 1959, ethnic polarization in British Guiana was an undisputed fact of political life.<sup>507</sup>

The United States was deeply troubled by the victory of the PPP out of anxiety that it represented the first steps toward communist penetration in the Western hemisphere.<sup>508</sup> Fear turned to hysteria after the Cuban Revolution in 1959, and the declaration by Cuba that it was a Communist state in 1961. The U.S. Administration began a campaign tying Cheddi Jagan to Fidel Castro, reflecting its heightened hostility toward him and the PPP as British Guiana moved toward independence.<sup>509</sup> According to Cary Fraser, "the conception of British Guiana as another Cuba had little to do with the policies of the PPP, and more to do with the hysteria unleashed in the United States by the radicalization of the Cuban Revolution."<sup>510</sup> The United States began to engage in sustained attempts to destabilize the government after Jagan's victory in 1961 (41% of the votes and 21 seats) despite the fact that he had moderated his position, dropped Janet Jagan (the more radical of the two)<sup>511</sup> from his cabinet, expressed an interest in Puerto Rico's development model, and declared that he was not communist and would pursue a path of nonalignment.<sup>512</sup> The CIA-funded strikes in 1962 and 1963 and the full blockade of ships and aircrafts going in and out of the country orchestrated by the United States brought the economy to a halt and forced Jagan to turn to the Soviet Union and Cuba for vital supplies. This was in the face of the suspension by the Kennedy administration of aid to Guyana. Even though Jagan was democratically elected, "the Jagan administration was considered unacceptable to American and British interests and had to be removed... the government of Cheddi Jagan was brought down at the hands of the CIA, in conjunction with the Harold Macmillan government in England, following a crippling 80 day strike led by the Civil service and financed by the CIA, through the Gotham Foundation and the American Institute for Free Labor Development."<sup>513</sup> This was just one example of U.S sabotage.<sup>514</sup>

More significantly, "the United States... orchestrated a campaign of violence and destabilization that left over 100 persons dead, and a legacy of ethno-racial political strife;"<sup>515</sup> their clandestine exacerbation of racial conflict and unrest led to the ouster of Cheddi Jagan as Premier in 1964. The PNC and the right wing United Force, representing the interests of the business elite and tied to U.S. imperial interests, received a collective 52.9% of the vote and established a coalition government dominated by the PNC. The victory was made possible in the wake of a constitutional change designed and insisted upon by the Kennedy administration that mandated a coalition government. The percentage of votes each party received represented the racial constitution of the colony,<sup>516</sup> and reflected the institutionalization of racial antagonism and ethnic cleavage in Guyanese politics. The racialization of politics in British Guiana that ensued from Anglo-American manipulation was a direct product of the entangled realities of U.S. anticommunism and racism. The antipathy toward anti-Western ideologies combined with its disdain for non-Western peoples combined to produce "American intolerance of forces that did not accept American defined limits upon foreign and domestic policies in its sphere of

influence.”<sup>517</sup> The United States used racialism as a tool to destabilize British Guianese nationalism, starting in 1954, because Cheddi Jagan did not capitulate to the American strategy of communist containment. The U.S. administration was hostile to “the ideological orientation of the PPP and its militant anticolonialism [and this] served as a catalyst for renewed activism” in the British West Indies generally, and in British Guiana particularly.<sup>518</sup> Racial solidarity between Indo-Guyanese and Afro-Guyanese in the form of radical anticolonialism and militant nationalism was seen as a threat to American national security because it promised to provide a fundamental challenge to Western capitalism in a region that was strategic to Cold War maneuvering.

### Conclusion

Because of the fears that they unleashed, U.S. and West Indian Black radicals became subjected to multifarious modes of anticommunist discipline and punishment. Anticommunism/antiradicalism/antiblackness became one of the definitive instrumentalities of U.S. state and empire that abjected Black radical thought from dominant discourse. In its deployment, it was meant to undermine, marginalize, and/or neutralize leftist nationalist and internationalist struggles; anti-imperial anticolonialism that challenged development and modernization theories and the hegemony of the U.S.; interracial and antiracist struggles that threatened American accumulation; and non-Western ideological formations that potentiated autonomy for the Global South. Any method of organization that challenged the pedagogy of the U.S. state and empire became subjected to forms of niggerization that were used to rationalize violence and intervention. Through anticommunism/antiradicalism/antiblackness, the United States was able to turn its targets and enemies into dangerous, seditious, and treasonous insurgents. With the advent of the Cold War, American domestic and foreign policy became contingent upon the denial of civil rights, civil liberties, autonomy, and self-determination to individuals, groups, and states that refused to take a staunch anticommunist position and that decided to assert freedom and liberation on their own terms.

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<sup>1</sup> Here I use Clarence Lang’s definition of radical thought: “an ideological trend that pursues the qualitative transformation of a given society either through massive reforms that dramatically redistribute wealth and power, or through revolutionary upheaval.” Clarence Lang, “Freedom Train Derailed: The National Negro Labor Council and the Nadir of Black Radicalism,” in *Anti-Communism and the African American Freedom Movement* edited by Robbie Liberman and Clarence Lang, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), 183 note 5.

<sup>2</sup> Dennis Forsythe, “West Indian Radicalism in America: An Assessment of Ideologies,” in *Ethnicity in the Americas* edited by Frances Henry, (Stuttgart: Walter de Gruyter, 2011), 302; Ira Reid, “Negro Migration to the United States,” *Social Forces* 16 (1937-1938), 221.

<sup>3</sup> W.A. Domingo, “Gift of the Black Tropics,” in *The American Negro* edited by Alain Locke, (New York: Arno, 1968), 346; Perry Mars, “Caribbean Influences in African-American Political Struggles,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 27 (2004), 574; Forsythe, “West Indian Radicalism,” 301.

<sup>4</sup> Carole Boyce Davies, ed., *Claudia Jones: Beyond Containment*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publisher, Inc., 2011), 18.

<sup>5</sup> Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 72.

<sup>6</sup> Mars, “Caribbean Influences,” 566.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 573.

<sup>8</sup> Forsythe, “West Indian Radicalism,” 304.

<sup>9</sup> Tony Perucci, “The Red Mask of Sanity: Paul Robeson, HUAC, and the Sound of Cold War Performance,” *The Drama Review* 53 (2009), 19-20.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>12</sup> This will be referred to as anticommunism/antiradicalism/antiblackness.



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- <sup>13</sup> Claudia Jones, *Ben Davis: Fighter for Freedom*, (Brooklyn: National Committee to Defend Negro Leadership, 1954).
- <sup>14</sup> Robeson Taj Frazier, *The East is Black: Cold War China in the Black Radical Imagination*, Durham; Duke University Press, 2015), loc. 1738.
- <sup>15</sup> In this instance, “Communism” as a proper noun in quotation marks connotes all forms of radicalism that the U.S. deemed communist to rationalize and legitimate the use of force, repression, and violence.
- <sup>16</sup> Richard Freeland, *The Truman Doctrine and the Origins of McCarthyism: Foreign Policy, Domestic Politics, and Internal Security, 1946-1988*, (New York: New York University Press, 1970), 5. By 1948, Americans had lost hope for cooperation between the U.S and the U.S.S.R.; the Senate endorsed the strengthening of the Armed Forces and the Pentagon took steps toward arming the U.S for the Cold War; and American foreign policy was unambiguously based on opposition to the U.S.S.R. Ibid, 8.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid., 6.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid., 10, 88-101.
- <sup>19</sup> Perucci, “The Red Mask of Sanity,” 20.
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid., 10.
- <sup>21</sup> Perucci, “The Red Mask of Sanity,” 20.
- <sup>22</sup> Gerald Horne, “The Case of the Civil Rights Congress: Anti-Communism as an Instrument of Social Repression,” in *Anti-Communism: The Politics of Manipulation* edited by Judith Joel and Gerald M. Erickson, (Minneapolis: MEP Publications, 1987), 121.
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid., 214.
- <sup>24</sup> Perucci, “The Red Mask of Sanity,” 20.
- <sup>25</sup> Buzz Johnson, “*I Think of My Mother*”: *Notes on the Life and Times of Claudia Jones*, (London: Karia Press, 1985), 44.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid., 56.
- <sup>27</sup> Horne, “Case of the Civil Rights Congress,” 119.
- <sup>28</sup> Jones, “*I Think of My Mother*,” 55.
- <sup>29</sup> Jones, *Ben Davis: Fighter for Freedom*.
- <sup>30</sup> Ibid., 57.
- <sup>31</sup> U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigations, “Paul Robeson,” Paul Robeson, Sr. File 100-12304-110, <https://archive.org/details/FBI-Paul-Robeson>. These materials from Paul Robeson and Associates were mailed to J. Edgar Hoover on August 3, 1948 by W.N. Elam, the Acting Chief of Agricultural Education Service, Federal Security Agency, U.S. Office of Education. The letter read enclosed with the materials read, “This material contains several references to Communism and Communist leaders. It occurred to me that since this material was sent to the New Farmers of America, which is an organization of 26,000 Negro boys enrolled in vocational agriculture in public schools, it would be of interest to you to learn of the efforts to bring such statements before national Negro youth organizations. Furthermore, you may rest assured that this material will not be presented to the new Farmers of America for their endorsement.”
- <sup>32</sup> Horne, “Case of the Civil Rights Congress,” 119, 123.
- <sup>33</sup> Ibid., 128.
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>35</sup> C.L.R. James, *Mariners, Renegades, and Castaways: The Story of Herman Melville and the World We Live in*,” (New York: C.L.R. James, 1953), 169.
- <sup>36</sup> Freeland, *The Truman Doctrine*, 219.
- <sup>37</sup> James, *Mariners, Renegades, and Castaways*, 173.
- <sup>38</sup> Ibid., 219.
- <sup>39</sup> Ibid., 207.
- <sup>40</sup> Marika Sherwood, *Claudia Jones: A Life in Exile*, (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1999), 21.
- <sup>41</sup> Ibid., 22.
- <sup>42</sup> Johnson, “*I Think of My Mother*,” 29.
- <sup>43</sup> Ibid., 31.
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>45</sup> Sherwood, *A Life in Exile*, 22-23.
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid., 25.
- <sup>47</sup> Freeland, *The Truman Doctrine*, 217.
- <sup>48</sup> Ibid., 228.

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- <sup>49</sup> Davies, *Claudia Jones: Beyond Containment*, 17.
- <sup>50</sup> Sherwood, *A Life in Exile*, 25.
- <sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.
- <sup>52</sup> Davies, *Claudia Jones: Beyond Containment*, 17.
- <sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 56.
- <sup>54</sup> Johnson, "I Think of My Mother," 52.
- <sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.
- <sup>56</sup> Davies, *Claudia Jones: Beyond Containment*, 130-131.
- <sup>57</sup> Davies, ed., *Claudia Jones: Beyond Containment*, 16.
- <sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>59</sup> Claudia Jones, "An End to the Neglect of the Problems of the Negro Woman!" in *Let Nobody Turn Us Around, Second Edition*, edited by Manning Marable, (Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers Inc., 2009), 316.
- <sup>60</sup> Robbie Liberman, "'Does that Make it a Bad Word?' American Response to the Communist Peace Offensive, 1949-1950," *Peace and Change* 17 (1992): 198-225.
- <sup>61</sup> Jones, "An End to the Neglect," 317.
- <sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 325.
- <sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 326.
- <sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 323.
- <sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 316.
- <sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 317.
- <sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 324.
- <sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 317-318.
- <sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 320.
- <sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 321-322.
- <sup>71</sup> Carole Boyce Davies, *Left of Karl Marx: The Political life of Black Communist Claudia Jones*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 135.
- <sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 137.
- <sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>74</sup> U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigations, "Changed: PAUL ROBESON wa John Thomas," Paul Robeson, Sr. File 100-25857, <https://archive.org/details/FBI-Paul-Robeson>.
- <sup>75</sup> Lisa Brock, "Black America's Contradictory Politics of Inclusion, 1898-1998," *Peace Review* 10 (1998), 358.
- <sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>77</sup> Martin Duberman, *Paul Robeson: A Biography*, (New York: Open Road, 1988), 444.
- <sup>78</sup> U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigations, "PAUL ROBESON, was." Paul Robeson, Sr. File 100-25857, <https://archive.org/details/FBI-Paul-Robeson>.
- <sup>79</sup> James Meriwether, *Proudly We Can Be Africans: Black Americans and Africa, 1935-1961*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 82.
- <sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.
- <sup>81</sup> U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigations, "PAUL ROBESON, was.," Paul Robeson, Sr. File 100-12304-279, <https://archive.org/details/FBI-Paul-Robeson>. Quoting the *Daily Worker*, April 6, 1952.
- <sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.
- <sup>83</sup> U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, Paul Robeson, Sr. File 100-56680, <https://archive.org/details/FBI-Paul-Robeson>.
- <sup>84</sup> Beeching, "Paul Robeson and the Black Press," 353.
- <sup>85</sup> Brock, "Black America's Contradictory," 357, 359.
- <sup>86</sup> U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigations, "Paul Robeson, wa.: John Thomas," Paul Robeson, Sr. File 100-25857, <https://archive.org/details/FBI-Paul-Robeson>.
- <sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>88</sup> Beeching, "Paul Robeson and the Black Press," 339.
- <sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 341.
- <sup>90</sup> Paul Robeson, "Negroes in the Ranks of the World Front in its Fight for Peace and Progress," *Trybunu Ludu*, June 2, 1949.
- <sup>91</sup> Brock, "Black America's Contradictory," 359-360
- <sup>92</sup> Duberman, *Paul Robeson*, 170-171, 185-190, 210-227.

- <sup>93</sup> Hollis R. Lynch, *Black American Radicals and the Liberation of Africa: The Council of African Affairs, 1937-1955*, (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1978), 17; Brock, “Black American’s Contradictory Politics,” 357.
- <sup>94</sup> U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigations, “ESLANDA GOODE ROBESON, also known as Mrs. Paul Leroy Robeson and Essie Robeson,” Paul Robeson, Sr. File 100-8032, <https://archive.org/details/FBI-Paul-Robeson>. The document reads: “It should be noted that the Council on African Affairs, 1123 Broadway is reported as a Communist Front organization whose Chairman is PAUL ROBESON and whose Executive Director is MAX YERGAN.”
- <sup>95</sup> Penny Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957*, (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1997), loc. 471.
- <sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, loc. 486.
- <sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, loc. 1380. In August 1946, sixty to seventy thousand South African miner went on strike for a week and met brutal resistance from the South Africa State. At least twelve Africans were killed and thousands were injured by police intervention. Robeson and the CAA appealed to Black Americans to protest this treatment given the link between the interests of the South African gold economy and U.S. patronage.
- <sup>98</sup> Paul Robeson, “A Message from the Chairman to Members and Friends of the Council on African Affairs,” in Philip S. Foner, *Paul Robeson Speaks*, (New York: Citadel Press, 1978), 224.
- <sup>99</sup> Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire*, loc. 1290.
- <sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, loc. 1327.
- <sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>102</sup> Meriwether, *We Can Be Africans*, 80.
- <sup>103</sup> Brock, “Black American’s Contradictory Politics,” 359.
- <sup>104</sup> Meriwether, *We Can Be Africans*, 80.
- <sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>106</sup> U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigations, “Paul Robeson, wa.: John Thomas,” Paul Robeson, Sr. File 100-25857, <https://archive.org/details/FBI-Paul-Robeson>.
- <sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, Reported in the *New York Sun* on June 4, 1948.
- <sup>108</sup> *Ibid.* Reported by the *Daily Worker* on September 29, 1948.
- <sup>109</sup> Lieberman, “Does That Make Peace,” 201.
- <sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 202-203.
- <sup>111</sup> Perucci, “The Red Mask of Sanity,” 19.
- <sup>112</sup> U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigations, “Paul Robeson, wa.: John Thomas,” Paul Robeson, Sr. File 100-25857, <https://archive.org/details/FBI-Paul-Robeson>.
- <sup>113</sup> Meriwether, *We Can Be Africans*, 81.
- <sup>114</sup> U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigations, “Paul Robeson, wa.: John Thomas,” Paul Robeson, Sr. File 100-25857, <https://archive.org/details/FBI-Paul-Robeson>.
- <sup>115</sup> *Ibid.* Reported in *Trybunu Ludu*, June 22, 1949.
- <sup>116</sup> Meriwether, *We Can Be Africans*, 81.
- <sup>117</sup> Robbie Lieberman, “‘Measure Them Right’: Lorraine Hansberry and the Struggle for Peace,” *Science and Society* 75 (2011), 213.
- <sup>118</sup> Duberman, *Paul Robeson*, 359; Perucci, “The Red Mask of Sanity,” 19.
- <sup>119</sup> Meriwether, *We Can Be Africans*, 81.
- <sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.
- <sup>121</sup> Perucci, “The Red Mask of Sanity,” 20.
- <sup>122</sup> Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 9.
- <sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.
- <sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.
- <sup>125</sup> Woodrow Wilson, “Fourteen points,” (speech, Joint Session of Congress, Washington, D.C., January 8, 1918).
- <sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>127</sup> Kenneth J. Twitchett, “The American National Interest and the Anti-Colonial Crusade,” *International Relations* 3 (1967), 275.
- <sup>128</sup> In the 1930s, the U.S. Linked colonialism and international instability given Japanese expansion into Asia and Italian expansion into Africa, and the problems that followed. Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 10.
- <sup>129</sup> Richard Dalfiume, “The ‘Forgotten Years’ of the Negro Revolution,” *The Journal of American History* 55 (1980), 94.
- <sup>130</sup> Twitchett, “The American National Interest,” 275-276.
- <sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 275.

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- <sup>132</sup> Cary, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 11.
- <sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 23
- <sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>135</sup> Colin A. Palmer, *Eric Williams and the Making of the Modern Caribbean*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 199.
- <sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, 281.
- <sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, 279.
- <sup>138</sup> Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 15-16.
- <sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.
- <sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 282.
- <sup>141</sup> Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 14.
- <sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, 285. This supports Cary Fraser's thesis that U.S. support for anticolonialism in the Commonwealth Caribbean waxed and waned based on its own strategic and anticommunist concerns. See Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 1-8. See also Paul Blanshard, *Democracy and Empire in the Caribbean*, (New York: Macmillan, 1949) and Annette Baker Fox, *Freedom from Welfare in the Caribbean*, (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1949).
- <sup>143</sup> Maurice St. Pierre, *Eric Williams and the Anticolonial Tradition: The Making of a Diasporan Intellectual*, (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2015), 41
- <sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, 42; Ken Boodhoo, *The Elusive Eric Williams*, (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, Inc., 2002), 69.
- <sup>145</sup> Tony Martin, "Eric Williams and the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission: Trinidad's Future Nationalist Leader as Aspiring Imperial Bureaucrat, 1942-1944," *The Journal of African American History* 88 (2003), 274; David Hinds, "Afterword: Reflections on Eric Williams and the Challenges of Postcolonial Caribbean Political Leadership," in *The Legacy of Eric Williams: Into the Postcolonial Moment* edited by Tanya L. Shields, (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2015), 192.
- <sup>146</sup> Eric Williams, *The Negro in the Caribbean*, (Washington, D.C.: The Associates in Negro Education, 1942), 104.
- <sup>147</sup> V.T. Harlow to Eric Williams, 21 October 1977, Eric Williams Memorial Collection, University of the West Indies St. Augustine, Trinidad (hereafter EWMC), folder 005, Oxford University: No. 4-Postgraduate Years.
- <sup>148</sup> See Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1944).
- <sup>149</sup> Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 278; St. Pierre, *Eric Williams and the Anticolonial Tradition*, 36, 39; Marika Sherwood, "Eric Williams (1911-81)" in *Pan-African History: Political figures from Africa and the Diaspora since 1787* edited by Hakim Adi and Marika Sherwood, (London: Routledge, 2003), 185; Boodhoo, *The Elusive Eric Williams*, 78; Colin Palmer, *Eric Williams and the Making*, 16.
- <sup>150</sup> Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 210.
- <sup>151</sup> Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, ix; Sherwood, "Eric Williams (1911-81)," 185; Martin, "Eric Williams and the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission," 275; Dale Tomich, "*Capitalism and Slavery* Revisited: Remaking the Slave Commodity Frontier," in *The Legacy of Eric Williams: Into the Postcolonial Moment* edited by Tanya L. Shields, (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2015), 172.
- <sup>152</sup> Eric Williams, *British Historians and the West Indies*, (Brooklyn: A & B Books Distributors Inc., 1994), 233; Tomich, "*Capitalism and Slavery* Revisited," 175; Palmer, *Eric Williams and the Making*, 17.
- <sup>153</sup> Frank Tannenbaum, "Book Review," *Political Science Quarterly* 61 (1962): 212.
- <sup>154</sup> Palmer, *Eric Williams and the Making*, 29.
- <sup>155</sup> Eric Williams, *Inward Hunger: The Education of a Prime Minister*, (London: Andre Deutsch 1969), 110.
- <sup>156</sup> Hinds, "Afterword," 189.
- <sup>157</sup> Palmer, *Eric Williams and the Making*, 27.
- <sup>158</sup> Frazier and Williams, *The Economic Future of the Caribbean*, 19-24.
- <sup>159</sup> Jerome Teelucksigh, "The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly: Eric Williams and the Labor Movement in Trinidad and Tobago, 1955-1981," in *The Legacy of Eric Williams: Into the Postcolonial Moment* edited by Tanya L. Shields, (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2015), 130.
- <sup>159</sup> Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 146.
- <sup>160</sup> St. Pierre, *Eric Williams and the Anticolonial Tradition*, 64; Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 66.
- <sup>161</sup> Williams, "Eric Williams Annual Report in Reference to Memorandum of 30<sup>th</sup> May 1944," *ibid.*
- <sup>162</sup> Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 69; Martin, "Eric Williams and the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission," 274; S. Burns Weston, "The Anglo-American Caribbean Commission," in *The Economic Future of the Caribbean* edited by E. Franklin Frazier and Eric Williams, (Dover: The Majority Press, 2004), 73; Boodhoo, *The Elusive Eric Williams*, 85.

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- <sup>163</sup> St. Pierre, *Eric Williams and the Anticolonial Tradition*, 64; Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 83; Boodhoo, *The Elusive Eric Williams*, 90.
- <sup>164</sup> Martin, "Eric Williams and the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission," 284; St. Pierre, *Eric Williams and the Anticolonial Tradition*, 64.
- <sup>165</sup> Frazier and Williams, *The Economic Future of the Caribbean*, 36.
- <sup>166</sup> Martin, "Eric Williams and the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission," 276-277; St. Pierre, *Eric Williams and the Anticolonial Tradition*, 47.
- <sup>167</sup> Sherwood, "Eric Williams (1911-81)," 186; St. Pierre, *Eric Williams and the Anticolonial Tradition*, 65.
- <sup>168</sup> Boodhoo, *The Elusive Eric Williams*, 87; Palmer, *Eric Williams and the Making*, 20; Eric Williams, "My Relations with the Caribbean Commission," in *Eric E. Williams Speaks: Essays on Colonialism and Independence* edited by Selwyn Cudjoe, (Wellesley: Calaloux Publications, 1993), 125.
- <sup>169</sup> Palmer, *Eric Williams and the Making*, 20.
- <sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, 286.
- <sup>171</sup> Williams, *Inward Hunger*, 92; St. Pierre, *Eric Williams and the Anticolonial Tradition*, 69; Boodhoo, *The Elusive Eric Williams*, 88.
- <sup>172</sup> Boodhoo, *The Elusive Eric Williams*, 92.
- <sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>174</sup> Palmer, *Eric Williams and the Making*, 27.
- <sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.
- <sup>176</sup> Williams to Sir John Macpherson, K.C.M.G., 28 May 1945, EWMC, folder 025, Teaching appointment at Howard University.
- <sup>177</sup> Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* edited by Graham Burchelle et al., (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 87-104.
- <sup>178</sup> Dr. J. St. Clair Price to Eric Williams, 1 May 1946, *ibid.*
- <sup>179</sup> Williams to Dr. J. St. Clair Price, 8 July 1946, *ibid.*
- <sup>180</sup> Dr. J. St. Clair Price to Eric Williams, 16 July 1946, *ibid.*
- <sup>181</sup> Williams, "Report of an Interview with Dean Price, July 29, 1946," *ibid.*
- <sup>182</sup> Eric Williams to Dr. Mordecai W. Johnson, 10 August 1946, *ibid.*
- <sup>183</sup> Dr. J. St. Clair Price to Eric Williams, 8 October 1946, *Ibid.*
- <sup>184</sup> Eric Williams to Mr. Carey McWilliams, 17 June 1955, EWMC, Folder 061, Termination of Appointment, 1955: Caribbean Commission.
- <sup>185</sup> St. Pierre, *Eric Williams and the Anticolonial Tradition*, 68; Boodhoo, *The Elusive Eric Williams*, 97.
- <sup>186</sup> Williams, "My Relations with the Caribbean Commission," 160.
- <sup>187</sup> Martin, "Eric Williams and the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission," 273.
- <sup>188</sup> Eric Williams to George Padmore, 17 June 1955, EWMC, Folder 061, Termination of Appointment, 1955: Caribbean Commission; Caribbean Commission, "Memorandum on Termination of Eric Williams," 24 June 1955, EWMC, Folder 061, Termination of Appointment, 1955: Caribbean Commission; *Ibid.*, 275; St. Pierre, *Eric Williams and the Anticolonial Tradition*, 69.
- <sup>189</sup> Boodhoo, *The Elusive Eric Williams*, 110.
- <sup>190</sup> Ivar Oxaal, *Black Intellectuals Come to Power: The Rise of Creole Power in Trinidad & Tobago*, (Cambridge: Schenkman Publishing Co., 1968), 110.
- <sup>191</sup> Palmer, *Eric Williams and the Making*, 21.
- <sup>192</sup> Sherwood, "Eric Williams (1911-81)," 187.
- <sup>193</sup> Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 187; Boodhoo, *The Elusive Eric Williams*, 105; Palmer, *Eric Williams and the Making*, 10.
- <sup>194</sup> Eric Williams to George Padmore, 17 June 1955, EWMC, Folder 061, Termination of Appointment, 1955: Caribbean Commission.
- <sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*, 156.
- <sup>196</sup> Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 148-149.
- <sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*, 151.
- <sup>198</sup> Williams, "Address to the Special Convention for the 1961 General Elections," EWMC, Folder 827.
- <sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*, 154-155.
- <sup>200</sup> Sherwood, "Eric Williams (1911-81)," 157.
- <sup>201</sup> Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 157-158; Boodhoo, *The Elusive Eric Williams*, 167.

- <sup>202</sup> Palmer, *Eric Williams and the Making*, 22-25; Selwyn Cudjoe, *Eric E. Williams Speaks: Essays on Colonialism and Independence*, (Wellesley: Calaloux Publications, 1993), 238-257.
- <sup>203</sup> Percy Hintzen, *The Cost of Regime Survival: Racial Mobilization, Elite Domination, and Control of the State in Guyana and Trinidad*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 2.
- <sup>204</sup> Williams, "Address to the Special Convention for the 1961 General Elections," EWMC, Folder 827.
- <sup>205</sup> Williams, "Prime Minister's Press Conference, New York: Statement by Dr. Eric Williams before his Press Conference at the Waldorf Astoria," 30 April 1964, Patricia Raymond's Dr. Eric Williams Collection, University of the West Indies St. Augustine, Trinidad (hereafter PRDEWC), Box 1, Folder 5.
- <sup>206</sup> Williams, "The Developing Nation in the Modern World," 20 May 1968, PRDEWC, Box 1, Folder 5.
- <sup>207</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>208</sup> Williams, *British Historians and the West Indies*, iv.
- <sup>209</sup> Palmer, *Eric Williams and the Making*, 18.
- <sup>210</sup> Williams, "Press Conference on arrival at Nairobi Airport," 3 September 1964, PRDEWC, Box 1, Folder 5; Williams, "Press Conference at Entebbe Airport," 3 September 1964, PRDEWC, Box 1, Folder 5; Sherwood, "Eric Williams (1911-81)," 188.
- <sup>211</sup> Williams, "Report by the Prime Minister on the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference," 23 July 1965, PRDEWC, Box 1, Folder 5.
- <sup>212</sup> Hintzen, *The Cost of Regime Survival*, 16.
- <sup>213</sup> Williams, "An Address, Deliver by Dr. The Rt. Hon. Eric Williams Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago and Political Leader of the PNM, to the Ninth Annual Convention," 24 September 1965, PRDEWC, Box 1, Folder 5.
- <sup>214</sup> Palmer, *Eric Williams and the Making*, 205-206.
- <sup>215</sup> 211-212.
- <sup>216</sup> Ibid., 211.
- <sup>217</sup> Williams, "Proposals for the Accession of British Guiana to Independence," 7 July 1964, PRDEWC, Box 1, Folder 5.
- <sup>218</sup> Ibid., 212-221.
- <sup>219</sup> Ibid., 221.
- <sup>220</sup> St. Pierre, *Eric Williams and the Anticolonial Tradition*, 120.
- <sup>221</sup> Paul K. Sutton, ed., *Forged from the Love of Liberty: Selected Speeches of Dr. Eric Williams*, (Port of Spain: Longman Caribbean, 1981), 318.
- <sup>222</sup> Boodhoo, *The Elusive Eric Williams*, 167-168.
- <sup>223</sup> Teelucksigh, "The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly," 130.
- <sup>224</sup> Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 159.
- <sup>225</sup> Boodhoo, *The Elusive Eric Williams*, 168.
- <sup>226</sup> Williams, *Inward Hunger*, 311.
- <sup>227</sup> Teelucksigh, "The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly," 132.
- <sup>228</sup> Ibid., 131.
- <sup>229</sup> Ibid., 136-137.
- <sup>230</sup> Hintzen, *The Cost of Regime Survival*, 84.
- <sup>231</sup> Gordon Rohlehr, "The Culture of Eric Williams: Context, Performance, Legacy," *Callaloo* 24 (1997), 868.
- <sup>232</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>233</sup> Hinds, "Afterword," 191.
- <sup>234</sup> Boodhoo, *The Elusive Eric Williams*, 201.
- <sup>235</sup> Sherwood, "Eric Williams (1911-81)," 188.
- <sup>236</sup> "We Don't Want Crumbs: We Want the Whole Bread," National Joint Action Committee, March 1970. On Stokely Carmichael, see Stokely Carmichael and Ekwueme Michael Thelwell, *Ready for Revolution: The Life and Struggle of Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Turé)*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003).
- <sup>237</sup> Hintzen, *The Cost of Regime Survival*, 81.
- <sup>238</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>239</sup> Ibid., 82.
- <sup>240</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>241</sup> Robert L. Tignor, *W. Arthur Lewis and the Birth of Development Economics*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 6.
- <sup>242</sup> Ibid., 2.

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- <sup>243</sup> Berhanu Abegaz, "W. Arthur Lewis," (The College of William and Mary: Department of Economics Working Paper 152, 2014), 1.
- <sup>244</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.
- <sup>245</sup> Lloyd Best, "Reflections on the Reflections," in *Independent Thought and Caribbean Freedom: Essays in Honour of Lloyd Best*, edited by Selwyn Ryan, (St Augustine: Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies, 2003), 426.
- <sup>246</sup> Abegaz, "W. Arthur Lewis," 8.
- <sup>247</sup> Lewis's attitude is manifested in his statement toward the Fabian-controlled colonial government in the 1940s: "We must give the new Government time, and see what it does... If it does change, we must co-operate. If not, then... we must push the British out and do the bet we can for ourselves." Rita Hinden, *Socialist and the Empire: Five Years' Work of the Fabian Colonial Bureau*, (London: Fabian Publications and Victor Gollancz, 1946), 3.
- <sup>248</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.
- <sup>249</sup> Abegaz, "W. Arthur Lewis," 24.
- <sup>250</sup> W. Arthur Lewis, *Racial Conflict and Economic Development*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), 67-68.
- <sup>251</sup> W. Arthur Lewis, *Domination or Co-Operation?*, (London: Fabian Publications and Victor Gollancz, 1946), 5-9.
- <sup>252</sup> W. Arthur Lewis, "Economic Development with Unlimited Supplies of Labour," *Manchester School* 22 (1954), 149-150, 159-160.
- <sup>253</sup> Yoichi Mine, "A Political Element in the Work of W. Arthur Lewis: A Black Fabian's Attitude to Africa," presented at *The Lewis Model After 50 Years*, University of Manchester, July 6-7, 2004, 11.
- <sup>254</sup> W. Arthur Lewis, "Development Economics in the 1950s," *Pioneer in Development*, edited by Gerald Meier and Dudley Seers, (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the World Bank 1984), 136.
- <sup>255</sup> Norman Girvan, "Sir Arthur Lewis—A Man of His Time; And Ahead of His Time," (UWI St. Augustine: Distinguished Lecture, Year of Sir Arthur Lewis, 2008), 4.
- <sup>256</sup> W. Arthur Lewis, "Beyond African Dictatorship: The Crisis of the One-Party State," *Encounter* (1965), 2-3.
- <sup>257</sup> *Ibid.*, 4; W. Arthur Lewis, *The Theory of Economic Growth*, (London: George Allen & Unwin: 1954), 187-91.
- <sup>258</sup> *Ibid.*, 4-5.
- <sup>259</sup> *Ibid.*, 5-7.
- <sup>260</sup> *Ibid.*, 10-14.
- <sup>261</sup> Mine, "A Political Element," 3.
- <sup>262</sup> W. Arthur Lewis, "The Agony of the Eight," *Journal of Eastern Caribbean Studies* 23 (1998), 12.
- <sup>263</sup> Lewis, "Beyond African Dictatorship," 5-6.
- <sup>264</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>265</sup> Arend Lijphart, "Cultural Diversity and Theories of Political Integration," *Candaian Journal of Political Science* 4 (1971); Daniel T. Osabu-Kle, "Compatible Cultural Democracy: The Key to Development in Africa," (Orchard Park: Broadview Press, 2000), 34-35; Arend Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies, A Comparative Exploration*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 143-147.
- <sup>266</sup> Osabu-Kle, *Compatible Cultural Democracy*, 36.
- <sup>267</sup> Norman Girvan, "W.A. Lewis, The Plantation School, and Dependency: An Interpretation," *Social and Economic Studies* 54 (2005), 199.
- <sup>268</sup> Gustav Ranis, "Arthur Lewis's Contribution to Development Thinking and Policy," (Yale University: Economic Growth Center Discussion Paper 891, 2004), 4.
- <sup>269</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.
- <sup>270</sup> Abegaz, "W. Arthur Lewis," 13.
- <sup>271</sup> Lewis, *Theory of Economic Growth*, 193-194.
- <sup>272</sup> W. Arthur Lewis, *Labour in the West Indies: The Birth of a Workers Movement*, (London: Fabian Society, 1939), 13; Lewis, *Domination or Co-Operation*, 5.
- <sup>273</sup> Girvan, "W.A. Lewis, The Plantation School, and Dependency," 209.
- <sup>274</sup> Arthur Lewis, "Black Power and the University," *PAW* (1969), 2.
- <sup>275</sup> *Ibid.*, 2-3.
- <sup>276</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.
- <sup>277</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.
- <sup>278</sup> Lewis, "Development Economics in the 1950s," 129.

- <sup>279</sup> Girvan, "W.A. Lewis, The Plantation School, and Dependency," 199. "Lewis was impressed with the success of Puerto Rican industrialization policies, which he studied during his stint with the Caribbean Commission in the late 1940s," 200.
- <sup>280</sup> Lewis, "Development Economics in the 1950s," 129.
- <sup>281</sup> Ibid., 134. The New World economists critiqued Lewis's position on the role of foreign investment: "They pointed out that this investment was carried out by establishing subsidiaries of multinational corporations (MNCs), which are international oligopolies likely to create barriers to entry by local entrepreneurs. They argued that job creation was limited because MNCs used capital-intensive techniques, sourced their intermediate goods abroad, did not reinvest their profits locally, and did not share their technology with locals. Local entrepreneurs adopted imported technologies, promoting technological dependence." Girvan, "W.A. Lewis, The Plantation School, and Dependency," 212.
- <sup>282</sup> Girvan, "W.A. Lewis, The Plantation School, and Dependency," 201.
- <sup>283</sup> Lewis, "Unlimited Supplies of Labor," 400-449.
- <sup>284</sup> Girvan, "Sir Arthur Lewis," 5.
- <sup>285</sup> Lewis, *Theory of Economic Growth*, 120-136.
- <sup>286</sup> Ranis, "Arthur Lewis's Contribution," 5. The turning point is "the time when labor reallocation has outstripped population growth long enough for dualism to atrophy and the economy to become fully commercialized."
- <sup>287</sup> Assar Lindbeck, *Nobel Lectures, Economics 1969-1980*, (Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Co, 1992), 397.
- <sup>288</sup> Lewis, "Unlimited Supplies of Labor," 139-191; W. Arthur Lewis, "The Dual Economy Revisited," *Manchester School* 47 (1979), 211-29.
- <sup>289</sup> Abegaz, "W. Arthur Lewis," 17.
- <sup>290</sup> Ibid., 19.
- <sup>291</sup> Ibid., 27.
- <sup>292</sup> Ranis, "Arthur Lewis's Contribution," 14.
- <sup>293</sup> Lewis, "Unlimited Supplies of Labor," 174-175.
- <sup>294</sup> Ranis, "Arthur Lewis's Contribution," 13.
- <sup>295</sup> Mine, "A Political Element," 11.
- <sup>296</sup> Ibid., 6.
- <sup>297</sup> Arthur Lewis, "Education and Economic Development," *Social and Economic Studies* 10 (1961), 19-33.
- <sup>298</sup> W. Arthur Lewis, "Reflections on Unlimited Labor," *International Economics and Development: Essays in Honor of Raul Prebisch*, edited by Luis DiMarco, (New York: Academic Press, 1972), 93. "Real wages [could not] be constant if agricultural productivity [was] rising significantly, since this would be moving the factorial terms of trade against industry."
- <sup>299</sup> Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 9.
- <sup>300</sup> Ibid., 50 note 1.
- <sup>301</sup> J.W. Ford, "The First International Conference of Negro Workers: Its Accomplishments and Future Tasks," *The Red International of Labor Unions*, August-September 1930, 212; Hakim Adi, *Pan Africanism and Communism: The Communist International, Africa and the Diaspora, 1919-1939*, (Trenton: African world Press, 2013), 88.
- <sup>302</sup> Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 40.
- <sup>303</sup> Ibid., 41.
- <sup>304</sup> Arthur M. Ross, "The Negro Worker in the Great Depression," *Social Forces* 18 (1940), 550-551.
- <sup>305</sup> Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 10.
- <sup>306</sup> Ibid., 37.
- <sup>307</sup> Lang, "Freedom Train Derailed," 170.
- <sup>308</sup> Mars, "Caribbean Influences," 575.
- <sup>309</sup> Brock, "Black American's Contradictory Politics," 359.
- <sup>310</sup> Lang, "Freedom Train Derailed," 165; Harry Haywood, *Black Bolshevik: Autobiography of an Afro-American Communist* (Chicago, Liberator Press, 1978), 253-365; Susan Campbell, "'Black Bolsheviks' and Recognition of African-America's Right to Self-Determination by the Communist Party USA," *Science & Society* 58 (1994-1995), 440-469; Glenda Gilmore, *Defying Dixie: The Racial Roots of Civil Rights, 1919-1950*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008), 51-65.
- <sup>311</sup> V. Chattopadhyaya, "The First International Conference of Negro Workers," 2 October 1930. [OpenSourceGuine.org](http://OpenSourceGuine.org).
- <sup>312</sup> Richard Nixon, "The Emergence of Africa," in *The Department of State Bulletin* 36, No. 930, (April 22, 1957), Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 640.



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- <sup>313</sup> Ibid., 636.
- <sup>314</sup> Ibid., 636-637.
- <sup>315</sup> Ibid., 638.
- <sup>316</sup> Ibid., 639-640.
- <sup>317</sup> Rupert Lewis, "George Padmore: Toward a Political Assessment," in *Caribbean Reasoning: George Padmore: Pan-African Revolutionary*, (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2009), loc. 4059; James R. Hooker, *Black Revolutionary: George Padmore's Path from Communism to Pan-Africanism*, (London: Pall Mall Press, 1967), 6.
- <sup>318</sup> Lewis, "Toward a Political Assessment," loc. 4062.
- <sup>319</sup> Leslie James, "'What We Put in Black and White': George Padmore and the Practice of Anti-Imperial Politics," (master's thesis, London School of Economics, 2012), 22; Laura Wienkel, *Modernism, Race and Manifesto*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 162.
- <sup>320</sup> Hooker, *Black Revolutionary*, 15
- <sup>321</sup> Rodney Worrell, "George Padmore: Pan-Africanist Par Excellence," in *Caribbean Reasoning: George Padmore: Pan-African Revolutionary*, (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2009), loc. 890.
- <sup>322</sup> Lewis, "Toward a Political Assessment," loc. 4146.
- <sup>323</sup> Ibid., loc. 984.
- <sup>324</sup> Worell, "Pan-Africanist Par Excellence," loc. 897; CLR James, *At the Rendezvous of Victory*, (London: Allison and Busby, 1984), 255.
- <sup>325</sup> Hooker, *Black Revolutionary*, 27; Solomon, *The Cry Was Unity*, 178.
- <sup>326</sup> George Padmore, ed., "Colonial and Colored Unity," in Hakim Adi and Marika Sherwood, *The 1945 Manchester Pan-African Congress Revisited with Colonial and Coloured Unity*, (London: Beacon Boos, 1995), 61.
- <sup>327</sup> Lewis, "Toward a Political Assessment," loc. 3940-3962.
- <sup>328</sup> Ibid., loc. 4024.
- <sup>329</sup> Immanuel Geiss, *The Pan-African Movement*, trans. Anna Keep, (London: Meuthen, 1974), 322.
- <sup>330</sup> Anna Grimshaw, *The CLR James Reader*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 289.
- <sup>331</sup> Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 280.
- <sup>332</sup> Ibid., 279.
- <sup>333</sup> Worell, "Pan-Africanist Par Excellence," loc. 944.
- <sup>334</sup> Ford, "First International Conference of Negro Workers," 211.
- <sup>335</sup> Susan Pennybacker et al, "Mother Ada Wright and the International Campaign to Free the Scottsboro Boys, 1931-1934," *American Historical Review* 1(2001), 399; Worell, "Pan-Africanist Par Excellence," 945.
- <sup>336</sup> Ford, "First International Conference of Negro Workers," 211.
- <sup>337</sup> Ibid., 213.
- <sup>338</sup> *Negro Worker* 3/Special number, (15 October 1930), 7-14; Adi, *Pan-Africanism and Communism*, 113-114.
- <sup>339</sup> Ibid., 17-18.
- <sup>340</sup> Worell, "Pan-Africanist Par Excellence," loc. 1073.
- <sup>341</sup> "Pan-Africanism is an ideology and movement concerned with the dignity, liberation, transformation, unification and independence of Africa and African descendants worldwide." Worrell, "Pan-Africanist Par Excellence," loc. 851.
- <sup>342</sup> George Padmore, "An Open Letter to Earl Browder," *The Crisis*, (October 1955), 302, 315; Adi, *Pan Africanism and Communism*," xiii.
- <sup>343</sup> Mark Naison, *Communists in Harlem During the Great Depression*, (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1983), 156.
- <sup>344</sup> Ibid., loc. 4076.
- <sup>345</sup> Ibid., 961; Solomon, *The Cry Was Unity*," 181.
- <sup>346</sup> Lewis, "Toward a Political Assessment," loc. 4011.
- <sup>347</sup> Hooker, *Black Revolutionary*, 33.
- <sup>348</sup> Ibid., 14.
- <sup>349</sup> Mark Solomon, *The Cry Was Unity: Communists and African-Americans, 1917-1936*, (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1998), 177.
- <sup>350</sup> Hooker, *Black Revolutionary*, 14.
- <sup>351</sup> James, "'What We Put in Black and White,'" 124-125.
- <sup>352</sup> Ellis, *Negro Subversion*, 242.
- <sup>353</sup> Ibid.

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- <sup>354</sup> Ibid., summary 2.
- <sup>355</sup> *Crisis*, XVI (July 1918), 111.
- <sup>356</sup> Ellis, *Negro Subversion*, 247.
- <sup>357</sup> Ibid., 247. This assertion was made by Captain James L. Bruff in a July 13, 1918 Memorandum entitled, "Memorandum re. Officers and Directors of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored people." According to Ellis, it was typical of the views of intelligence officers hostile toward liberal groups that "expressed concern for disadvantaged groups in American society."
- <sup>358</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>359</sup> Ibid., 258.
- <sup>360</sup> John Pittman, "The Long Struggle for Peace," *Masses and Mainstream* (1952), 37-43.
- <sup>361</sup> Robbie Lieberman, "'Another Side of the Story': African American Intellectuals Speak Out for Peace and Freedom During the Early Cold War Years," in *Anti-Communism and the African American Freedom Movement* edited by Robbie Liberman and Clarence Lang, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), 37-38.
- <sup>362</sup> Liberman, "Another Side of the Story," 26.
- <sup>363</sup> Herbert Aptheker, ed., *The Correspondence of W.E.B. DuBois, vol. 3: Selections, 1944-1963* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1978), 306.
- <sup>364</sup> W.E.B. DuBois, "Peace: Freedom's Road for Oppressed People," in *W.E.B. DuBois: A Reader* edited by David Levering Lewis, (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1995), 752-754.
- <sup>365</sup> Wilson Record, *Race and Radicalism: The NAACP and the Communist Party in Conflict*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1964), 146.
- <sup>366</sup> Ibid., 175
- <sup>367</sup> DuBois, "Peace: Freedom's Road," 752.
- <sup>368</sup> Lieberman, "Another Side of the Story," 26.; James L. Roark, "American Black Leaders: The Response to Colonialism and the Cold War, 1943-1953," *African Historical Studies* 4 (1971), 265; Meriwether, *Proudly We Can Be Africans*, 87-89; Bill Mullen, *Popular Fronts: Chicago and African-American Cultural Politics, 1935-1946* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 182-184;
- <sup>369</sup> DuBois, "Peace: Freedom's Road," 751.
- <sup>370</sup> W.E.B. DuBois, "The Trial," in *W.E.B. DuBois: A Reader* edited by David Levering Lewis, (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1995), 777-778.
- <sup>371</sup> Lieberman, "Another Side of the Story," 21; Horne, *Black and Red*, 126.
- <sup>372</sup> *New York Times*, July 13, 1950 1; Martha Biondi, *To Stand and Fight: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Postwar New York City*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 160-161; Horne, *Black and Red*, 41.
- <sup>373</sup> Liberman, "Communist Peace Offensive," 212; Horne, *Black and Red*, 132.
- <sup>374</sup> Liberman, "Communist Peace Offensive," 213-214.
- <sup>375</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>376</sup> David Levering Lewis, *W.E.B. DuBois: The Fight for Equality and the American Century, 191-1963*, (New York: Henry Hold and Company, 2000), 547.
- <sup>377</sup> Lewis, *W.E.B. DuBois: The Fight for Equality*, 546.
- <sup>378</sup> Horne, *Black and Red*, 134.
- <sup>379</sup> Liberman, "Communist Peace Offensive," 213; Horne, *Red and Black*, 126, 133.
- <sup>380</sup> Horne, *Black and Red*, 128.
- <sup>381</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>382</sup> Ibid., 130.
- <sup>383</sup> DuBois, "The Trial," 779.
- <sup>384</sup> W.E.B DuBois, *The Autobiography of W.E.B. DuBois*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 233; Liberman, "Another Side of the Story," 22.
- <sup>385</sup> Horne, *Black and Red*, 137.
- <sup>386</sup> Liberman, "Another Side of the Story," 22.
- <sup>387</sup> Horne, *Black and Red*, 151.
- <sup>388</sup> DuBois, "The Trial," 780.
- <sup>389</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>390</sup> CMD Ellis, "'Negro Subversion': The Investigation of Black Unrest and Radicalism by Agencies of the United States Government, 1917-1920," vol. 1, (PhD dissertation, University of Aberdeen, 1984), summary 2-3.
- <sup>391</sup> Ibid., summary 4.
- <sup>392</sup> Robin D.G. Kelley and Betsy Esch, "Black Like Mao: Red China and Black Revolution," *Souls* 1 (1999), 8-9.

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- <sup>393</sup> Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War*, 5; Frazier, *The East is Black*, loc. 2495.
- <sup>394</sup> Frazier, *The East is Black*, 2515.
- <sup>395</sup> Ibid., loc. 1726.
- <sup>396</sup> Ibid., loc. 2485.
- <sup>397</sup> Kelley and Esch, "Black Like Mao," 8.
- <sup>398</sup> Ibid.; W.E.B. DuBois, *The Autobiography of W.E.B. DuBois*, ed. Herbert Aptheker, (New York: International Publishers, 1968), 404.
- <sup>399</sup> Gerald Horne, *Black and Red: W.E.B. DuBois and the Afro-American Response to the Cold War, 1944-1963*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986), 322-323.
- <sup>400</sup> Ibid., 324; Kelley and Esch, "Black Like Mao," 8.
- <sup>401</sup> Frazier, *The East is Black*, loc. 1734.
- <sup>402</sup> Micahel Freeberne, "Racial Issues and the Sino-Soviet Dispute," *Asian Survey* 5 (1965), 408.
- <sup>403</sup> Mao Tse-Tsung, *Statements Supporting the American Negroes in Their Just Struggles Against Racial Discrimination in the United States*, (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1963), 2.
- <sup>404</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>405</sup> Ahmed Sukarno, *Under the Banner of Revolution, vol. 1*, (Jakarta: Paitya Penerbit, 1963), 296-297; Frazier, *The East is Black*, loc. 5793, note 1.
- <sup>406</sup> Harold Cruse, *Rebellion or Revolution?*, (New York: William Morrow Company, Inc., 1968), 73.
- <sup>407</sup> Kelley and Esch, "Black Like Mao," 12; Ibid., 74-75
- <sup>408</sup> Maxwell Stanford, "Revolutionary Action Movement: A Case Study of an Urban Revolutionary Movement in Western Capitalist Society," (master's thesis, Atlanta University, 1986), 197; Kelly and Esch, "Black Like Mao," 14-15.
- <sup>409</sup> Kelley and Esch, "Black Like Mao," 17-18.
- <sup>410</sup> Ibid., 19.
- <sup>411</sup> Frazier, *The East is Black*, loc. 2520.
- <sup>412</sup> Freeberne, "The Sino-Soviet Dispute," 408.
- <sup>413</sup> Frazier, *The East is Black*, loc. 2521; Freeberne, "The Sino-Soviet Dispute," 408.
- <sup>414</sup> Freeberne, "The Sino-Soviet Dispute," 409-410.
- <sup>415</sup> Ibid., 411.
- <sup>416</sup> Ibid., 412.
- <sup>417</sup> Frazier, *The East is Black*, loc. 2502
- <sup>418</sup> Lorenz M. Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split: Cold War in the Communist World*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 158-192.
- <sup>419</sup> Freeberne, "The Sino-Soviet Dispute," 414.
- <sup>420</sup> Ibid., 414-415.
- <sup>421</sup> Edward Crankshaw, *The New Cold War: Moscow v. Peking* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1963), 153-154.
- <sup>422</sup> Frazier, *The East is Black*, loc. 2524,
- <sup>423</sup> The complete list of countries that attended, along with the five invitees, is as follows: Afghanistan, Cambodia, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gold Coast, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Laos, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Nepal, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Thailand, Turkey, North and South Viet-Nam, and Yemen.
- <sup>424</sup> Cary Fraser, "Race and Realpolitik in the American Response to the Bandung Conference, 1955," in *Window on Freedom: Race, Civil Rights, and Foreign Affairs, 1945-1988* edited by Brenda Gayle Plummer, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 117; Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire*, loc. 3565.
- <sup>425</sup> Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire*, loc. 3565; Augusto Espiritu, "'To Carry Water on Both Shoulders': Carlos P. Ramulo, 'American Empire, and the Meanings of Bandung,'" *Radical History Review* 95 (2006), 174; Perucci, "The Red Mask of Sanity," 40.
- <sup>426</sup> Ramulo, "The Meanings of Bandung," 115-116; George McTurnan Kahin, *The Asian-African Conference*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1956); Jacqueline Castledine, "Quieting the Chorus: Progressive Women's Race and Peace Politics in Postwar New York," in *Anti-Communism and the African American Freedom Movement* edited by Robbie Lieberman, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 51, 68; Fanon Che Wilkins, "Beyond Bandung: The Critical Nationalism of Lorraine Hansberry, 1950-1965," *Radical History Review* 95 (2006), 193-194;
- <sup>427</sup> Reprint of President Sukarno's keynote address in *Spotlight on Africa* 14 (May 1955), 4.
- <sup>428</sup> Wilkins, "Beyond Bandung," 193.
- <sup>429</sup> Bill V. Mullen, *Afro-Orientalism*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 78; Wilkins, "Beyond Bandung," 194.

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- <sup>430</sup> Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire*, loc. 3560; See Cary Fraser, "A Requiem for the Cold War: Reviewing the History of International Relations since 1945," in *Rethinking the Cold War*, edited by Allen Hunter, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998), 93-116; Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935-1970* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 247-256; Robbie Liberman, ed., *History in Dispute, Volume 19: The Red Scare After 1945*, (Detroit: Manly, Inc., 2005), 12-13
- <sup>431</sup> Espiritu, "To Carry Water on Both Shoulders," 175.
- <sup>432</sup> Richard Wright, *The Color Curtain: A Report on the Bandung Conference*, (Cleveland: World, 1956), 207.
- <sup>433</sup> Carlos P. Ramulo, *The Meaning of Bandung*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1956), 3-4; Espiritu, "To Carry Water on Both Shoulders," 175
- <sup>434</sup> The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Indonesia, ed., *Asia-African speak form Bandung*, (Djakarta, 1955), 168.
- <sup>435</sup> Paul Robeson, "Greetings from Bandung," in *Paul Robson Speaks: Writing, Speeches, Interviews, 1918-1974*, edited by Philip S. Foner, (New York: Brunnel/Mazel, 1978), 398-400.
- <sup>436</sup> Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire*, loc. 3575.
- <sup>437</sup> Fraser, "American Response to the Bandung Conference," 131.
- <sup>438</sup> *Ibid.*, 115.
- <sup>439</sup> *Ibid.*, 121.
- <sup>440</sup> *Ibid.*, 132.
- <sup>441</sup> *Ibid.*, 125.
- <sup>442</sup> *Ibid.*, 132.
- <sup>443</sup> *Ibid.*, 122.
- <sup>444</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.
- <sup>445</sup> *Ibid.*, 120.
- <sup>446</sup> *Ibid.*, 118.
- <sup>447</sup> Grace Lee Boggs, *Living for Change: An Autobiography*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 47; Scott McLemee and Paul LeBlanc, eds., *C.L.R. James and Revolutionary Marxism: Selected Writings of CLR James, 1939-1949*, (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1994), 4.
- <sup>448</sup> Boggs, *Living for Change*, 48.
- <sup>449</sup> Anthony Bogues, *Black Heretics, Black Prophets: Radical Political Intellectuals*, (New York: Routledge, 2003), 89.
- <sup>450</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.
- <sup>451</sup> Bogues, *Black Heretics, Black Prophets*, 72, 12-14.
- <sup>452</sup> Andrew Ross, "Civilization in One Country? The American James," in *Rethinking C.L.R. James* edited by Grant Farred, (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 75.
- <sup>453</sup> *Ibid.*, 83.
- <sup>454</sup> CLR James, "Lectures on the Black Jacobins," *Small Axed: A Journal of Criticism* 8 (2000), 71; Bogues, *Black Heretics, Black Prophets*, 74.
- <sup>455</sup> CLR James, "Revolution and the Negro," in *C.L.R. James and Revolutionary Marxism: Selected Writings of CLR James, 1939-1949* edited by Scott McLemee and Paul LeBlanc, (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1994), 77.
- <sup>456</sup> James, "Lectures on the Black Jacobins," 85.
- <sup>457</sup> CLR James, "Revolutionary Answer to the Negro Problem," in *C.L.R. James and Revolutionary Marxism: Selected Writings of CLR James, 1939-1949* edited by Scott McLemee and Paul LeBlanc, (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1994), 187; C.L.R. James, *The Future in the Present*, (Westport: Lawrence Hill, 1977), 126-127.
- <sup>458</sup> Ross, "Civilization in One Country," 76.
- <sup>459</sup> James, "Revolution and the Negro," 87.
- <sup>460</sup> James, *Mariners, Renegades, and Castaways*, 187-188
- <sup>461</sup> *Ibid.*, 190.
- <sup>462</sup> Boggs, *Living for Change*, 50. Also see Ken Worcester, *CLR James: A Political Biography*, (Albany: State University of New York, 1996).
- <sup>463</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.
- <sup>464</sup> *Ibid.*, 58; Ross, "Civilization in One Country," 84. The Johnson-Forest tendency subsequently published the first English translation of selected essays from the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*. See *Essays by Karl Marx, Selected from the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* (New York: Johnson-Forest Tendency, 1947).
- <sup>465</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.
- <sup>466</sup> *Ibid.*, 55-56.

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- <sup>467</sup> Boggs, *Living for Change*, 58.
- <sup>468</sup> James, "Revolutionary Answer," 180.
- <sup>469</sup> CLR James, *Notes on Dialectics: Hegel, Marx, Lenin*, (London: Allison and Busby, 1980), 117.
- <sup>470</sup> Stuart Hall, "A Conversation with C.L.R. James," in *Rethinking C.L.R. James* edited by Grant Farred, (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 34.
- <sup>471</sup> James, "Revolutionary Answer," 180.
- <sup>472</sup> Boggs, *Living for Change*, 63.
- <sup>473</sup> Ria Stone [Grace Lee Boggs], *The American Worker* (New York: Johnson-Forest Tendency, 1947).
- <sup>474</sup> Boggs, *Living for Change*, 64.
- <sup>475</sup> *Ibid.*, 67. The "third layer," according to Vladimir Lenin, consisted of peasants and workers.
- <sup>476</sup> Boggs, *Living for Change*, 68.
- <sup>477</sup> James, *Mariners, Renegades, and Castaways*, 174-175.
- <sup>478</sup> *Ibid.*, 193.
- <sup>479</sup> *Ibid.*, 149.
- <sup>480</sup> *Ibid.*, 195.
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- <sup>482</sup> *Ibid.*, 173.
- <sup>483</sup> *Ibid.*, 175.
- <sup>484</sup> Gerald Horne, *Cold War in a Hot Zone: The United States Confronts Labor and Independence Struggles in the British West Indies*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2007), 160.
- <sup>485</sup> *Ibid.*, 157-158.
- <sup>486</sup> *Ibid.*, 159.
- <sup>487</sup> Percy Hintzen, "Cheddi Jagan (1918-97): Charisma and Guyana's Challenge to Western Capitalism," in *Caribbean Charisma: Reflections on Leadership, Legitimacy and Populist Politics* edited by Anton Allahar, (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2001), 129.
- <sup>488</sup> *Ibid.*, 131-132; Horne, *Cold War in a Hot Zone*, 164.
- <sup>489</sup> Hintzen, "Cheddi Jagan (1918-97)," 136; Linden Lewis, "Forbes Burnham (1923-85): Unraveling the Paradox of Postcolonial Charismatic Leadership in Guyana," in *Caribbean Charisma: Reflections on Leadership, Legitimacy and Populist Politics* edited by Anton Allahar, (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2001), 100.
- <sup>490</sup> Horne, *Cold War in a Hot Zone*, 166.
- <sup>491</sup> *Ibid.*, 157.
- <sup>492</sup> Hintzen, "Cheddi Jagan (1918-97)," 135; Percy C. Hintzen, "Thunder in Guyana," *Journal of Latin American Anthropology* 9 (2004), 500.
- <sup>493</sup> *Ibid.*, 137.
- <sup>494</sup> *Ibid.* 137-138; Lewis, "Forbes Burnham (1923-85)," 100; Hintzen, "Thunder in Guyana," 500.
- <sup>495</sup> Cheddi Jagan, *The West on Trial: My Fight for Guyana's Freedom*, (St. John's: Hansib, 1997), 299.
- <sup>496</sup> *Ibid.*, 299-300.
- <sup>497</sup> Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 169.
- <sup>498</sup> Hintzen, "Cheddi Jagan (1918-97)," 125; "Forbes Burnham (1923-85)," 101.
- <sup>499</sup> Hintzen, "Cheddi Jagan (1918-97)," 136.
- <sup>500</sup> *Ibid.*, 141; Lewis, "Forbes Burnham (1923-85)," 101.
- <sup>501</sup> Jagan, *The West on Trial*, 300.
- <sup>502</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>503</sup> Hintzen, "Cheddi Jagan (1918-97)," 142.
- <sup>504</sup> Jagan, *The West on Trial*, 288.
- <sup>505</sup> Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 170-172.
- <sup>506</sup> *Ibid.*, 174.
- <sup>507</sup> *Ibid.*, 178; Jagan, *The West on Trial*, 204.
- <sup>508</sup> Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 174; Horne, *Cold War in a Hot Zone*, 165.
- <sup>509</sup> Hintzen, "Cheddi Jagan (1918-97): Charisma," 124; Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 183.
- <sup>510</sup> Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 208.
- <sup>511</sup> Janet Jagan was considered to be more radical, and more "bigoted and anti-British in her attitude." Horne, *Cold War in a Hot Zone*, 172; According to Percy Hintzen, she was cast as the "evil genius" that was manipulating her with her militant politics; and "the ire of the anti-communists was directed particularly at Janet. She was labeled as

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one of the most dangerous communists in the hemisphere and was compared to Eva Peron by the New York Times.”  
Hintzen, “Thunder in Guyana,” 500, 501.

<sup>512</sup> Horne, *Cold War in a Hot Zone*, 184-186; Hintzen, “Cheddi Jagan (1918-97)” 143.

<sup>513</sup> Lewis, “Forbes Burnham (1923-85),” 119 note 4.

<sup>514</sup> Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 200 note 112, 191-192; Hintzen, “Cheddi Jagan (1918-97)” 123-124.

<sup>515</sup> Hintzen, “Cheddi Jagan (1918-97)” 123.

<sup>516</sup> *Ibid.*, 124; Hintzen, “Thunder in Guyana,” 500-501; Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 194.

<sup>517</sup> Fraser, *Ambivalent Anticolonialism*, 194-195.

<sup>518</sup> *Ibid.*, 207.

## Chapter Four

### **The American Academy, Antiradicalism, and Africana Studies: The UC Berkeley Example**

For a brief moment, the Africana Studies<sup>1</sup> project represented the intellectual expression of political Pan-Africanism in the United States academy. It was formed to fundamentally challenge the statist and imperialist logic of the traditional disciplines in the academy by focusing on redistribution; African and African descendant struggles for liberation and self-determination; and the importance of internationalism to the larger project of Black freedom. However, once it became the object of academic discipline and control through management by the university, it began to take on the form and function of American studies and area studies. “Progressives” who were neither radical nor conservative founded the latter disciplines, and they got their start in the Cold War academy, purged of Marxism by McCarthyism. As a result, class analysis was conspicuously absent from their scholarship.<sup>2</sup> The institutionalization of Africana Studies engendered a turn away from Pan-Africanism, internationalism, Black radical scholarship, and community and working class concerns. With American studies and area studies setting the precedent, the struggle over redistribution was replaced by a struggle over representation.<sup>3</sup> The mobilization of culture became the means of securing recognition and reward. History and literature became the two areas through which Blackness was studied, defined, and codified, and culture became the focus of anthropological and sociological studies of the black condition. Political economic and structural understandings of the Black condition inside and beyond the United States became relegated to cultural specifications as Africana Studies became institutionalized and legitimated. By the 1990s, Pan-African internationalism had been replaced by “diaspora,” a culturalized, abstracted, and “anti-essentialist,” conceptualization of connection, disjuncture, commonality, and difference among African descendants. Scholars focusing on comparative literature, intellectual history, and traditional Black historiography became central to the shape and direction of the discipline.

This chapter will focus on the history of American studies and area studies as the founding interdisciplinary projects that emerged in the post-WWII academy. They provided the architecture for subsequent “interdisciplines,” including Africana studies. The discussion will focus on the epistemological and structural parallels between Africana studies—as one variant of ethnic studies—and American studies and area studies. The development of Africana studies at the University of California, Berkeley (UCB) will provide a case study of the effects of antiradicalism and Culturalism on the discipline. At both its African American studies and African diaspora studies stages, its institutionalization transformed it into a site of discipline and regulation.

#### **American Studies, Area Studies, and the Institutional Formation of Africana Studies**

In *The Reorder of Things: The University and Pedagogies of Minority Difference*, Roderick Ferguson analyzes the role of the academy in harnessing minority difference to the reconstitution of capital and to the needs of the U.S. State. He does so in the context of demands for inclusion by minoritized subjects on the one hand, and of the global entrenchment of U.S. political and economic imperatives on the other. Malini Schueller makes a similar argument in his contention that, “the university is an integral part of the modern world system, which, with the United States as center, continues today to perpetuate a neocolonial globalization, in tandem with a military-

style imperialism. . . . [but] it is also a changing site of colonial difference where subaltern knowledges are gaining currency.”<sup>4</sup> Ferguson argues that by the late 1960s the academy had become the “training ground” for how the U.S. state and capital ought to contend with the meaning, representation, and accommodation of minority difference.<sup>5</sup> It was concerned with developing ways to “combin[e] tolerance for diversity with the imperatives of world order.”<sup>6</sup> Civil Rights gains of the 1960s became manifested in changes in racial accommodation in and composition of the academy. The increasing presence of U.S. minority groups was underscored by the growing presence of scholars from the Global South, partly as a consequence of the 1965 Immigration Act that deracialized immigration policy. Consequently, students of color began to identify their struggles with those of the “Third World.” With this radicalization, internationalization, and proliferation of domestic and global minorities in the academy, disciplines that focused on specific races, ethnicities, global areas, and identities increasingly became sites of surveillance.<sup>7</sup> Demands for inclusion were occurring both within and outside the United States under conditions of a growing American empire organized around “[a] mode of power [that] was forming. . . whose DNA was based on a nation-state’s dictum, the management of the international, the supervision of difference, and the contradictions of interdisciplinary enhancement and subjection.”<sup>8</sup>

The academy became a site of “reactive crisis management”<sup>9</sup> that both accommodated and disciplined challenges to Eurocentrism, Euro-American coloniality, and white supremacy. While it incorporated new cultures, knowledges, and bodies, it did so in a way that produced new means of exclusion in the service of U.S. empire.<sup>10</sup> Through area studies and ethnic studies/Africana studies, the state, by way of the academy, was able to reconstitute its pedagogy through the “distribution [of] recognition and legitimacy.”<sup>11</sup> It transformed its power in order to “incorporate formerly marginalized and excluded subjects and societies, an ability signified through the extension of recognition and sovereignty for people who spent much of their histories under the colonial yoke,”<sup>12</sup> and an extension of recognition and rights for people who had hitherto been racialized and marginalized from citizenship. In the 1960s, area studies and ethnic studies/Africana studies contributed to efforts by the United States to refashion itself as anticolonial and antiracist in order to legitimate itself as the world leader and to absorb heterogeneity. This was done in the context of the Cold War and in the context of the crisis of white supremacy. In effect, “the modern idea of empire and the modern idea of difference” coalesced into an ideological project that entangled “the management of the international. . . with the management of diversity.”<sup>13</sup> Essential to this project were the “interdisciplines,” especially area studies, American studies, and later, ethnic studies/Africana studies.

The academy plays a fundamental role in the maintenance of the state as the “repository and guarantor of national culture.”<sup>14</sup> As Gerald McWorter explains,

The university should be conceptualized or re-conceptualized in terms of a set of powers. . . . One is the power of knowledge: the university is a reservoir of knowledge. The second is that the university is indeed a social and political institution. The third one is that the university maintains certain powers of socialization, that is, to make people certain kinds of people. In terms of the university being a reservoir of knowledge, there are at least two ways in which this is true. One way is that the university maintains a tradition—that is, the accumulated body of knowledge of a community of people that it can transmit back to that community and maintain over time. The second way in which it is a reservoir of knowledge is in terms of research: the university is committed to



innovation and concerned with revealing new knowledge about the world and the people who live in it.<sup>15</sup>

As such, the American university serves a political function, operating in relationship to the state, which is interested in maintaining the interests of empire “over and against various communities which exist in this country that are committed to radical change.”<sup>16</sup> The university manages how disciplines are constituted, what areas of study are acceptable, which concepts become dominant and which are marginalized or eradicated, and which fields become the sites of surveillance, co-optation, and disciplining. These must be consonant with narratives of the nation.

With the rise of the United States after WWII came the necessity to develop an epistemic practice that demanded consolidation of knowledges from different fields of study as interdisciplines. This was because, “The interdisciplines were an ensemble of institutions and techniques that offered positivities to populations and constituencies that had been denied institutional claim to agency. The interdisciplines connoted a new form of biopower organized around the affirmation recognition, and legitimacy of minoritized life.”<sup>17</sup> Traditional disciplinarity, according to Ferguson, was fashioned as a way to produce, create, and evaluate knowledge about “the figure of man” and to organize it into “distinct and specialized knowledges.”<sup>18</sup> The interdisciplines, on the other hand, were necessitated out of the need to displace Western man as the dominant object of critique and to introduce racial, sexual, and gendered difference into the historical narration of the nation.<sup>19</sup> This was in response to the changing demands of post-World War II and postcolonial formations.

Ferguson locates the rise of the interdisciplines in the institutionalization of ethnic and gender studies. He sees in their formation the need to satisfy the ideological and expansionist imperatives of the United States in keeping with the demands of global capital as it assumed its role as leader of the free world. He argues that with the rise of U.S. empire came the concomitant need to regulate and manage groups of “others” domestically, and nations of “others” internationally. This demanded a shift in the academy away from specialized disciplines to interdisciplinary forms of knowledge. However, Ferguson overlooks that the narratives of freedom and democracy necessitated by the spread of the ideology of embedded liberalism rested upon the spread of knowledge about a distinctive American culture, civilization, and society that differentiated itself from Europe and Asia. It was this imperative that led to the emergence of the first interdisciplinary field: American Studies. This was accompanied by the development of area studies—the other foundational interdiscipline—which aimed to acquire and produce knowledge about other parts of the world with which the U.S., as the dominant empire, would have to contend.<sup>20</sup> Liberated from the restrictive methods, canons, and approaches of dominant disciplines, the foundational interdisciplines were able to deploy the power of the state and the academy<sup>21</sup> to position difference as their object of critique and engagement. Acting in the service of U.S. state and empire, the interdisciplinary approaches of American studies and area studies provided the acceptable institutional model for fields of study focused specifically on minority difference as it related to history, culture, and society. They allowed the academy to strategically accommodate the demands for Civil Rights, “relevant education,” and equality. While it is true that “[t]he rise of women’s and ethnic studies represent[ed] a new era of biopower, occasioning a change in power/knowledge [in which] new [inter]disciplines rose to study previously excluded subjects,”<sup>22</sup> it was American studies that provided the grammar, and area studies that structured the relationship between the state, the academy, and the study of difference. This had

consequences for the development of Africana studies in the academy. Contrary to the desire of Black revolutionaries and cultural nationalists to use the academy to “make the institutional, state, and administrative forms in their own image,”<sup>23</sup> to a large degree, Africana studies was institutionalized and legitimated in the image of the foundational interdisciplines.

“[A]cademic practices within the U.S. university,” according to Schueller, “particularly those of the humanities and social sciences, cannot be understood without their relationship to imperialism, which has structured the production of knowledge through different apparatuses.”<sup>24</sup> It is little wonder that the academy became the site of convergence between U.S. global dominance, the imperatives of capital accumulation, and multiculturalism as a technology of discipline. The academy became the space in which demands for the reformulation of epistemological and cultural representation converged with the capitalist-imperialist interest in difference.<sup>25</sup> It provided the means by which state and capital developed its “methods of representation and regulation.”<sup>26</sup> This is especially true in the context of the 1960s and 1970s, during which “[n]ational liberation, civil rights, and neocolonialism [came to] be understood as part of a larger social context that proclaimed the command of a new mode of power, a mode that was composed of power’s new techniques of management, especially around internationalism and minority difference, as well as its insinuation into political agency.”<sup>27</sup> This period inaugurated a new intentionality in the university that, as an instrumentality of state and empire, needed to locate, “know,” accommodate, and affirm difference so that it could simultaneously legitimate and depoliticize it. American studies and area studies institutionalized the historical imperatives of U.S. power to manage international and sociopolitical difference<sup>28</sup> through the inscription of their new knowledge into the pedagogy of U.S. state and empire. The foundational interdisciplines, as sites for “representing national culture[s],” provided an example of how Africana studies could be managed and disciplined. They provided a grammar for the academy to “speak through and with local culture and difference and to absorb them” on behalf of the state and capital.<sup>29</sup>

### **American Studies**

The position of the United States as the new superpower at the juncture of World War II and the Cold War created the conditions for the development of American Studies. According to Philip Gleason, “[t]he emergence of the United States as ‘the repository of Western culture in the world overrun by Fascism’... lent urgency to the effort ‘to recover America *as an idea*.’”<sup>30</sup> Nikhil Pal Singh argues that: “The ideological framework of the cold war... creat[ed] a new understanding of American universalism that tied together a celebration of America’s pluralism and political exceptionalism with the fate of the ‘the West’ as a whole.”<sup>31</sup> Throughout the 1940s, as the United States became more important economically, politically, and militarily in the world-system—particularly for Europe—there arose a need to reveal the role of American society in Western Civilization.<sup>32</sup> The U.S. was in a position to displace “European models of high culture, of Europe as the universal subject of culture, and of culture itself in its old Arnoldian reading...”<sup>33</sup> World War II incited a greater appreciation among American scholars for the “positive values embodied in the nation’s social, political, and cultural traditions.”<sup>34</sup> As the U.S. ascended to the status of world power, nation, identity, and culture came to constitute the basis for a powerful state ideology: “World War II powerfully reinforced existing tendencies toward cultural nationalism, gave great prominence to the ideological dimension of American identity (that is, to the ideas and values for which the nation stand for), and forged a link between

the democratic ideology and the idea of culture that became central to the American Studies approach.”<sup>35</sup>

A peculiarly American brand of democracy became identified with the defense and preservation of Western civilization.<sup>36</sup> Particularly because of its essential role in WWII, the United States was able to represent itself as the ultimate defense against the threat of Fascism, and to construct “democracy” as the “democratic nature” in which the American nation and culture were inscribed.<sup>37</sup> The democratic ideal became a foundational aspect of Americanness, and “...was fully in line with national policy as enunciated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who spoke of making the United States ‘the arsenal of democracy’... and devoted his third inaugural address to a meditative reflection on the democratic faith that was challenged by the international threat...”<sup>38</sup> It became the affirmative universal principle around which the diverse ethnic factions that constituted the United States could rally and become incorporated into the narrative of the nation.<sup>39</sup> In fact, “U.S. world-ordering aspirations were explicitly legitimated by claiming the virtues of *internal* democracy, or the harmonious cooperation of different groups within the vast national body, and the broad toleration of cultural, religions, ethnic, and racial differences in America.”<sup>40</sup> The “normative” way of life in America was constructed as “democratic,” and as such “democracy” became the essential element in “American culture.” As Margaret Mead put it, democracy was a “type of behavior and an attitude of mind which runs through our whole culture,”<sup>41</sup> and “culture determines character, and... culture itself is learned behavior.”<sup>42</sup> In this way, “democracy” came to be separated from the social, economic and political structures upon which the U.S. was built. It became represented as an embodied and learned characteristic that inhered in the way Americans understood and conducted themselves. In this way, “democracy” became transformed into a metonym for “American culture.”

It was with the *ideology* of democracy—not the practice—that the United States came to represent. As an abstract ideal, democracy became the essential component of national culture.<sup>43</sup> As Eleanor Roosevelt wrote in 1942, “We know that this country is bound together by an idea. The citizens of this country belong to many races and many creeds. They have come here and built a great Nation around the idea of democracy and freedom... [T]he present crisis challenges us to preserve what this country was founded to be, a land where people should have the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, regardless of race creed or color.”<sup>44</sup> The slippage between “culture” and “way of life” was made possible by this idea of American democracy. Mrs. Roosevelt conveyed that the idea, and the principle—the “should”—made America a “great nation.” The patently undemocratic reality of U.S. society after WWII did not interfere with this narrative of democracy as endemic in American culture. “American culture” became abstracted from material and structural realities, including inequality, racism, and capitalist exploitation, and came to be understood as the way in which the American people existed in the world—in other words, as the “American way of life.”

The collapsing of “democracy” into “America,” and “culture” into “way of life,” provided the basis for the development and organization of American studies and subsequently area and ethnic studies. The casting of democracy in cultural rather than structural terms negated an effective critique of the racialized, classed, and gendered material realities of the United States. Thus, the Marxist intellectual tradition was irrelevant as a counter to this narration of the project of democracy because of the latter’s inattention to the structural features of American economy and society. According to Barry Shank, “Popular front and cold war ‘Americanism’... created the special conditions that had blocked the development of an American Marxist” tradition.<sup>45</sup> “The nation” came to operate metonymically for American “culture” and

“civilization.” This became reflected in the creation of the first American Civilization departments that presaged American studies. World War II understandings of American democratic culture morphed into Cold War nationalism, so “[t]he campaign to sanction the scholarly respectability of American subject matter won a quick and easy triumph, largely because of the wave of overheated nationalism that accompanied World War II and its Cold War aftermath.”<sup>46</sup> The emergence of the United States as a world power coincided with its repositioning as “the center of global cultural production and circulation” which represented “a displacement and a hegemonic shift in the *definition* of culture—a movement from high culture to American mainstream popular culture...”<sup>47</sup> The study of American culture could not be accomplished by a single discipline and thus required a move to interdisciplinarity. As Gleason explains, “...understanding the national cultural holistically is the task Americanists have always set for themselves... [it is] the implicit (and sometimes explicit) premise of the American Studies approach...”<sup>48</sup> The American character, American mind, American spirit, American tradition, American creed, America civilization, and American way of life, “...were precisely the topics in which the increasingly self-conscious devotees of American Studies were interested.”<sup>49</sup>

Historical, literary, and anthropological approaches were foundational to the American studies projects. According to Robert Sklar, American studies “grew up” in English and history, so its methods were primarily literary and historical.<sup>50</sup> American Studies differentiated itself from the latter disciplines through its focus on teaching American materials, and its transcendence of their intellectual traditions and pedagogical strictures.<sup>51</sup> Because of this emphasis on American cultural artifacts, American Studies came to be perceived as a threat to “the cultural hegemony perpetuated by the traditional liberal arts curriculum, and especially by the universalized systems of values embodied in English—British English—literary culture.”<sup>52</sup> Starting in the 1930s, American Studies represented a fusion of literary history and intellectual history, manifested in, “high cultural history—the study of arts and artists, of intellectuals and ideas.”<sup>53</sup> The new interdiscipline embraced the myth and symbol school, part of the literary criticism tradition, which contended that literature and other arts played a role in the maintenance and transformation of society and exerted an important influence on the material world.<sup>54</sup> Foundational to this school of thought, which focused on the study of works by writers including Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Walt Whitman, and Henry James, was the idea that:

America’s culture was peculiarly shaped by systems of myths and symbols that were most precisely expressed and deeply explored in the writings of novelists, poets, and intellectuals. Thus the nature of American society could be discovered by studying its reflections in the imagination and intellects of men and women who stood both within and outside their culture, who preached to it and criticized it and created its enduring symbols and models.<sup>55</sup>

New criticism focused on the primacy of the mind and the autonomy of individual works of art as a response to the loss of momentum of interwar social history and of the celebration of American folk and popular culture in the depression years.<sup>56</sup> With this approach, American Studies took up the function and imperatives performed by American literature as a cultural form in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Literature was meant to “finish writing the American nation-state”<sup>57</sup> by constructing and asserting a national discourse that reconciled the ideology of the U.S. with its political and social contradictions. In the 1920s and 1930s, scholars

engaged in a search for a distinctive high American culture turned to the study of American literature and its link to notions of cultural evolution.<sup>58</sup> Cultural nationalism came to manifest itself as literary nationalism engaged in a process of self-discovery<sup>59</sup> for a nation-state that was fast becoming the most industrialized and modern in the world. In other words, “Literature attempted to identify the nation-state as a ‘writerly’ formation, that is, one whose aim is to inscribe ‘the many’ into the national body.”<sup>60</sup> The emphasis of literature in American Studies expanded that project to construct and reveal a U.S. culture in which “others” from within and without could be conscripted. Its project was to reconstitute the cultural center of the nation, replacing the ideology of national homogeneity with “the capacities for and the principles of heterogeneous absorption.”<sup>61</sup>

The literature/history nexus became crowded out as American studies sought to assert itself as a discipline. As Giroux et. al assert:

The problem is that no solid alternatives to disciplinary structure [evolved] within the academy and, as a result, movements such as American Studies paradoxically [stroved] to become disciplines. Thus, while these movements [began] with a critical perspective, they retreat[ed] from radical critique [of disciplinarity] as they become more successful... And as American Studies became more entrenched, interdisciplinarity receded in importance in the rhetoric of the movement.”<sup>62</sup>

Thus an anthropological school of American Studies began to develop. It pushed the anthropological definition of culture—that is, that culture emanates from society—and maintained that through an anthropological approach, American studies could obtain disciplinary integrity. Its adherents challenged the literary and historical turn in American Studies and argued for the latter as a branch of cultural anthropology that was closer to the social sciences than the humanities.<sup>63</sup> “[B]y the 1960s, the basis of the claim that American Studies constituted its own discipline... rested on a particular methodology derived from the anthropological understanding of culture. The disciplinary integrity of American Studies was based on its claim to being a social science.”<sup>64</sup> American Civilization programs, which started at the University of Pennsylvania, Princeton, and Harvard, evolved into American studies programs as they shifted from interdisciplinary to disciplinary approaches. While past and present American culture and society remained the subject matter, there was a new assertion of its “method as that of the social sciences,” which “applied to both contemporary and historical data.” Culture as a concept was approached as a systemic whole.<sup>65</sup>

The culture concept was integral to the maintenance of the status of American Studies as a discipline.<sup>66</sup> Even as American studies began to centralize the social science methodology, culture remained foundational to the study of “America.” According to Robert Sklar, this turn to the social sciences in American studies reproduced the ubiquity of the culture concept in American Studies without sufficient theorizing: “in American Scholarship the social sciences [dominate] the generation of theory, and humanistic scholars [have] no coherent way to transform techniques and jargons of social science into their own framework.”<sup>67</sup> Ethnographic methods describing behavior became essential as the focus shifted from high literary culture to “the popular.”<sup>68</sup> The shift from the humanities to the social sciences was necessary because, “[s]ocial scientific methods [enabled] the writing of new histories ‘from the bottom up,’ giving voice to those populations who had left few, if any, written records.”<sup>69</sup> With the adoption of the anthropological method in American studies, materiality came to be understood as embedded in

an “anthropological whole” as part of a “whole way of life.”<sup>70</sup> The idea of “culture” in the United States came to inhere in ideological notions of nationalism that tended to be abstracted from material and historical realities. It had little to do with power relations. Through pedagogy, this idea of culture came to constitute the ways in which Americans understood themselves and their relations to the state. Accordingly, as George Lipsitz opines, “[s]tudies of culture too far removed from studies of social structure leave us with inadequate explanations.”<sup>71</sup>

The “shallow egalitarian idealism”<sup>72</sup> of WWII and Cold War nationalist understandings of culture continued to manifest themselves in American Studies. By the 1960s, this “whitewashing” was being contested by the proliferation of ethnic studies programs, which in turn influenced the way in which culture was understood in American Studies. In other words, because minoritized subjects and women were excluded from understandings of the nation, and by extension, American culture, they agitated for the formation of their own departments in which their subjectivities would be centralized. Inspired by this challenge to their epistemic erasure, a new social history approach emerged that focused on smaller groups and subcultures that challenged and contested the foundational narrative of American studies—that American culture was constituted as an undifferentiated whole. This focus on division, difference, and conflict represented a critique of what was understood as elitist, consensus based white patriarchal history.<sup>73</sup> As a result of such critique, and despite common developments in American Studies and ethnic studies, “never a thought [was] given to the idea that American Studies might well be the proper home for such subjects...”<sup>74</sup> This was because American Studies had, until the 1960s, conveyed a “possessive investment in whiteness.”<sup>75</sup> Leo Marx asserts that, “a truly imaginative American Studies enterprise just possibly might have obviated the demand for separate Afro-American Studies and Women’s Studies in the 1960s.”<sup>76</sup> Lipsitz expands, “Because they are ignorant of even the recent history of the possessive investment in whiteness... American [studies] produce[s] largely cultural explanations for structural social problems.”<sup>77</sup> Notwithstanding the roots of American studies in efforts to permit the entrance of hitherto excluded groups into an academy that had been previously dominated by white male Anglo-Saxon upper-middle class protestants,<sup>78</sup> ethnic minorities including Blacks, Chicanos, Asians, and Native Americans continued to be systematically underrepresented in American Studies because of its investment in whiteness.

The institutionalization of ethnic studies/Africana studies in the late 1960s heavily resembled American Studies, specifically the latter’s continued emphasis on humanistic and social scientific understandings of culture and its drive toward disciplinarity in its efforts to maintain itself in the academy. According to Sklar, new programs like Africana Studies and urban studies inherited the interdisciplinary mode from American Studies that had become “high pedagogical fashion, but [was] more of a slogan than a serious endeavor.”<sup>79</sup> Ethnic studies/Africana studies inherited the paradox stemming, on the one hand, from a need for an interdisciplinary framework to study culture while on the other hand, a need for disciplinarity to remain legible in the academy. The need for institutional recognition and legitimacy carried over from American Studies to ethnic studies, along with the inherited focus on culture as an essential element in the study of race, ethnicity, gender, and other forms of identity and difference. Ethnic studies/Africana studies began to assert forms of identity politics characterized by Eric Hobsbawm as essentially assertions of particularistic nationalisms in claims by groups to their right to self-determination.<sup>80</sup> In making such claims, many aspects of American studies came to be reproduced in ethnic studies/Africana Studies. The American studies project was conceived to describe, construct, and later critique a particular American culture and civilization (i.e. national

self-determination) vis-à-vis other “great” civilizations in order to provide a scholarly basis for American empire. Similarly, ethnic studies/Africana studies employed approaches of American studies, specifically those that mobilized the use of history, literature, and culture to articulate “difference” and cultural particularity in their efforts to challenge white supremacy and Eurocentrism and to assert their right of belonging to the nation. The latter interdisciplines aimed to hold the United States to the democratic ideal that it had constructed through the conflation of nation, culture, belonging, and democracy; and had exported through American studies.

### **Area Studies**

Area Studies emerged in the 1950s as “an intellectual handmaiden to the cold war,”<sup>81</sup> as “part of the struggle for World hegemony against Communist states,”<sup>82</sup> and in response to the emergence of the United States as a global political and economic superpower. In the era of decolonization and international bipolarity, area studies took on the role that anthropology occupied in the era of formal colonization.<sup>83</sup> As Hans Morgenthau observed, “[It is not] an accident that the areas around which area studies are centered are generally defined in terms which coincide with the areas of political interest.”<sup>84</sup> Built upon the “intellectual, material, and racial pillars” of U.S. national politics,<sup>85</sup> area studies was officially institutionalized in 1958 through the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) and Title VI. The Act was a response to the Soviet Union’s launching of Sputnik to address the perceived educational weakness of the U.S., and to educate citizens in science, language, and areas studies in order to surpass the Soviet Union in technological capability and international influence.<sup>86</sup> Additionally, “to meet the demands of war, scholars of diverse disciplines *were forced* to pool their knowledge [of many areas of the globe which had been inadequately studied] in frantic attempts to advise administrators and policy makers” through Language and Areas Centers authorized by “Public Law 85-864, the National Defense Education Act of 1958, Title VI.”<sup>87</sup> Vicente Rafael explains,

[M]ost area studies programs in the United States were conceived at a moment in American history [of] liberal ambitions for enforcing a global peace necessary for capitalist expansion... the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) of 1958... [was passed] because of the generalized hysteria over the putative technological advances of the Soviets, as represented by the launching of the Sputnik satellites... The advocacy of area studies in the late 1940s and the 1950s was thus implicated in the... social conditions of the nation...

[T]o an influential sector of social scientists... such populations were objects of analysis and targets of examination and testing insofar as they were also subjects... who may be equal to, yet were culturally distinct from the white majority... within the interdisciplinary optic of the liberal notion of area studies, the area and presumably its populations remained at a safe remove, managed by the operations of the social sciences into stages of comparable development, cultural groupings, or discrete ethnolinguistic realms... it is within the context of this liberal response to new nations in the world and the new subjects within the nation that we can understand... the importance of area studies... [to] the national interest.<sup>88</sup>

This formalization of the “material and political relationship between area studies and the state”<sup>89</sup> was bound up in the anticommunist and Culturalist ethos of the immediate postwar period that was also characterized by an increasing intolerance for all forms of radicalism.<sup>90</sup>

Even after a respecification of area studies under a new Higher Education Act in 1968 in the face of increasing criticism of the ethnocentrism and sociopolitical agenda of the field, it continued to be bound up with the imperialist agenda of the American state.<sup>91</sup> Area studies was originally conceived to support the global demands of the U.S. imperial state and its efforts to secure and expand U.S. power.<sup>92</sup> As Schwoch and White assert,

World War II saw, particularly in the USA... an incredible state mobilization of cultural analysis, most prominent for the American case... in the restructuring of universities themselves. This led, particularly in the USA, to the postwar rise of area studies programs... During the Cold War era, many of these USA area studies program would become politicized in the service of a national security state, most notably through the influence of research funding.<sup>93</sup>

The Cold War influenced the types of knowledge that would be sought about strategic areas in the decolonizing world in order to conscript them into the space of U.S. Empire. These programs, “from the 1950s searched for... authentic... history and culture... and scrutiniz[ed] structures in terms of their potential as vehicles for political and economic modernization.”<sup>94</sup> Cold War politics alongside funding from large foundations created the conditions for the systematic study of Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, and other “strategic” geopolitical locations. The funding sources of area studies—primarily the Ford, Carnegie, and Rockefeller Foundations<sup>95</sup>—dictated and determined the character of the field by privileging particular regions, paradigms, and approaches. Because foundations were subsidizing area studies research and scholarship, they were able to draw the discursive boundaries and to promote work in the service of the U.S. state and capital.<sup>96</sup> Like American studies, area studies required an interdisciplinary approach to satisfy the requirements of state-sponsored research. The foundations promoted area studies as an interdisciplinary field that emphasized the social sciences.<sup>97</sup> Combining social science research with regional study would “open the road to... a weakening of the rigid compartments that separate[d] the disciplines,”<sup>98</sup> since “the study of an area, its culture, and its society call[ed] for the contribution of many sciences, and the area provide[d] a concrete focus for the disciplines of the social sciences and related fields of the humanities and natural sciences.”<sup>99</sup> As “a discipline that specialized in scrutinizing others,” area studies moved beyond texts in order to study people and “culture in action.”<sup>100</sup> Anthropology—the “non-West” social science<sup>101</sup>—played an important role in accumulating knowledge about “others”<sup>102</sup> inasmuch as its “traditional strengths” were the study of culture and behavior in local contexts.<sup>103</sup>

With regard to Africa in particular, area studies initiated a political and academic response by the U.S. in the face of decolonization, anticolonialism, and struggles against neocolonialism.<sup>104</sup> Paradigms were established “that worked in the logic of empire: to contain or direct anticolonial movements and, later, to influence African independent states.”<sup>105</sup> Through area studies, the U.S. state was able to harness nationalism to condemn formal colonial administration and mask its general hostility toward worldwide decolonization.<sup>106</sup> Newly decolonized countries were accepted in and “consigned to” dominant notions of sovereignty and freedom that served as “a kind of house arrest in which freedom signified genres of subjugation



and domiciliation.”<sup>107</sup> In other words, through area studies, the U.S. academy developed and constructed knowledge about strategic minoritized areas that conscripted them into various liberal discourses, i.e. rights, development, and modernization, and ordered them hierarchically based on their level of compliance. It is no coincidence, for instance, that African studies programs proliferated in the 1960s and 1970s just as African development was ascending as a national policy issue.<sup>108</sup> Area studies combined the social scientific focus on development with humanities and culture-oriented discourses of modernization. “The new development theories stressed gradual change, the creation of elites, and achievement of political stability... Intellectuals came to believe in the existence of a common Western culture that encompassed American values that backward peoples could learn.”<sup>109</sup> These understandings (re)produced the United States as model and benefactor, and as such, rationalized the latter’s intervention in strategic areas on behalf of development and modernity. They also lent themselves to foreign policy considerations, including which countries would receive aid and which would be invaded; the level of democracy or authoritarianism that would be accepted; and how Third World populations would be disciplined, managed, and/or accommodated. As such, area studies was an instrumentality of neocolonialism, “the moment in which manifold strategies of conquest, management, and regulation would take place within and through the outward appearance of anticolonial independence and freedom. This was a form of power that had cultivated a solicitous rather than a primarily dismissive manner.”<sup>110</sup> Democracy and capitalism—the pillars of American power—became the essential features of the new “civilizing mission”: modernization.<sup>111</sup>

Area Studies was predicated on the assumption that the world could be organized into self-contained divisions<sup>112</sup> that have no historical or discursive linkages.<sup>113</sup> It assumed that important geopolitical areas were knowable by highly trained specialists. As Spivak writes,

...[O]ur national security, stability, and economic vitality depend, in part, on American experts who have sophisticated language skills and cultural knowledge about the various areas of the world. An urgent need exists to enhance the nation’s in-depth knowledge of world areas and transnational issues, and fluency of U.S. citizens in languages relevant to understanding societies where... culture, politics, religion, and economy are a significant factor.<sup>114</sup>

Area studies experts sought to analyze underdeveloped and traditional societies to provide knowledge about how to approach and relate to “the other” in order to better manage him and to make modernizing projects as simple as possible.<sup>115</sup> The field developed also out of the “need” to educate a citizenry for empire and “arose in the United States... from an American reading of an older connection between liberal education and empire. The United States... could not take over the global responsibilities of Great Britain without possessing an enlightened citizenry.”<sup>116</sup> If the United States was to be a responsible member of the United Nations, according to the Social Science Research Council Committee on World Regions, then it had to know and appreciate other lands, peoples, cultures, and institutions. Research, graduate training, undergraduate teaching, and elementary education would satisfy this need.<sup>117</sup>

Objects of inquiry were constituted as “...other[s] whose difference from self recuperated the latter as self-same, autonomous and sovereign.”<sup>118</sup> This logic dovetailed with the Cold War nationalism that inhered in American studies, uniting the two fields as parallel and complimentary projects in service of the U.S. domestic and foreign policy. With American

studies and area studies as the intellectual arms of the U.S. state, “anti-fascism, anti-communism, and anti-imperialism coexisted in an uneasy partnership in the governing vision of U.S. post-World War II promise: universal nationhood and liberal, capitalist democracy.”<sup>119</sup> Area studies’ emphasis on the nation as a level of analysis—as the primary unit for understanding difference—produced narratives of “undivided subject[s], separated and observable in relation to an equally undivided”<sup>120</sup> United States. The same cultural logics that asserted a U.S. democratic nationalism whose structural integrity allowed it to absorb and accommodate the decolonizing world also undergirded the study of “undivided and separate” nation-objects in the Third World.<sup>121</sup> The nation was constituted as a “universally applicable unit of analysis,” and national identity became the focus of both the Global North and the Global South.<sup>122</sup> “Capitalist democracy,” which was synonymous with “development”—an essential component of a strong sovereign nation—required a detailed understanding of the culture of Third World nations so that specialists could discern whether the “right attitude” could be adopted to create the conditions for development. Marxist analysis, which emphasizes class difference, critiques nationalism as an ideology that produces distortions both in scholarship and in reality, and asserts the role of relations of production and political control in specifying “third worldliness,”<sup>123</sup> had no place in area studies because it proved antithetical to its project and method. Inasmuch as Marxist scholarship highlighted conflict, heterogeneity, resistance, and change,<sup>124</sup> it was fundamentally incompatible with area studies. The possibility of radical scholarship was foreclosed, underscoring the inscription of area studies in the anticommunist, Cold War politics of the U.S. state.

Moreover, as a discipline, area studies was epistemologically grounded in the logics of U.S. empire, locating theory in the Global North and the objects of study—those to be represented—in the Global South.<sup>125</sup> The paradigms were produced in United States and imposed onto diverse groups that were homogenized as “others” but who were, at the same time, conceived of as “separate and coherent entit[ies], easily demarcated as difference.”<sup>126</sup> As such,

The United States [was] not seen as part of ‘area studies,’ as white is not a color when one speaks of people of color. This [was] probably related to the particular history of institutionalization of area studies in the U.S. academy and its ties to U.S. imperialism. Thus areas to be studied/conquered are ‘out there,’ never within the United States.... Area studies in U.S. academic settings were federally funded and conceived as having a political project in the service of U.S. geopolitical interests...<sup>127</sup>

Area studies maintained a particular “epistemic privilege” by asserting itself as observer and the Third World as the object to be observed.<sup>128</sup> The entire intellectual project was about the “foreigner” who was wholly located outside the U.S., and who was both the object and subject of knowledge. As Mohanty writes, “the local and the global are both defined as non-Euro-American. The focus on [area studies] implies that it exists outside the U.S. nation-state... [I]ssues are based on spatial/geographical and temporal/historical categories located elsewhere. Distance from ‘home’ is fundamental to the definition...”<sup>129</sup> Area studies scholars reproduced the investments and ideologies of the U.S. state in the academy by representing “others” as culturally relative and nationally specified. The discovery of new histories and cultures, revealed through “reality on the ground,”<sup>130</sup> was made possible by essential understandings of the nation in terms of the culture concept. Like American studies, area studies emphasized culture and the

nation through their “depiction of vibrant realities [that] fell in line with nationalist celebrations.”<sup>131</sup>

By 1968, area studies had come under heavy scrutiny and critique due to its ethnocentrism, complicity with the Cold War, and its problematic assertions of modernization theory and its “three worlds” division.<sup>132</sup> However, the framework had been set for fields of study that both institutionalized state pedagogy and informed the ways in which the state ought to accommodate difference. Wallerstein argues that, as with American studies discussed earlier, ethnic studies reversed the focus of area studies with their bottom-up as opposed to top-down approach; their demand that the racialized and ethnicized other be heard and not forgotten; and their revisions of “central theoretical premises of social science.”<sup>133</sup> However, notwithstanding their critical approach, as ethnic studies/Africana studies became institutionalized, they were depoliticized in ways that were identical to area studies because of the manner in which they (re)produced anthropological and cultural notions of difference. This ultimately aided in the reconstitution of capital, based on new forms governmentality and exclusion through cultural specifications. In the process Blackness, now viewed through the lens of development, continued to be marked as abject. The logics of modernization and development that circulated in area studies became transferred to ethnic studies/Africana studies through their investment in historicism and the privileging of history; through civilization narratives and the privileging of literary and cultural studies; and through cultural explanations of deviance and pathology and the privileging of structural-functionalist sociology. The result was the production of ethnic studies/Africana studies specialists whose development of expertise and production of knowledge served the interests of the state and its engagement with notions of difference that became reduced to specifications of cultural condition.

### **Africana Studies**

Community activism, Pan-Africanism<sup>134</sup>, and student demands for more relevant education were responsible for the introduction of Africana studies into the academy. Black cultural nationalism, the movement it supported, its tendency, and its ideology—in other words, its “intellectual spirit”—motivated the demand for Africana studies programs.<sup>135</sup> Despite its community and activist roots, “university administrators were determined to reshape [Africana studies] into a purely academic phenomenon.”<sup>136</sup> The university was largely successful through its deployment of “networks of power... [that] work[ed] through and with minority difference and culture... to redirect originally insurgent formations and deliver them into the normative ideals and protocols of state, capital, and academy.”<sup>137</sup> As the number of programs began to shrink considerably—from about five hundred in 1971 to about two hundred twenty-five in 1984<sup>138</sup>—the survival of Africana studies programs came to rest on their ability to successfully perform a purely academic function.<sup>139</sup> With such conversion, “the simultaneous identifications with and antagonisms to the institutional embodiments of power” that had characterized their formation came to be largely “tilted toward identification.”<sup>140</sup> In order to be legitimated in the academy, Black Studies began to focus its scholarship and research on changing the perceptions about Black people as a basis of the potential impact of such changes on their social status. As Alan Colòn writes, “The struggle for conceptual legitimacy, which is the handmaiden of institutionalization... will be generally correlative with the perception and social status of Black people in American Society.”<sup>141</sup> With its move away from counterhegemonic struggle and activism, Africana Studies succumbed to the “institutionalizing ethos,” and became part of the “imperial tendency” of the U.S. state<sup>142</sup> to co-opt, manage, and ultimately undermine oppositional tendencies. As such,

“When [the Africana Studies] movement bec[a]me institutionalized... [its] originality, potency, and relevance tend[ed] to be decimated, if not lost, despite the continuing impact of innovations associated with [it].”<sup>143</sup>

Area studies and American studies provided the models for the institutionalization of Africana Studies. This is evident in the Afro-American Studies program proposal submitted to the Yale University administration in December 1968; “[b]y November 1967, the Black Student Alliance at Yale... formally recognized the urgent necessity for including the study of Afro-American societies and cultures in the curriculum at Yale College.”<sup>144</sup> The aim was to acquaint students with:

1. The diversity of peoples of African ancestry and their living conditions in the perspective of time
2. The diversity as well as the unity of the African-American cultural experience, and the similarities and differences among the culture of people of African origin in the American and Africa
3. The various nodes of artistic expression in the literature, art, and music characteristic of black cultures
4. The philosophies and values of these cultures, with major emphasis on continuity and change among the geographic areas
5. The interrelationships among these factors<sup>145</sup>

Added to these was a perceived need to study the experiences, conditions, and origins of Black people, a “...large and important cultural group...who... share[d] a history and a culture different in a number of important respects from the rest of the population.”<sup>146</sup> The suggested model of study to be employed was multidisciplinary and virtually identical to area studies departments. Students would concentrate on one of the dominant disciplines to become conversant in its methods and substantive content. The course of study that was advocated would emphasize either the social sciences or the humanities.<sup>147</sup> Essentially, what was being proposed was a combination of extant American studies/American civilization and area studies programs that specifically focused on Black people: “As a contribution to a new social science, Black Studies, which [was] interdisciplinary, bec[a]me a paradigm for the multidimensional approach to social and historical reality.”<sup>148</sup> Furthermore, “critical research into the heart of black life and culture had to be interdisciplinary. The tools of black studies scholarship could not be narrowly confined to traditional apolitical approaches...”<sup>149</sup> In both American studies and Africana studies, moving beyond disciplinary boundaries was in and of itself a political challenge to the traditions of the university. Africana studies was meant to target the “cultural apparatus” of the United States and to counterbalance the historical effects of white “cultural particularism” that, of necessity, denied the validity of competing cultural values and standards.<sup>150</sup> Africana studies was to be an intellectually valid, educationally responsible, and socially constructive project, which, like American studies and area studies, demanded little attention to class. This was accommodated and made possible in part by its move away from the community in its desire for legitimacy in the university:

While overall the movement was positive, particularly in its critique of white supremacy, the movement’s blind spot with regard to class, and specifically, working-class issues, subjected the movement to subversion by pro-corporate forces... the blind spot to class

served to increasingly isolate and marginalize the black studies movement... As time went on... Black studies as a movement, a series of institutions, and a discourse became less and less relevant to the everyday African American. Indeed, in the interests of scholarship, such isolation was often upheld by certain proponents of and within black studies.<sup>151</sup>

Relatedly, Manning Marable argues that the majority Africana studies programs rejected political economy and public policy to focus on arts and humanities, creating an imbalance between literary and cultural studies and structural critique.<sup>152</sup> As a consequence, Africana Studies has generally ignored Black workers; the contributions of unions to fights for Black freedom; and has paid no attention to growing class polarization.<sup>153</sup> In other words, the formalization of Africana studies instantiated a move away from class and community. The then-acting president of Yale, Charles H. Taylor, Jr., described the relevance of Africana studies in the following way:

What we are faced with then in our black students' protest is not simply, in some respects not even chiefly, their proper demand to know more about themselves, about *their* heritage, and *their* tradition, but rather their consciousness of how important it is for American society, for us, the white majority, to know a lot more about them. We need this knowledge to attack not only the conscious discrimination, which is easy to identify, but to overcome unconscious discrimination, that simple lack of awareness, the ignorance from which we all suffer in white America.<sup>154</sup>

Like American studies, Africana studies was understood to perform the function of helping American society understand itself, especially its prejudice and "unconscious discrimination" in its efforts to create a more inclusive nationalism. And, like area studies, the purpose of Black Studies was understood to reveal the heritage, traditions, and experiences of a previously neglected and marginalized group. Harold Cruse writes, "The creation of black studies must reflect his black history and an investigation into his past. These are the only ways in which the black student, the black intellectual, or the Negro of any calling or class can begin to re-examine his position in society as a whole, and then begin to work from there toward a more equitable and democratic inclusion within American society."<sup>155</sup> Manning Marable concurs, "The function of black studies scholarship should be more than the celebration of heritage and self-esteem; it must utilize history and culture as tools through which an oppressed people can transform their lives and the entire society."<sup>156</sup> Bill Fletcher adds, "The struggle of black studies has historically represented an effort to alter the manner in which U.S. culture and history has been understood and, specifically, the African American contribution as comprehended by both the larger society as well as black America."<sup>157</sup> The excavation of Black history and culture, it was argued, would provide a means of social uplift, a corrective to white racial chauvinism, and the cultural resources for Blacks people to assert themselves as equal citizens. "Equitable and democratic inclusion" came to be understood as the discursive strategy to move the Black from the margins to the center of intellectual investigation, and toward a position in society that legitimated the state's pedagogy of multiculturalism. This provided the basis for a new form of governmentality that inherited in liberal inclusion instead of racist foreclosure and conscious and unconscious "ignorance."

Area studies set the precedent for racially specific studies to become sites for the management of difference. Area studies specialists became essential to the formulation of

policies and practices adopted by the U.S. state in strategic areas of global governance. Africana studies scholars, on the other hand, were largely irrelevant to efforts aimed at the implementation of policies that impacted the material realities of Black people. According to St. Clair Drake, “[t]o some extent they [black studies scholars] did bring about changes in values and curriculum content. They did not, however, have a strong impact in areas not directly related to teaching and research.”<sup>158</sup> Africana studies did, however, provide an understanding of how Black people should be managed by the state—namely, through discourses of multicultural rights that asserted equality in terms of cultural recognition. Taylor makes this point: “For white society as for the individuals who compose it, coming to have a really felt awareness of the black man as an individual, a real human being, and to know more about his heritage and experience, is a challenge to our maturity. Either we will meet this challenge successfully, both as a society and as individuals, and be the better for it, or we will fail to meet it, and suffer the consequences.”<sup>159</sup> Accordingly, the purpose of Africana studies was to bring whites to consciousness about the humanity of the Black in order to facilitate mutual recognition. This form of recognition, abstracted from the realities of material inequality and continued economic dispossession, reinscribed antiradicalism both in state pedagogy and in Africana studies curricula. The perceived accomplishments of Black Studies—its shift from a Eurocentric to an Afrocentric perspective; its cultivation of a new interest in Black life and culture; its revelation that African culture persisted in the United States; its acceptance of the U.S. as a “pluralistic society with multiple viable cultures;” and its shift from a discourse of “assimilation” to one of “acculturation” in its efforts to understand the ways in which the dominant culture was being redefined<sup>160</sup>—attest to its role in the management of Black people for their conscription into the nationalist agenda of the state. Through its enunciations of culturally coded Blackness, Africana studies became self-disciplining, creating the conditions for its institutionalization. Paradoxically, it created the conditions for its own destruction by asserting a superficial “equality” and representation that rationalized the eradication of ethnic studies/Africana studies. Moreover, like area studies, Africana studies became an instrumentality for the management of radical and potentially revolutionary movements, thereby helping the state, capital, and empire to rearticulate itself through incorporation, absorption, and regulation.

The connection between Africana studies and area studies became evident in student identification with Third World and decolonization struggles, and their characterization of their own agitation in terms of such identification. Malini Schueller explains:

The Third World Movement, which began at San Francisco State College in 1968, comprised African Americans, Latinas/os, Asian Americans, and Native Americans, all of whom declared ghettos and barrios to be internal colonies of the United States and who modeled themselves after third-world liberation struggles. The founding of race-based academic programs, now loosely covered under the umbrella term ‘multiculturalism,’ is directly attributable to the demands raised by these students... The project of multicultural education thus emerged from a context of struggles over access to material resources and was tied to the inevitably linked goals of recognition and redistributive justice for the colonized within the United States. Multiculturalism implied affirmative action. The goal of race-based programs... was to decenter Eurocentrism in the academy and bring to the fore race as a systemic form of oppression, legislated through the juridical apparatuses of the nation-state and normalized through different ideological apparatuses.<sup>161</sup>

Black students drew upon Third World liberation struggles as a “defining political metaphor”<sup>162</sup> for their position as a colonized nation within a nation. Furthermore, “Black studies shared a great deal with features of national liberation movements in the so-called third world (the former colonial world) during the same era. Brought to the fore in the midst of a worldwide upsurge against imperialism, colonialism, and traditional racism, black studies often evidenced an explicitly anti-imperialist character.”<sup>163</sup> Like anticolonial nationalist movements, the Black student movement asserted itself as culturally and socially equal to the dominant power, and thus deserving of recognition and legitimacy.<sup>164</sup> Through the appropriation of the image of nationalistic movements of the Global South by the Black student movement, the material politics of decolonization became “culturally marked by the emergence of the decolonized sensibility.”<sup>165</sup> Colón drew the following parallel: “Just as the larger Black liberation movement catalyzed activity against various facets of oppression, Black Studies gave rise to calls by other groups... for scholastic treatment of their experiences.”<sup>166</sup> And, like many nationalist liberation struggles, the student movement became enraptured by the pedagogy of the liberal state because it strove to make itself “legible to power, even as [it] contest[ed] power... [w]hich made... [it] vulnerable to institutional solicitation.”<sup>167</sup>

Like area studies, Africana studies was an “attempt to create a systematic body of knowledge and experience based on the history”<sup>168</sup> of a group that had previously been excluded from academic study. Both area studies and Africana studies had the impact of inserting into the academy, especially predominately white institutions, research and teaching in areas that had been considered outside of the purview of civilization. Both area studies and Africana studies contested what Harold Cruse calls the “integrationist ethic.”

This ethic has been a historical tendency stimulated both by Anglo-Saxon political ideology, rampant industrialism, racism, and an Americanism whose implied goal has been the nullification of all competing subcultures indigenous to North America. It is my belief that both black and white scholarly rationalizations have historically supported the integrationist ethic in pursuit of the ideal of the American creed. This approach was obviously predicated on an intellectual consensus which held that the political, economic, and cultural values of the Anglo-American tradition were sufficiently creative and viable enough to sustain the American progression to realization of its ultimate potential.<sup>169</sup>

Furthermore, part of this ethic was to judge “others” as pathological if they did not adhere to the standards and values of the dominant society that had been imposed on subject peoples.<sup>170</sup> In order to reproduce empire in the post-WWII moment in which the majority of the world was contesting race-based forms of coloniality, the “American” creed had to be expanded beyond the “cultural values of the Anglo-American tradition” so that “others” could be more easily accommodated. Instead of conscripting racialized and colonized subjects into a model that refused to recognize them, the U.S. state and academy inaugurated programs of research and scholarship that made their experiences, histories, and cultures constitutive of imperial expansion. The accumulation of knowledge became the means by which the state and the academy could monitor and influence the direction of potentially revolutionary movements. Africana studies became a site of surveillance and discipline to ensure that eventually demands for material redistribution would collapse into demands for cultural recognition. To ensure that the logics of state and capital were not fundamentally disrupted, “systems of power... responded

to... protests by attempting to manage that transition, in an attempt to prevent economic, epistemological, and political crises from achieving revolutions that could redistribute social and material relations. Instead, these systems would work to ensure that these crises were recomposed back into state, capital, and academy.”<sup>171</sup>

As Africana studies became institutionalized, the need for surveillance abated as its primary objective became transformed into multicultural recognition and its focus became organized around cultural specification. “This severance of race from rights across a broad sociopolitical spectrum... made it possible for multiculturalism... to simply represent politics of cultural recognition without recognition of equal social reward or redistributive justice.”<sup>172</sup> Stated differently, redistribution became extricated from cultural recognition in demands for self-determination.<sup>173</sup> The emphasis on abstract representation ultimately allowed the academy, the state, and capital to shore up their power,<sup>174</sup> because “the margins” and the “periphery” came to be understood as sites of cultural empowerment and contestation.

Within culture, marginality, though it remains peripheral to the broader mainstream, has never been such a productive space as it is now. And that is not simply the opening within the dominant spaces that those outside it can occupy. It is also the result of the cultural politics of difference, of the struggle around difference, of the production of new identities, of the appearance of new subjects on the political and cultural scene... What we are talking about is a struggle over cultural hegemony... Cultural hegemony is never about pure victory or pure domination... it is always about shifting the balance of power in relations of culture; it is always about changing the dispositions and the configurations of cultural power, not getting out of it.<sup>175</sup>

The goal was to “develop cultural strategies that make a difference.”<sup>176</sup> In area studies, strategic marginal/peripheral countries became productive spaces for the conjoining of state and academy because they represented areas in which the United States could extend its influence, management, and regulation. In a similar fashion, the struggle by subjects for “new identities” in contestations over cultural hegemony became central to the success of efforts of reinscription into U.S. state, capital, and empire. In other words, the accommodation of difference by the state, first through area studies, then through ethnic studies/Africana studies, allowed the U.S. state to acquire knowledge so that it could adequately inscribe those occupying the margins into its imperial project. In the final analysis, academic research and scholarship produced knowledge of “others from without” and “others from within” to be employed by state and capital while conscripting them to their agendas through the deployment of technologies of cultural relativism. The margin/periphery became an important frontier for U.S. imperial expansion abroad and U.S. conscription of the racialized other at home and abroad.

With the focus on difference and cultural politics, the margins came to be incorporated into the “center” in the core; and the periphery came to be incorporated into the core of global capital, while each maintained their marginal positions. As the site of struggle shifted to the *meaning* of difference and to demands for representation and recognition of cultural identities in society, the focus of Africana studies necessarily shifted to the politicization of culture, to the development of new identities, and to contesting the cultural hegemony of the “mainstream.” With domination culturally specified, demands for change in and reconfiguration of relations of power came to rest on efforts aimed at the deployment of a politics of difference that would place Blackness on an equal footing with white cultural forms. The state was able to



accommodate these demands by shifting to a more open, inclusive, and accommodating “disposition of power”<sup>177</sup> that was effective without compromising its capitalist and imperialist agenda. While increasingly worse off in material terms because of the shift to neoliberalism, Black people came to be recognized and represented in popular culture and popular discourse, where they could be adequately policed, regulated, and commodified. As Hall acknowledges, the spaces “won” for difference can become spectacularized and morphed into segregated visibility. Through collaboration between the state and the academy cultural identity politics came to be recognized as the only acceptable articulation of Black struggle and contestation. The radical transformative potential of “wars of position” became foreclosed by culturalist specifications, unhinged from critical political economy critique, and organized around struggles for a place in global capitalist formation.<sup>178</sup>

American studies provided the grammar for the conflation of Africana studies with the interdisciplinary study of culture. Fletcher asserts, “...black studies in the sixties... focused on the national or ‘ethnic’ feature of the African American freedom struggle. Culture was prominent, but so too was a nonclass view of African American experience.”<sup>179</sup> The cultural specifications of Blackness readily accommodated the transition to African diaspora studies as the 1980s and 1990s inaugurated concerns about globalization and transnationalism. Additionally, African diaspora studies reinscribed Culturalism in two ways. First, it inserted alternative discourses of Blackness into an existing cultural framework that was legible to and useful for the state. If it is true that “[t]he multicultural... meets its limits where it becomes foreign, and ‘foreign’ signifies ‘anti-American,’” then the African diaspora was a method of engaging “foreign” notions of Blackness—those with different histories, developments, and relationships to the state—without challenging the pedagogy of the U.S. state. By doing so it avoided the problem of being marked and targeted as ‘anti-American.’ In fact, by the 1980s, “the U.S. government no longer seriously consider[ed] black Americans to be a potential Soviet Trojan Horse or a possible Communist fifth column... The massive changes resulting from the success of the civil rights movement ha[d] virtually eliminated the appeal of the international Communist movement as a useful weapon to African-Americans.”<sup>180</sup> Second, Culturalism created the conditions for African diaspora studies to further distance itself from the (Black) left because, “[a]t a certain level, the Left, through its critique of empire, intersects with the foreign in being cast as unnational.”<sup>181</sup> It deterritorialized, relativized, and abstracted Blackness in a way that seriously hampered a structural critique of power. Blackness was delinked from the nation-state and its historical specificity and asserted as a hybrid, transcultural phenomenon, so the location-specific materialities of dispossession and domination that produced and reinscribed the Black went largely uncontested.

The shift to African diaspora studies was a way to move the study of Blackness beyond the nation-state and the specificities of race, and to articulate it as a cultural phenomenon to keep it under the radar of state surveillance. Robert L. Harris, Jr. defines Africana studies as: [T]he multidisciplinary analysis of the lives and thought of people of African ancestry on the African continent and throughout the world. It embraces Africa, Afro-America, and the Caribbean, but does not confine itself to those three geographical areas. Africana studies examines people of African ancestry wherever they may be found... Its primary means of organization are racial and cultural...<sup>182</sup> As a corrective, descriptive, and prescriptive project—in that order—Africana Studies became a means to combat white racial and cultural supremacy.<sup>183</sup> Once it became a field of study in the academy, culture overdetermined the methods by which the African diaspora could “confront the legacies” of racialized domination. This slippage between Blackness and

culture can be explained by the ways in which American studies and area studies laid the institutional groundwork for Africana studies, and later, African diaspora studies. Schueller writes, “The twin imperatives of color-blind illusion and American global power have coalesced into... multicultural imperialism that seeks to regulate public discourse. Within this regulatory mechanism, radical, race-based multiculturalism, and critiques of imperialism, both legacies of civil rights and decolonization movements are deemed national security threats.”<sup>184</sup> The “colorblindness” of the diaspora analytic asserts itself from an articulation of structural power relations in cultural terms. This understanding became inherited in a regulated public discourse in which Blackness came to take on so many forms, variations, articulations, and enunciations that it became all but impossible to contest the materialities of power.<sup>185</sup> According to Robin Kelley: “Whether we employ metaphors of survival, retention, exchange, transformation, acculturation, or conversation, the remaking of African New World cultures had enormous implications not just for the study of the African diaspora but for the Atlantic as a whole.”<sup>186</sup> Such a remaking of “the African diaspora” as a cultural space served to marginalize material analyses of the effects of forced labor, racialization, dispossession, coloniality, and capitalist exploitation that manifest across the modern world-system in ways that are coordinated but not fixed or uniform, and that always require the unequal or unfree labor of Black people.<sup>187</sup>

The culturalist orientation of Africana studies and diaspora theory in the academy foreclosed critical engagement with political economy. As international linkages became culturally specified and divorced from political and economic realities, it foreclosed possibilities offered up by variations of socialism and Communism, that “reache[d] out to all oppressed colonial subjects... [and] enabled many different people to identify with other oppressed peoples and to reject patriotism and national identity.”<sup>188</sup> Race became essentialized in globalized relations of representation.<sup>189</sup> The possibilities of international alliances against capitalist oppression were also foreclosed in academic formulations of the African diaspora because “the Atlantic” as a unit of analysis<sup>190</sup> became frequently articulated to explain and make assertions about “political and cultural autonomy of African people in the West.”<sup>191</sup> African diaspora theory became used largely as a means of interrogating how the “transatlantic system” influenced representations of Africa and impacted the formation of “African” identity, and how “the cultures, ideas, [and] epistemologies taken from Africa or created in the ‘New World’ have deeply influenced art, religion, politics, philosophy, and social relations in the West.”<sup>192</sup> As a result, “Africanness” came to be understood as a culturalized form of transnational Blackness that had no historical, geospatial, political, or economic specificity. This negated the possibility for structural or material critique. Converted into a transhistorical receptacle of culture and survival, opportunities for the consideration of “Africa” as a contemporary reality tend to be severely curtailed. As Harris explains, Black college students during the “Civil Rights revolution” demanded the inclusion of African studies in newly-formed Africana studies departments out of the belief that the image of Africa impacted the status of African Americans; that African heritage informed the cultural heritage of African Americans; and that “true” representations of the history, politics, and culture of Africa could act to counteract the Eurocentrism and Western cultural exclusivity prevalent in U.S. institutions of higher education.<sup>193</sup> Resentment was directed against the failure to acknowledge the “African heritage” of these black students, thus reducing them merely to the descendants of slaves.<sup>194</sup> In other words, they were largely motivated by cultural concerns.

The need for engagement with global political economy and radical critique was raised by a number of scholars. By the 1980s St. Clair Drake was asserting that no Africana studies

program should “avoid responsibility for dealing with global policies.”<sup>195</sup> Using W.E.B. DuBois as a guide, and sensing the limitations of the academy, James Stewart proposed that Africana studies must look beyond the academy and the U.S. to develop an interdisciplinary or non-disciplinary paradigm that shaped teaching, research, and social change activities using a synthesis of nationalism and Marxism as its foundation.<sup>196</sup> Manning Marable argued that if Africana studies was to remain an important interdisciplinary field, it had to continually interpret and understand socioeconomic and global forces that were rapidly restructuring the life chances of Black people throughout the world.<sup>197</sup> However, with the exception of its engagement in anti-apartheid movements, Africana studies continued to refuse consideration of the structural and material effects of “global policies” while asserting black transnationality through a culturally specified diaspora analytic. In the tradition of American studies and area studies, African diaspora studies became conscripted into the academic arm of U.S. imperial multiculturalism by specifying transnational blackness as a culturalized trope while ignoring critical engagement with the material conditions of racialized abjection. The counterhegemonic challenge that African diaspora studies could have posed to the nation-state as its object of critique was thus negated by the centrality of Culturalism to its formulation.

### **Africana Studies at the University of California, Berkeley: A Case Study in Culturalist Antiradicalism**

The establishment of the African American studies department in 1974 and the development of the African diaspora studies Ph.D. program in 1997 at the University of California, Berkeley (UCB) provides a case study for how the U.S. (public) university—as a technology of the state—disciplines forms of (Black) radicalism that challenge the hegemonic order. It is also an example of how the institutionalization and “professionalization” of Africana studies, and the adaptation of African diaspora discourse as a response to globalization,<sup>198</sup> inevitably led to the entrenchment of the cultural specification of Blackness and the marginalization of analyses grounded in political economy.

#### **From Radicalism to Departmentalization**

In the late 1960s, Black radical activity proliferated on the campus of UCB, despite its negligible Black student population—1.02% in 1964.<sup>199</sup> On October 29, 1966, the Students for a Democratic Society held a conference entitled, “Black Power and Its Challenges” that featured Maulana (Ron) Karenga of the US Organization, James Bevel of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and Stokely Carmichael of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee as its speakers. Even though the event was boycotted by the Afro-American Student Union (AASU)—devotees of the Black Panthers<sup>200</sup>—because it was undesirable “to educate whites on black power when such a significant portion of the community [was] still uneducated on the subject,” the presence of Black radicals and activists on campus nonetheless concerning to the administration. The protest of the AASU itself represented the radicalization of race issues, with the organization asserting the right of Blacks to call their own conferences.<sup>201</sup> In 1968, a course organized by Troy Duster entitled “Social Analysis 139X” was set to feature ten lectures from Eldridge Cleaver; the Office of the President responded that Cleaver did not have the academic qualifications, and the UC Regents Board of Governance instituted a rule that a course could only have one guest lecture per semester in response to the course. These reactions convey that the presence of Cleaver, a Black radical, on campus was viewed as a problem and threat. In a protest against the “racism” of the Regents, students occupied Moses Hall, causing a reported

\$28,277.26 worth of damage. In the end, Cleaver was allowed to give six lectures.<sup>202</sup> Later that year, with the support of Black community activists and Black Power advocates, the AASU demanded a Black Studies department<sup>203</sup> based on the model provided by Nathan Hare, a Sociology Professor at San Francisco State University.<sup>204</sup> Student demands resulted in a compromise; the administration agreed to introduce five Black Studies courses in Fall: “The Black Experience from the Civil War to the Early Twentieth Century,” a history course; “The Black Family,” a sociology course; “Art of Black Africa,” an art course; “Subject A,” a literature course; and a colloquium in Black studies.<sup>205</sup> The courses offered are instructive inasmuch as they foreshadowed the “acceptable” categories of studying the Black experience that came to constitute Africana Studies. They laid the groundwork for the idea that “Black Studies” amounted to the study of Black culture. Of the five courses offered, none focused on political economy, capitalist exploitation, or the material conditions of the Black community.

The UCB administration focused on the cultural specifications of Blackness to neutralize the radical demands of the Black student body. Their attempt to beat back Black radicalism was evident in their refusal to establish a Black Studies department, instead agreeing to a Black Studies program. Though this decision was later overruled and the Dean of Letters and Sciences recommended a department, the stipulations were by most accounts restrictive, conservative, and antithetical to the exercise of self-determination that students were demanding. For example, according to Nelson Maldonado-Torres, “the university committee that was created to consider the proposal for a Black Studies program or department eliminated the community involvement program, field work, and student participation.”<sup>206</sup> AASU President Charles Jackson asserted, “the administration’s proposal for a department of Afro-American Studies is irrelevant. It can’t be for black people if it’s not from blacks.”<sup>207</sup> The Black students rejected the administration’s proposal and, along with their allies of color, called for a Third World Strike against the University beginning on January 22, 1969. They also demanded a Third World College that would include departments of Black studies, Chicano Studies, Asian Studies, and Native American Studies.<sup>208</sup> Though other minority groups participated, it was Black radicals that produced the call for a Third World College and that fundamentally challenged the power and authority of the University administration. According to Bil Banks, Black studies was “where the action was.”<sup>209</sup> As such, Blacks on campus needed to be disciplined and controlled.

On March 4, 1969, the University approved an interim Department of Ethnic Studies with a structure sufficiently flexible to “permit evolution to a college.”<sup>210</sup> “Afro-American” Studies offered thirty courses in Spring 1970, which far outnumbered what was offered by the other units. In Fall 1970 the number of courses ballooned to forty-one. Because Afro-American Studies was the standout unit, and because Black power and community involvement on campus continued to pose a threat to University stability,<sup>211</sup> the administration singled it out for special consideration. The decision was made to convert Afro-American Studies into a department in the College of Letters and science to ensure that it could be disciplined into institutionalization. Ling-Chi Wang, one of the founders of the Asian-American Studies Program and one of the first Chairs of the Ethnic Studies Department at UCB, asserts:

Well, you know, if you look at the national and local politics here in the San Francisco Bay area, at that time the only thing that the administration worried about was, you know, Black Power. And so even though it was not exclusively stated in the external review report, it was very clear that the administration was first and foremost concerned about African American Studies and its development. And the others, and in fact if you read the

other report, you will see that the other three programs are not considered to be, to put it bluntly, a threat to the university. So the administration was only interested in really cultivating African American Studies.

The process of “cultivation” started with the firing of Ron Lewis in 1972. He had served as the Afro-American Studies coordinator since 1969, and was popular among students and faculty. On June 1, 1972 Bil Banks, who had joined the faculty in 1970, replaced him without consultation with the faculty or the student body. Banks admitted that there was controversy surrounding his appointment because of the lack of transparency.<sup>212</sup> He explained: “The students took it upon themselves to mobilize the Black community, the political leaders, the ministers and so forth, against me. There were always these meetings in the community, in churches.”<sup>213</sup> These protests were in response not only to Lewis’s firing, but also to Chancellor Bowker’s plan to move Afro-American Studies—with the help of Banks—to the College of Letters and Sciences. The conditions for the move had been set by an external review of Ethnic Studies completed in 1973, because, according to Wang, “usually the Chancellor, who makes the appointments of these review committees, already has some agenda. Of course [he] will never disclose it and then [he] will pick the people essentially who will then follow... the agenda and then come up with recommendations... And they just use the review to legitimize... what the administration wants to do. That’s what these reviews are, essentially.”<sup>214</sup> According to Banks, there were two reports “contemporaneous” with the move—the Collins Committee Report and the Dekker Report—that concluded that Afro-American Studies was “eligible” or “suitable” to achieve departmental status.<sup>215</sup> The Collins Committee “recommended the formal departmentalization of each area of Ethnic Studies, referred to at that time as Afro-American Studies, Native American Studies, Chicano Studies, and Contemporary Asian Studies... because... [each unit] act[ed] independently of each other.”<sup>216</sup> Wang also contended that Banks was a “key person in the negotiation process” even as it was opposed by most of the constituencies that would be affected by the move.<sup>217</sup> This position is indicated in a letter written by Bokwers that informed Banks that he would “be considered for tenure, not primarily on the basis of scholarship, for [he] would have little time for that, but primarily on the basis of [his] administrative work in beginning to form a strong academic department for Afro-American Studies.”<sup>218</sup> Indeed, because of his collaboration with the administration, Banks was tenured in 1974 although he had not published a book.

Bowker’s claim that Banks was a “proven scholar” so his leadership would strengthen the department became a critical element in the administration’s push for professionalization of Afro-American Studies and in its efforts to extricate it from student activism and the larger Black community. Banks was much more preferable than Ron Lewis who, according to Banks, never “understood or came to grips with what an academic department could and could not do within the context of the campus. He never bothered to understand the environment well enough to impose some limits on his vision. If he wanted to have a class in east Oakland, he thought he should be able to do that.”<sup>219</sup> In other words, Banks’s “intellectual vision” was preferable to Lewis’s community orientation and activism. In exchange, Banks was rewarded for his role in de-radicalizing Afro-American Studies. The university’s decision did not go uncontested. Black students boycotted Banks’s courses, and Afro-American studies generally, leading to a drop in enrollments from 421 students in Fall 1971 to 93 students in Fall 1972. In addition, the faculty and lecturers sent letters to the community protesting that they had not been consulted about the dismissal of Lewis.<sup>220</sup>

Student and faculty protests were ignored. With Banks as Coordinator, the curriculum was revised to reflect its new status as an academic department and to rid it of “political rap.” Conditions were set to sever Afro-American Studies from Ethnic Studies and move it to the College of Letters and Sciences because, according to Banks, “in its present position on the outside, Ethnic Studies has actually less autonomy than it would if it were part of a college.”<sup>221</sup> Additionally, more tenured faculty members were hired. Departmental status and the hiring of faculty ostensibly would ensure the confidence and trust on the part of the University that it could become an institutionalized discipline.<sup>222</sup> For Banks and the administration, “autonomy” did not mean “self-determination,” but rather legitimacy in the larger structure of the University. It meant hiring tenure-track faculty and ensuring that the faculty did not have joint appointments so that they did not “get chewed up trying to serve two masters.”<sup>223</sup> In other words, it meant university-directed and sanctioned liberty to develop a legitimate department. “Autonomy” also appeared to be unrelated to the demands of the students, who continued to boycott the program. The transformation of Afro-American Studies into a “traditional academic unit” and the recruitment of faculty with degrees and credentials suitable to the College of Letters and Sciences were critical to its development into a legitimate department.<sup>224</sup> In 1974, Banks moved toward departmentalization for Afro-American Studies in the College of Letters and Sciences despite the remonstrations of faculty, students, and the other Ethnic Studies units.<sup>225</sup> According to Ling-Chi Wang, there “was not an unanimous vote among Afro-American Studies faculty, and faculty from other programs expressed their opposition to the plan as well... African American students later called for a boycott of Afro-American Studies classes to protest the transfer.”<sup>226</sup> Banks admitted that there was opposition, primarily from students with a community-oriented focus (mostly Asian Students, he claims) and those hostile to bringing in faculty with PhDs to ensure departmental status. However, he felt it was important to obtain “clout,” in structural terms, on par with that of disciplines like economics or sociology, and to become institutionalized. This would secure protection in a highly conservative political climate during a time when Ronald Reagan was serving his second term as the Governor of California. Banks was less interested in cross-ethnic collaboration, and more interested in using the “muscle” associated with 12.5 Full Time Equivalent appointments (FTE) to establish an “academic arena dedicated to exploring the condition, history, and culture of Black people” that “would be around long after political winds might change.”<sup>227</sup>

Protesters understood that the move of Afro-American Studies destroyed any possibility for the establishment of a Third World College, and the latter never materialized at UCB. In 1974 and 1976, Ethnic Studies faculty continued to submit proposals for the establishment of a separate college—either Third World or Ethnic Studies—but they were rejected.<sup>228</sup> According to Wang, “That pretty much—yeah that first report [that recommended the move of Afro-American Studies] pretty much blew away the idea of a Third World College.”<sup>229</sup> The 1980 Brenner Commission Report confirmed Wang’s assertion; it recommended that Ethnic Studies either obtain divisional status within the College of Letters and Science, or that each unit become completely absorbed into the College as separate departments.<sup>230</sup> A Third World College was out of the question. Banks contended that among Black students in particular there was not a “market” for a Third World College. Additionally, there were differences of opinion among the programs in Ethnic Studies related to their different sets of foci as to how faculty resources should be allocated. For example, most Asian-American Studies courses went toward reading and composition—four to five per semester. This differed significantly from the “political and intellectual core” that Banks thought was important for Afro-American Studies.<sup>231</sup> Banks was

also not “sympathetic” to the idea of service to the community as part of the role of academics because, according to him, students were at the University to gain a deeper understanding of community issues, not necessarily to solve them.<sup>232</sup> It was these differences that undermined the potential for a College and not, according to Banks, his intention to “single-handedly erode the College.”<sup>233</sup> The administration allocated a disproportionate amount of resources, tenure lines, staff positions, and administrative support to Black Studies to the detriment of other programs that were deemed less important because they were considered less threatening to the University.<sup>234</sup> Banks readily acknowledged that the 12.5 FTE, the promise of no budget cuts for three years, and other concessions he received fortified Afro-American Studies as a department—about which he has no apologies despite the hardships that other programs faced because the largesse came at their expense.<sup>235</sup> In effect, the administration was successful in undermining “Third World” solidarity because the move sowed seeds of distrust and contempt between Afro-American Studies and Ethnic Studies. Academic collaboration ceased after 1974, and the two departments had little communication until a joint faculty meeting that was held in 1982.

The departmentalization of Afro-American Studies, along with its move to the College of Letters and Sciences, confirmed and concretized the move away from radicalism and toward professionalization.<sup>236</sup> There was a decided turn to the humanities in the curriculum, because “if you were to emphasize the disparities, whether it be housing or jobs or in education, that’s too threatening to the institution. That’s why the humanities became popular. Universities love that.”<sup>237</sup> Courses focused on the history and culture of Africa and its diaspora. There was an emphasis placed on bringing creative writers and artists to campus, including Alex Haley, Alice Walker, Gil Scott-Heron, and Ishmael Reed.<sup>238</sup> With the hiring in the 1980s of a political scientist, a political economist, and an anthropologist,<sup>239</sup> the department began to institutionalize a dual focus that allowed students to declare an area of concentration in either the humanities or the social sciences. However, a continued emphasis on literature, history, and sociological and anthropological understandings of Black culture was evidenced in the way in which the administration framed FTE requests from the Department. In the span of three years, four full-time faculty members were hired in Comparative Literature, Poetry, Cultural Studies, and History, strengthening the cultural studies orientation of the department.<sup>240</sup> As the Department moved toward institutionalization, professionalization, and legitimation, the Black radicalism that had been foundational to its formation dissipated and all but disappeared. In effect, the antiradical UCB administration successfully disciplined and managed the way Blackness could be harnessed and would be studied.

### **The African Diaspora Studies Ph.D. and the Entrenchment of Culturalism**

By the early 1990s, area studies had been replaced by the study of globalization in the academy, and this was manifested in both American Studies and Africana Studies. While cultural studies, history, literature, and “anthropological approaches... to... the aesthetic functions of... nonliterary practices of everyday life” continued to be central,<sup>241</sup> the level of analysis shifted from the nation-state to empire, diaspora, and other supranational units. Both fields began to accommodate studies of postcolonialism, postnationalism, cultural hybridity, neoregionalism, and other issues that reflected the increased flows of bodies, commodities, and services across and beyond borders. “Global cultures” began to replace “national culture” in intellectual projects and curricular design, and scholars in these fields began to center critiques of cultural imperialism, Eurocentric privileging of particular cultures over others, the (United States)

American nativist bias and Americocentrism, national and cultural hierarchy, and the elision of social relations internal to particular geopolitical units. American Studies and Africana Studies also began to centralize the work of scholars who did not have an American background and that used theoretical models not drawn from the U.S. experience. At the same time, that nation-state was not wholly abandoned, as scholars continued to probe localized forms of power, the resurgence of nationalism(s) in particular locales, and the methods by which economic, social, political, and cultural formations play out within and through the nation-state. The goal of these new approaches in American Studies and Africana Studies was to explore alternatives to the nation-state.<sup>242</sup>

Especially in American Studies, the turn to globalization brought about a more sustained attempt to emplace cultural analyses in a broader framework of changes in global capitalism. Subjects including labor politics, shifts in cycles of accumulation, critiques of developmentalism and modernization, the movement of capital, the reconstitution of class formations, and the conjuncture of work and immigration began to infuse comparative studies of culture and to inform challenges to the notion that transnationalism produced a homogenized global culture.<sup>243</sup> Scholars with this material and structural focus began to consider the supranational and subnational dynamics of transnational capital that produced struggles, revolts, and movements that could not be easily attributed to either the “base” or the “superstructure.” In other words, they began to approach culture as “a terrain in which politics, culture, and the economic form an inseparable dynamic.” Intellectual projects also began to emphasize the ways in which cultural forms disrupt liberal, developmentalist, and Western Marxist historicist narratives, and challenge neat and closed categories of “tradition,” “modern,” and “postmodern” that do not adequately describe the transnational realities of late capital.<sup>244</sup> As Lowe and Lloyd argue, “The unevenness in the processes of commodification generates contradictions across the globe... the capitalist transformation of culture by way of universal commodification falls short of the exaggerated completion claimed by some theorists of globalization. Therefore, contradictions emerge along the fault lines between the exigencies of capitalist production and the cultural forms directly and indirectly engaged by those disciplines of production.” This conception of culture as “emerging in the economic and political processes of modernization” emphasized the political importance of cultural forms when they refuse exploitation and domination, and thus worked against anthropological and purely aesthetic notions of culture that had previously dominated the academy.<sup>245</sup> While approaches based on the conjunctures of culture, capital, and contradiction provided an alternative politics of culture, the turn to globalization also sustained the study of culture as an autonomous sphere, as commodification, and as aesthetic production.<sup>246</sup> The entanglement of “new” possibilities and “old” paradigms in American Studies and Africana Studies led to the formation of new subfields and areas of inquiry, including popular culture studies, film studies, postcolonial studies, and diaspora studies.

It is within this intellectual climate that the African American Studies department at UCB moved to develop a PhD program in African diaspora studies. They argued that in order to “attain mature status on campus”—that is, to become fully institutionalized and to gain recognition of the “full potential of African American studies”—a graduate program was necessary.<sup>247</sup> Starting in 1984, the African American Studies department joined with the Ethnic Studies Graduate Group to teach graduate courses, advise students, and serve on committees. With growing demand for a PhD in African American Studies, in 1989 the faculty gathered for a series of retreats to discuss the development of a PhD program. It was decided that, “the program should be multi and trans disciplinary in approach, multi and trans national in orientation, and



global in scope.”<sup>248</sup> In other words, the Ph.D. would be built around the African diaspora concept. Starting in 1991, the Ford Foundation—the same foundation that was integral to the funding of area studies departments starting in the 1950s—provided the Department, with multiple grants directed at developing the field of African diaspora studies. The projects funded included “Advancing Interdisciplinary Scholarship on the African Diaspora,” from 1991-1994; and “African Diaspora Studies, Multiculturalism, and Identity Construction: The Development of a Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Framework,” from 1995-1998.<sup>249</sup> The Ford Foundation was responsible for funding a multitude of diaspora-related projects throughout the United States from the mid-1980s, so the Foundation was pivotal in determining the shape and scope of African diaspora studies. And like area studies, African diaspora studies would take on a form and function that was consonant with state pedagogy.<sup>250</sup>

A proposal for the PhD program was submitted to the Graduate Division in February 1992, and in May 1993 the Academic Senate Divisional Council recommended approval of the proposal.<sup>251</sup> However, when the proposal was submitted to the California Postsecondary Education Committee (CPEC), a number of issues were raised that demonstrated the Committee’s desire to impose higher standards and expectations on the Department, and its reticence to approve the proposal. These concerns included African American Studies’ separation from Ethnic Studies, its admissions requirements and the legitimacy and philosophical principals of African diaspora studies.<sup>252</sup> Percy Hintzen responded that CPEC criticism seemed to imply that the program would “admit the illiterates on Telegraph Avenue... if [they were] not held to a higher and more unrealistic standard.”<sup>253</sup> Hintzen’s response reveals the ways in which African American studies continued to be devalued in the American academy, and why it was necessary to develop a PhD program that would make it a legitimate (inter)discipline. It also underscores that legitimacy required official approval and the organization of the program in a manner that was acceptable to and in service of University and state pedagogy. Despite this setback, in March 1996, the first PhD program in African diaspora studies in the world was approved at UCB; fourteen students enrolled in Fall 1997, inaugurating the program.<sup>254</sup>

The response of the African American Studies department to CEPC critiques of the PhD proposal highlights the Culturalist thrust of African diaspora studies. The PhD program was based on the suggestions from the “Proceedings of the International Advisory Committee of the African Diaspora Research Project,” a 1988 conference held at Michigan State University. Its objective was to develop a paradigm and research agenda for comparatively studying the African Diaspora. The proposed focus was to be on resistance and struggle; nationalities and national identity; migration and displacement; and history, culture, and expressive modes.<sup>255</sup> These culturally specified thrusts acted to reproduce the study of Blackness as a combination of historical, anthropological, artistic, and socio-behavioral concerns that elide a structural or political economic basis for study. In fact, the department asserted that, “the occipital treatment by Anthropology of ethnicity and culture is the more appropriate framework for the treatment of race, class and gender.”<sup>256</sup> In other words, African diaspora studies, as they understood it, simply internationalized or transnationalized the culture concept inhered in American Studies, area studies, and the subsequent interdisciplines. Although there was an expectation that students would study development and underdevelopment, which are political economic modes of analysis, ultimately the focus would be on “endurance, resistance and struggle as entailed in cultural and political action.”<sup>257</sup> One can assume from this that “politics” implied the politics of identity, the politics of culture, and cultural politics. While it was asserted that, “the very rationale for using a global approach to the study of African American Studies” was “the idea of

the globalization of political economy and the need to develop analytical frameworks that recognize this reality,” the PhD program was structured around “existing theoretical and analytical frameworks” that heavily emphasized culture. These included Afrocentricity, poststructuralism and performance, liberation as it relates multiculturalism, and the critical interpretive approach of postmodernism.<sup>258</sup> The social constructionist approach was also specified, especially as exemplified by cultural structuralists, to challenge essentialism, determinism, structuralism and formalism of the “particularly flagrant” Marxist variety. Moreover, the program would be organized around concerns of agency and liberation because “the ‘subaltern other’ existing in a racially constructed universe, has ‘agency’ employed to contest the existing order and to apprehend its humanity. Hence [the] concern with cultural studies.”<sup>259</sup> Cultural studies is not necessarily opposed to political economy or Marxism; the work of Louis Althusser and Stuart Hall attest to this. However, the UCB African American studies department’s proposal specified agency in cultural terms rather than in relation to the material conditions of labor. Thus, the Ph.D. continued to be culturally specified, both in its humanities and its developmentalist formulation. There was no systematic treatment of or engagement with political economy. African Diaspora studies at UCB became inhered in this entanglement of liberation, agency, and culture—in other words, in Culturalism.

Taking its cue from Ruth Simms Hamilton, a professor at Michigan State University and pioneer of the study of the African diaspora, the department identified its four areas of focus as African history, culture, politics, and social organization.<sup>260</sup> It defined the African diaspora as a “focus”<sup>261</sup> on “the life, culture, and social organization” of African descendants based on “generalizable conditions that apply to persons of African descent, wherever they may find themselves.” These conditions “pertain to the international and national division of race, the implications of colonialism and European expansion, and international migration and its effect upon the home and host communities. Issues pertaining to ‘ethnicization’ related to identity construction, marginality, and territoriality are of universal concern...”<sup>262</sup> While it was mentioned that race played in central role in the organization of political economy and in class formation, emphasis was placed on the racialization and dispersion of African descendants, which they argued required a sustained study of “identity and their sense of peoplehood.”<sup>263</sup> In other words, the study of the African diaspora was meant to comparatively interrogate the ways in which Black people, wherever they were located, understood themselves and their relationship to other people with similarly racialized identities. African diaspora studies, then, did not necessitate an analysis of structures of domination, capitalist exploitation, inequitable distribution of resources, the global axial division of labor, or any of the other materialities of the Black condition. This was reflected in the two specific fields of emphasis for the PhD, “Issues of Development in the Diaspora” and “Cultural Studies.” The former included Social and Cultural Institutions; History of the African Diaspora; Politics of Culture; Psychology and Education; Urban Sociology; and Political Economy of the Diaspora. The latter included Comparative Literature, Performing Arts and popular Culture: Theater and Film, Critical Theory, Cultural history in the African Diaspora, and Language and Linguistic.<sup>264</sup> These two general areas reflected the dominance of the humanities and the Culturalist thrust in the Department’s conceptualization of the program. The courses offered in the PhD program between Fall 1997 and Spring 1999 included “Literary Methodologies: Toni Morrison,” “Multiculturalisms,” “Identity Politics in the Caribbean and Africa,” “The Cinematography of Sembène Ousame,” “Comparative Diaspora Discourses,” and “Lorraine Hansberry.” There were no courses focused on economic development, capitalism, or political economy.<sup>265</sup> It is no wonder, then, that of the

fourteen members of the first class of graduate students, at least half went on to teach in humanities departments. Thus, the development of African diaspora studies at UC Berkeley reproduced and reified the cultural specifications of Blackness and further marginalized Black radical scholarship. Irrespective of the political economic and structural conditions of the 1980s and 1990s, the African diaspora was theorized in terms of culture and ignored the convergence of the material conditions of Blacks in the Global North and the Global South.

### Conclusion

Africana studies at UCB continues the legacy of American studies and areas studies through its split from Ethnic Studies and institutionalization in the College of Letters and Sciences; its legitimation through the development of the African diaspora studies PhD program; and the entrenchment of Culturalism as the organizing principle for studying the Black condition worldwide. As Africana studies moved away from its Pan-African and community foundations and pushed for institutionalization and legitimation, American studies and area studies served as its institutional precursors. As an interdisciplinary focused on the study of a minority group, it became a site of surveillance, discipline, and ultimately self-regulation. By the 1980s the primary technology of self-regulation was Culturalism. The formation of Afro-American studies at the University of California, Berkeley and its transition to African diaspora studies in the nineteen 1990s exemplifies the antiradical and anti-materialist orientation of the U.S. academy, and the ways in which Culturalism became an important instrumentality of disciplining and institutionalization.

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<sup>1</sup>Africana Studies is used to describe the entire disciplinary project, starting in the 1960s, that came to be known variously as Black Studies, African-American Studies, African and African American Studies, Africology, Pan-African Studies, Black New World Studies, etc. As this chapter will show, in the early 1990s African diaspora studies became popular nomenclature.

<sup>2</sup> Joel Pfister, "The Americanization of Cultural Studies," *The Yale Journal of Criticism* 4 (1991), 210.

<sup>3</sup> Roderick Ferguson, *The Reorder of Things; The University and its Pedagogy of Minority Difference*, (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 2012).

<sup>4</sup> Malini Johar Schueller, "Area Studies and Multicultural Imperialism: The Project of Decolonizing Knowledge," *Social Text* 90 (2007), 42.

<sup>5</sup> Ferguson, *The Reorder of Things*, loc 259.

<sup>6</sup> Philip Gleason, "World War II and the Development of American Studies," *American Quarterly* 36 (1984), 356.

<sup>7</sup> Schueller, "Area Studies and Multicultural Imperialism," 47-48.

<sup>8</sup> Ferguson, *The Reorder of Things*, loc 817.

<sup>9</sup> Jurgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975), 60.

<sup>10</sup> Ferguson, *The Reorder of Things*, loc 278.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, loc 478.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, loc 466.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, loc 506.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, loc 265.

<sup>15</sup> Gerald A. McWorter, "Deck the Ivy Racist Halls: The Case of Black Studies," in *Black Studies in the University*, edited by Armstead Robinson et al., (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), 58.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 63.

<sup>17</sup> Ferguson, *The Reorder of Things*, loc 300.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, loc 632.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, loc 632, 670.

<sup>20</sup> Schueller, "Area Studies and Multicultural Imperialism," 44.

<sup>21</sup> Ferguson, *The Reorder of Things*, loc 292.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 692.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, loc 314.

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- <sup>24</sup> Schueller, "Area Studies and Multicultural Imperialism," 42.
- <sup>25</sup> Ferguson, *The Reorder of Things*, loc 581.
- <sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, loc 574.
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, loc 530-51.
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, loc 528.
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, loc 558.
- <sup>30</sup> Gleason, "Development of American Studies," 345
- <sup>31</sup> Nikhil Pal Singh, "Culture/Wars: Recoding Empire in an Age of Democracy," *American Quarterly* 50 (1998), 488.
- <sup>32</sup> Gleason, "Development of American Studies," 344.
- <sup>33</sup> Hall, "What is this 'Black,'" 255.
- <sup>34</sup> Gleason, "Development of American Studies," 358.
- <sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 345.
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 352.
- <sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 344.
- <sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 349.
- <sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 348.
- <sup>40</sup> Singh, "Culture/Wars," 490.
- <sup>41</sup> Gleason, "Development of American Studies," 356.
- <sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 356.
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 352.
- <sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>45</sup> Barry Shank, "The Continuing Embarrassment of Culture: From the Culture Concept to Cultural Studies," *American Studies* 38 (1997), 96.
- <sup>46</sup> Leo Marx, "Thoughts on the Origin and Character of the American Studies Movement," *American Quarterly* 31 (1979), 400.
- <sup>47</sup> Hall, "What is this 'Black,'" 255.
- <sup>48</sup> Gleason, "Development of American Studies," 354.
- <sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 358.
- <sup>50</sup> Robert Sklar "American Studies and the Realities of America," *American Quarterly* 22 (1970), 598.
- <sup>51</sup> Marx, "Thoughts on the Origin and Character," 398.
- <sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 399.
- <sup>53</sup> Robert Sklar "American Studies and the Realities of America," *American Quarterly* 22 (1970), 598.
- <sup>54</sup> Barry Shank, "The Continuing Embarrassment of Culture," 99.
- <sup>55</sup> Sklar "Realities of America," 599.
- <sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 598-599.
- <sup>57</sup> Ferguson, *The Reorder of Things*, loc 180.
- <sup>58</sup> Gleason, "Development of American Studies," 345.
- <sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>60</sup> Ferguson, *The Reorder of Things*, loc 429.
- <sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, loc 601.
- <sup>62</sup> Giroux et al., "The Need for Cultural Studies," 4.
- <sup>63</sup> Shank, "The Continuing Embarrassment of Culture," 99-100; Marx, "Thoughts on the Origin and Character," 399.
- <sup>64</sup> Shank, "The Continuing Embarrassment of Culture," 100.
- <sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 100-101.
- <sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 105.
- <sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 101.
- <sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 104.
- <sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 103.
- <sup>71</sup> George Lipsitz, "The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: Racial Social Democracy and the 'White' Problem in American Studies," *American Quarterly* 47 (1995), 371.
- <sup>72</sup> Marx, "Thoughts on the Origin and Character," 400.
- <sup>73</sup> Shank, "The Continuing Embarrassment of Culture," 104.
- <sup>74</sup> Sklar "American Studies and the Realities of America," 603.

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- <sup>75</sup> Lipsitz, "The Possessive Investment in Whiteness," 370.
- <sup>76</sup> Marx, "Thoughts on the Origin and Character," 400.
- <sup>77</sup> Lipsitz, "The Possessive Investment in Whiteness," 379.
- <sup>78</sup> Marx, "Thoughts on the Origin and Character," 399.
- <sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 400.
- <sup>80</sup> Eric Hobsbawm. "Identity Politics and the Left," *New Left Review* 217 (1996), 43.
- <sup>81</sup> Brent Hayes Edwards et. al, "'Unfinished Migrations': Commentary and Response," *African Studies Review* 43 (2000), 61.
- <sup>82</sup> Naomi Paik, "Education and empire old and new: HR 3077 and the resurgence of the US university," *Cultural Dynamics* 25 (2013), 4.
- <sup>83</sup> Immanuel Wallerstein, "The Unintended Consequences of Cold War Area Studies," in *The Cold War and the University: Toward an Intellectual History of the Postwar Years*, edited by Noam Chomsky et al., (New York: The New Press, 1997), 224
- <sup>84</sup> Wallerstein, "The Unintended Consequences," 207.
- <sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>86</sup> Patricia S. Kuntz, "The Training of an Africana Librarian: The Mellon Fellowship," *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 44 (2003).
- <sup>87</sup> *Language & Area Centers: Title VI/National Defense Act* 9Washington DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1968); Gayatri Spivak, "Gender and International Studies," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 27 (1998), 809.
- <sup>88</sup> Vicente L. Rafael, "The Cultures of Area Studies in the United States," *Social Texts* 41 (1994), 96-97.
- <sup>89</sup> Schueller, "Area Studies and Multicultural Imperialism," 44; O'Hanlon and Washbrook, "After Orientalism," 331.
- <sup>90</sup> See chapters 2 and 3 of this dissertation.
- <sup>91</sup> Paik, "Education and empire," 10.
- <sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*; Gayarti Spivak, *Death of a Discipline*, (New York: Columbia University Press), 3.
- <sup>93</sup> Mimi White and James Schwoch, eds, *Questions of Method in Cultural Studies*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 11.
- <sup>94</sup> Rosalind O'Hanlon and David Washbrook, "After Orientalism: Culture Criticism and Politics in the Third World," in *Mapping Subaltern Studies and the Postcolonial*, (London: Verso, 2000), 192.
- <sup>95</sup> Paik, "Education and empire," 9; Lisa Brock, "Nation and the Cold War: Reflections on the Circuitous Route of African Diaspora Studies," *Radical History Review* 103 (2009), 11; Spivak, *Death of a Discipline*, 6; Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "'Under Western Eyes' Revisited: Feminist Solidarity through Anticapitalist Struggle," *Signs* 28 (2002), 519 note 19; White and Schwoch, *Questions of Method*, 13; Wallerstein, "The Unintended Consequences," 208.
- <sup>96</sup> While and Schwoch, *Questions of Method*, 8.
- <sup>97</sup> Walter D. Mignolo, "The Geopolitics of Knowledge and Colonial Difference," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 101 (2002), 60; Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Rising Winds: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935-1960*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 228-229.
- <sup>98</sup> Wallerstein, "The Unintended Consequences," 197.
- <sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 205.
- <sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 219.
- <sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 205.
- <sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 218.
- <sup>104</sup> O'Hanlon and Washbrook, "After Orientalism," 171.
- <sup>105</sup> Pierre, *The Predicament of Blackness*, 190.
- <sup>106</sup> Schueller, "Area Studies and Multicultural Imperialism," 45.
- <sup>107</sup> Ferguson, *The Reorder of Things*, loc 455.
- <sup>108</sup> Culverson "From Cold War to Global," 224.
- <sup>109</sup> Plummer, *Rising Winds*, 229.
- <sup>110</sup> Ferguson, *The Reorder of Things*, loc 462.
- <sup>111</sup> Singh, "Culture/Wars," 488; Plummer, *Rising Winds*, 229.
- <sup>112</sup> Spivak, *Death of a Discipline*, 2.

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- <sup>113</sup> Ella Shohat, "Area Studies, Transnational Studies, and the Feminist Production of Knowledge," *Signs* 26 (2001), 1270.
- <sup>114</sup> Spivak, *Death of a Discipline*, 104 footnote 2.
- <sup>115</sup> David Theo Goldberg, "Racial Knowledge," in *Theories of Race and Racism* edited by Les Beck and John Solomos, (London: Routledge, 2000), 164.
- <sup>116</sup> Chakrabarty, "Reconstituting Liberalism," 458.
- <sup>117</sup> Wallerstein, "The Unintended Consequences," 196.
- <sup>118</sup> O'Hanlon and Washbrook, "After Orientalism," 172.
- <sup>119</sup> Singh, "Culture/Wars," 490.
- <sup>120</sup> O'Hanlon and Washbrook, "After Orientalism," 174.
- <sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 181.
- <sup>122</sup> White and Schwoch, *Questions of Method*, 13.
- <sup>123</sup> O'Hanlon and Washbrook, "After Orientalism," 174.
- <sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 175.
- <sup>125</sup> Ramon Grosfoguel, "Decolonizing Postcolonial Studies and Paradigms of Political Economy: Transmodernity, Decolonial Thinking and Decoloniality," *Transmodernity* 1 (2011), 3.
- <sup>126</sup> Shohat, "Area Studies, Transnationalism," 1270.
- <sup>127</sup> Mohanty, "'Under Western Eyes Revisited,'" 520.
- <sup>128</sup> Walter Mignolo and Madina V. Tlostanova, "Theorizing from the Borders: Shifting to Geo- and Body-Politics of Knowledge," *European Journal of Social Theory* 9 (2006), 206.
- <sup>129</sup> Mohanty, "'Under Western Eyes Revisited,'" 519-520.
- <sup>130</sup> O'Hanlon and Washbrook, "After Orientalism," 171.
- <sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 172.
- <sup>132</sup> Wallerstein, "The Unintended Consequences," 226.
- <sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>134</sup> "Pan-Africanism ha[d] provided a distinct global focus for Black Studies since the programs became a part of the campus scene in the late sixties and early seventies." Drake, "Black Studies and Global Perspectives," 236.
- <sup>135</sup> Harold Cruse, "The Integrationist Ethic as a Basis for Scholarly Endeavor," in *Black Studies in the University*, edited by Armstead Robinson et al., (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), 6, 10.
- <sup>136</sup> Drake, "Black Studies and Global Perspectives," 228.
- <sup>137</sup> Ferguson, *The Reorder of Things*, loc 180.
- <sup>138</sup> Colón, "Critical Issues," 276.
- <sup>139</sup> Drake, "Black Studies and Global Perspectives," 236.
- <sup>140</sup> Ferguson, *The Reorder of Things*, loc 368-370.
- <sup>141</sup> Colón, "Critical Issues," 273.
- <sup>142</sup> Ferguson, *The Reorder of Things*, loc 748.
- <sup>143</sup> Colón, "Critical Issues," 275.
- <sup>144</sup> Armstead Robinson et al., *Black Studies in the University*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), vii.
- <sup>145</sup> Robinson et al., *Black Studies*, 227.
- <sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, 225.
- <sup>147</sup> Robinson et al., *Black Studies*, 228.
- <sup>148</sup> James Stewart, "The Legacy of W.E.B. DuBois for Contemporary Black Studies," *The Journal of Black Education* 53 (1984), 296.
- <sup>149</sup> Henry Louis Gates, Jr., and Manning Marable, "A Debate about Activism in Black Studies," in *Dispatches from the Ebony Tower: Intellectuals Confronting the African American Experience* edited by Manning Marable, (New York: Columbia University, 1983), 190.
- <sup>150</sup> Cruse, "The Integrationist Ethic," 9.
- <sup>151</sup> Bill Fletcher Jr., "Black Studies and the Question of Class," in *Dispatches from the Ebony Tower: Intellectuals Confronting the African American Experience* edited by Manning Marable, (New York: Columbia University, 1983), 159.
- <sup>152</sup> Gates and Marable, "A Debate about Activism," 191.
- <sup>153</sup> Fletcher, "Black Studies," 161.
- <sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.
- <sup>155</sup> Cruse, "The Integrationist Ethic," 12.
- <sup>156</sup> Gates and Marable, "A Debate about Activism," 189.

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- <sup>157</sup> Fletcher, "Black Studies," 158.
- <sup>158</sup> Drake, "Black Studies and Global Perspectives," 236.
- <sup>159</sup> Robinson et al., *Black Studies*, 3.
- <sup>160</sup> Harris, "The Intellectual and Institutional," 18.
- <sup>161</sup> Ferguson, *The Reorder of Things*, loc 446.
- <sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, loc 518.
- <sup>163</sup> Fletcher, "Black Studies," 159.
- <sup>164</sup> Ferguson, *The Reorder of Things*, loc 777-783.
- <sup>165</sup> Hall, "What is this 'Black,'" 255.
- <sup>166</sup> Colón, "Critical Issues," 277.
- <sup>167</sup> Ferguson, *The Reorder of Things.*, loc 787.
- <sup>168</sup> Colón, "Critical issues," 268.
- <sup>169</sup> Cruse, "The Integrationist Ethic," 4.
- <sup>170</sup> McWhorter, "Deck the Racist Ivy Halls," 59.
- <sup>171</sup> Ferguson, *The Reorder of Things*, loc 141-142.
- <sup>172</sup> Schueller, "Area Studies and Multicultural Imperialism," 52.
- <sup>173</sup> Ferguson, *The Reorder of Things.*, loc 186.
- <sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, loc 288.
- <sup>175</sup> Hall, "What is this 'Black,'" 257.
- <sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*, 257-558.
- <sup>179</sup> Fletcher, "Black Studies," 159.
- <sup>180</sup> Drake, "Black Studies and Global Perspectives," 228.
- <sup>181</sup> Schueller, "Area Studies and Multicultural Imperialism," 54.
- <sup>182</sup> Robert L. Harris, "The Intellectual and Institutional Development of Africana Studies," in *The Black Studies Reader* edited by Jacqueline Bobo et. al, (New York: Routledge, 2004), 15.
- <sup>183</sup> Alan K. Colón, "Critical Issues in Black Studies: A Selective Analysis," *The Journal of Negro Education* 53 (1984), 273.
- <sup>184</sup> Schueller, "Area Studies and Multicultural Imperialism," 49-50.
- <sup>185</sup> Power is "shorthand for a plurality of relations... the 'name... [of] a complex *strategical* situation in a particular society.'" Ferguson, *The Reorder of Things*, loc 173.
- <sup>186</sup> Robin D.G. Kelley, "How the West was One: On the Uses and Limitations of Diaspora," in *The Black Studies Reader* edited by Jacqueline Bobo et. al, (New York: Routledge, 2004), 41-42.
- <sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.
- <sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.
- <sup>189</sup> Stuart Hall, "New Ethnicities," in *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies* edited by David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen, (London: Routledge, 1996).
- <sup>190</sup> Kelley, "How the West was One," 43.
- <sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.
- <sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>193</sup> Harris, "The Intellectual and Institutional," 17-18.
- <sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.
- <sup>195</sup> St. Clair Drake. "Black Studies and Global Perspectives: An Essay," *Journal of Negro Education* 53 (1984), 236.
- <sup>196</sup> Stewart, "The Legacy of W.E.B. DuBois," 316-317.
- <sup>197</sup> Gates and Marable, "A Debate about Activism," 190.
- <sup>198</sup> According to Scholars such as Brent Hayes Edwards, Tiffany Patterson & Robin Kelley, and Michael O. West, the resurgence of scholarship on the African Diaspora and the development of African diaspora studies can be attributed to the accession of concerns about "globalization" and "transnationalism." According to West, "The search for globalization in scholarship follows, willy-nilly, the globalization of capital, especially in the post-cold war era. Within the academy, the turn toward globalization ahs involved a parallel move movement away form the area studies approach... Such is the broader content for the increasing popularity of what is now being called African diaspora studies." Brent Hayes Edwards et. al, "Unfinished Migrations: Commentary and Response," *African Studies Review* 43 (2000), 61. Also see Tiffany Patterson & Robin D.G. Kelley, "Unfinished Migrations: Reflections

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on the African Diaspora and the Making of the Modern World,” *African Studies Review* 43 (2000), 11-45 and Brent Hayes Edwards, “The Uses of Diaspora,” *Social Texts* 66 (2001), 45-73.

<sup>199</sup> Ula Taylor, “Origins of African American Studies at UC-Berkeley,” *The Western Journal of Black Studies* 34 (2010), 256.

<sup>200</sup> William Banks (Professor Emeritus, African American Studies, University of California- Berkeley), interviewed by Charisse Burden-Stelly, 18 November 2015.

<sup>201</sup> *Daily Californian*, October 26 (1966). “Negro Group Afro-American Rally Will Oppose SD.”

<sup>202</sup> Taylor, “African American Studies at UC-Berkeley,” 256, 257

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.*, 257; *Daily Californian*, March 4 (1969). “Afro-American Studies Proposal.”

<sup>204</sup> William Barlow and Peter Shapiro, *An End to Silence: The San Francisco State Movement in the 60s*, (New York: Pegasus, 1971), 124.

<sup>205</sup> Taylor, “African American Studies at UC-Berkeley,” 257.

<sup>206</sup> Nelson Maldonado-Torres, “Selection from the Department Self-Review of July 14, 2009,” Ethnic Studies Department, University of California- Berkeley, 56.

<sup>207</sup> *Daily Californian*, January 22 (1969), “TWLF: Strike Issue is Self-Determination.”

<sup>208</sup> Taylor, “African American Studies at UC-Berkeley,” 258; Maldonado-Torres, “Departmental Self-Review,” 56.

<sup>209</sup> William Banks Interview, 18 November 2015.

<sup>210</sup> Maldonado-Torres, “Departmental Self-Review,” 56; *Daily Californian*, March 4 (1969), “Scope and Structure of Ethnic Studies Examined in Final TWLF Proposals.”

<sup>211</sup> Ling-Chi Wang (Professor Emeritus, Ethnic Studies, University of California- Berkeley), interviewed by Charisse Burden-Stelly, 27 October 2015.

<sup>212</sup> William Banks Interview, 18 November 2015.

<sup>213</sup> Banks, “Oral History with Bil Banks,” 161.

<sup>214</sup> Ling-Chi Wang Interview, 27 October 2015.

<sup>215</sup> William Banks Interview, 18 November 2015.

<sup>216</sup> Maldonado-Torres, “Departmental Self-Review,” 57.

<sup>217</sup> Ling-Chi Wang Interview, 27 October 2015.

<sup>218</sup> Taylor, “African American Studies at UC-Berkeley,” 261; William (Bil) Banks, “An Oral History with Williams (Bil) Banks” conducted by Nadine Wilmot, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 3 March 2004.

<sup>219</sup> Banks, “Oral History with Bil Banks,” 126.

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.*, 260-261; William Banks Interview, 18 November 2015.

<sup>221</sup> Taylor, “African American Studies at UC-Berkeley,” 260-261.

<sup>222</sup> William Banks Interview, 18 November 2015.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>224</sup> Taylor, “African American Studies at UC-Berkeley,” 261.

<sup>225</sup> Mark Kenchelian, “Ethnic Studies Makes Demands,” *Daily Californian*, May 17, 1974; *Daily Californian* (1974), “Divisions Challenge Black Studies Move.”

<sup>226</sup> Maldonado-Torres, “Departmental Self-Review,” 57.

<sup>227</sup> William Banks Interview, 18 November 2015.

<sup>228</sup> Maldonado-Torres, “Departmental Self-Review,” 58.

<sup>229</sup> Ling-Chi Wang Interview, 27 October 2015.

<sup>230</sup> Maldonado-Torres, “Departmental Self-Review,” 58.

<sup>231</sup> William Banks Interview, 18 November 2015.

<sup>232</sup> Banks, “Oral History with Bil Banks,” 127.

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>234</sup> Ling-Chi Wang Interview, 27 October 2015

<sup>235</sup> William Banks Interview, 18 November 2015

<sup>236</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>237</sup> Ling-Chi Wang Interview, 27 October 2015

<sup>238</sup> Taylor, “African American Studies at UC-Berkeley,” 262.

<sup>239</sup> *Ibid.*, 264.

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>241</sup> The Culturalist emphasis is manifested in John Carlos Rowe’s assertion that in order to remain relevant in the academy, American Studies needed to forge coalitions with “like-minded colleagues in history, English and



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American literature, comparative literature, [ethnic studies]... anthropology, folklore... popular culture... media and visual studies, art history, and the programs in foreign languages and literatures relevant to the study of the western hemisphere..." While he also mentions political science and critical theory, it is clear that political economy and materialist areas of inquiry are, in his opinion, less important to/in American Studies. Rowe also admits that "a great deal of work in American Studies is conducted without statistical, clinical, demographic, and other forms of empirical evidence that would make this work both more convincing and more conversant with disciplines in the social, natural, physical, and health sciences." See John Carlos Rowe, *The New American Studies*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), xiv, xxv, xxvii.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid., xiv-xxi.

<sup>243</sup> See Lisa Lowe and David Lloyd, Eds., *The Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997); John Carlos Rowe, "Post-Nationalism, Globalism, and the New American Studies," in *Post-nationalist American Studies* edited by John Carlos Rowe, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 23-37; Michael Denning, "The Laboring of American Culture," in *A Concise Companion to American Studies* edited by John Carlos Rowe, (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell Publishing, 2010), 59-73.

<sup>244</sup> Lisa Lowe and David Lloyd, "Introduction" in *The Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 2-4.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>247</sup> Percy C. Hintzen, "Establishing the First Ph.D. Program in African Diaspora Studies," African American Studies Department Files, University of California, Berkeley.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid.

<sup>249</sup> Margaret B. Wilkerson, "Advancing Interdisciplinary Scholarship on the African Diaspora," Ford Foundation project proposal July 1, 1991-June 30, 1994, African American Studies Department Files, University of California, Berkeley; Percy C. Hintzen, "African Diaspora Studies, Multiculturalism, and Identity Construction: The Development of a Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Framework," Ford Foundation project proposal September 1995-August 1998, African American Studies Department Files, University of California, Berkeley.

<sup>250</sup> A similar argument has been made regarding the relationship between Ford Foundation funding, the managing of Black Power, and the development of African American Studies. See Nowlie Rooks, *White Money/Black Power: The Surprising History of African American Studies and the Crisis of Race in Higher Education*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 2007).

<sup>251</sup> Hintzen, "Ph.D. Program in African Diaspora Studies," 1-2.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>253</sup> Percy Hintzen to Sandy Eillison, "CPEC: PHD IN AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES," 5 September 1995.

<sup>254</sup> Hintzen, "Ph.D. Program in African Diaspora Studies,"

<sup>255</sup> African American Studies Department, UC Berkeley, "Appendix 1: Information Required by the California Postsecondary Education Commission," A1, African American Studies Department Files, University of California, Berkeley.

<sup>256</sup> Ibid., A6.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid. A2-A3.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid. A3.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid., A4.

<sup>261</sup> Here, "focus" was essentially synonymous with "interdiscipline" inasmuch as both denote the theoretical, analytical, and methodological frameworks from various disciplines. Thus, "while a student may very well root herself/himself specifically in one discipline," they must also "be informed by an examination of linkages between that discipline and others." African American Studies Department, "Appendix 1," A6.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid. A5.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid., A4.

<sup>264</sup> African American Studies Department, UC Berkeley, "Academic Degree Programs: Information Required by the California Postsecondary Education Commission" 9, African American Studies Department Files, University of California, Berkeley. In this document, only two of the thirty-three sample required courses, Sociology 205 G- Social Stratification and Class Analysis and Geography 212- Economic Geography and Development Theory, was focused on class, capitalism, or political economy.

<sup>265</sup> African Diaspora Studies PhD Program, "Schedule 1997-1999," African American Studies Department Files, University of California, Berkeley.

## Chapter Five

### **The Culture Wars and Wars Over Culture: Africana Studies and Culturalism**

By the 1980s, there was an emergent emphasis on cultural affinity and connection in Africana studies that neglected the convergence of the material experiences in the structural organization of political economy among Blacks in the United States, Great Britain, Africa, and the Caribbean in the wake of a neoliberal agenda that produced a rollback of the state and its reformulation. This was instantiated through Reaganomics, Thatcherism, and Structural Adjustment that accompanied the collapse of the socialist/communist alternative. Despite this global restructuring, popular and scholarly understandings of American and “diasporic” Blackness did not involve a critique of political economy. An explanation of this elision will shed light on the conditions through and by which Africana studies shifted from its political, activist, and community-oriented distinctiveness to a Culturalist academic project. In other words, political economy became marginalized in the process of cultural specification of Africana studies.

Such overdetermination became evident in the “debates” taking place within the discipline focused around postcolonial studies/Black British Cultural Studies (BBCS), African American studies,<sup>1</sup> and Afrocentricity. Each perspective posed culture as the critical site of struggle for the Black without any fundamental critique of political economy. Even though the postcolonial/Black British model ultimately became the point of reference and assumed near hegemonic status, it became highly modified and challenged by American scholars who felt that the antiessentialist, decentered, and ethnicized study of Black culture distorted and marginalized the experience of African Americans and obfuscated the peculiar dynamics of U.S. racialization. In the final analysis, the ubiquity of this “debate” further marginalized radical intellectual thought and political economic critique because the latter was deemed irrelevant to that narrow and myopic conversation based on culture. As a result, Africana studies has largely produced a cadre of alienated, privatized, culture experts who are unable to critically engage with the structural and material realities out of which the Black condition is forged. The discipline has produced a “technical intelligentsia” who is generally fit only to reproduce the “bureaucratic... apparatus” and whose “rationality... is only instrumental in character.”<sup>2</sup> For this reason, the discipline has become unable, in its fundamentals, to engage significant issues of material abjection and political economy.

According to Martin Kilson, the maturation of Africana Studies was accomplished by and through the process of its “disciplinizing” and the proliferation of its most important innovation—Black cultural studies. Constituted by the overlapping of literary studies with psychological and societal studies, Black cultural studies provided an alternative Black ethnocentrism (Afrocentrism), and served as the primary source of enrichment of Africana Studies.<sup>3</sup> His position is part of a debate that effectively materialized into a cultural critique of the culture concept that involved the three primary factions named above. What was being disputed and contested was not the assertion that culture was the primary means of understanding Blackness and the Black condition. Rather, the debate centered on the meaning of culture and how it should be articulated; what was at stake in particular narratives of Black/African culture; and what the effects on Africana Studies epistemology would be if one method of engaging culture was chosen over another. It questioned how culture should be operationalized, what methods and analytics best served the new disciplinary specification, and how relations of power were constituted by and instantiated through culture in the lives of Black people. The impetus for

this debate was the growing influence of postcolonial studies/British cultural studies in the U.S. academy generally, and particularly of Black British Cultural Studies in Africana Studies.

The institutionalization and professionalization of Africana studies essentially collapsed the discipline into the study of Black culture. This was reified by the introduction of Black British Cultural Studies into the U.S. academy. The work and analytics of Paul Gilroy, Stuart Hall, Hazel Carby, Kobena Mercer, and other Black Britons were central to the epistemological transformation that resulted in African diaspora studies. This served in many ways to secure its legitimacy. The shift to African diaspora studies was predicated upon the appropriation and decontextualization of the tropes, concepts, and analytics of BBCS and a move away from historically and contextually specific Black American critiques of the U.S. racial state. As discussed in Chapter Four, the existent cultural specifications of Africana Studies precluded the (neo-) Marxist critique inhered in BBCS from taking root in the U.S. As a result, and unlike BBCS, African diaspora studies was unable to make an impact on Black struggles outside of the academy and on the structural issues related to these struggles. Africana studies challenged the racial epistemologies of the academy, but it fell far short of the critique raised by BBCS that systematically and deeply engaged the ways in which cultural forms were inextricably entangled with structures of domination and capitalist exploitation. Chapter Four argued that Africana studies became based on the grammar provided by American studies and the framework provided by area studies—(inter)disciplines that emerged in the context of the post-WWII proliferation of U.S. power and authority. BBCS satisfied the “need” for theory, complexity, and capaciousness in Africana studies, which had come under increasing criticism for ostensibly focusing on “victim studies” and “oppression studies.” The ready acceptance of BBCS by the American academy, though selective and partial, was due to the ways in which its abstracted articulations fit neatly within multicultural academic discourse and state pedagogy. Its cultural focus granted the state and capital reprieve from critical engagements with the material histories of racial domination, exploitation, and dispossession.

BBCS will be examined with particular focus on its critiques of the formulation of African American Studies in the U.S. academy, to elucidate the divergences in the two projects. As a counterhegemonic project, the origins and specifications of BBCS were forged as challenges to the British State and Thatcherism. When transferred to the U.S. context it proved compatible with the multicultural pedagogy of the U.S. state and became shorn of its radical critique. The following assertion by Laura Chrisman’s is particularly relevant to Africana Studies: “post-modernist intellectual concerns with language and subjectivity... infused both academia and ‘new Left’ politics to create a dominant paradigm of ‘culturalism’ for the analysis of social relations... [while] abandoning the tents and resources of socio-economic analysis.”<sup>4</sup> Next, the Africana Studies “culture wars” will be unpacked to explicate the ways in which a narrow focus on African American Studies, Afrocentricity, and an Americanized version of BBCS foreclosed the possibility of Black radicalism and political economy critique in the discipline. Finally, the role of Culturalism will be elucidated through a critical analysis of *The Black Atlantic*—arguably the most important text in the shaping of African diaspora studies—written by Paul Gilroy in 1993. I argue that Gilroy’s preoccupation with the transnational routes of Black culture decentered the nation-state while reproducing its epistemological technology: Culturalism. Stated differently, while Gilroy challenged “methodological nationalism,”<sup>5</sup> he did so through the cultural analytic of “diaspora”/Black Atlantic that reproduced the logics of nationalism and the nation-state. This explained the wide acceptance and acclaim received by

*The Black Atlantic* and its acceptance in the U.S. academy. While *The Black Atlantic* was subjected to various forms of criticism, they failed to address the problematics of Culturalism.

### **Black British Cultural Studies on Both Sides of the Pond**

Black British Cultural Studies was an intellectual project inaugurated in the late 1970s to interrogate “how ‘culture,’ ‘class,’ ‘false consciousness,’ and ‘the state’ were implicated with notions of ‘nation,’ ‘imperialism,’ ‘racism,’ and most explicitly, ‘ethnicity.’”<sup>6</sup> It,

...emerged from an intellectual climate created and sustained by a political discourse (as represented by the *New Left Review*), which operates on the assumption that the social and economic problems of Britain cannot be solved by current conservative or liberal socialist theories; instead, Marxism as a social theory is not only capable of explaining, but also of changing the conditions of British society. These debates, informed by the contributions of western European Marxism, French structuralism, and the work of Louis Althusser in particular... serve[d] as the intellectual resources for alternative, political responses to the problems of British society, including the distribution of economic and political power and the role of the media.<sup>7</sup>

Through collective scholarship and projects, group work, collectively produced books, and team teaching, BBCS aimed to instantiate an intellectual tradition. It was specified as neither a science nor a discipline.<sup>8</sup> For BBCS scholars, the humanities, represented as the last line of defense against the erosion of English culture,<sup>9</sup> were in a state of crisis. This was especially true for history and literature—the two disciplines, through their subfields of social history and literary criticism—which had become central to the historical construction of Englishness. As a result, English and History became two particularly important sites of struggle.<sup>10</sup> According to Stuart Hall, the cultural studies work of the 1960s and 1970s set out to unmask the unstated ideological underpinnings of the humanities tradition. It was meant to expose and critique the ways in which the humanities presented themselves as an objective and disinterested form of knowledge when indeed and in fact they played a “regulative nature and role... in relation to national culture.”<sup>11</sup> Furthermore,

The matrix of literature, literary criticism and Marxism produce[d] a convenient context for the questioning of cultural activities... Such contextualization and the location of the problematic in the cultural process, specifically among cultural, political, and economic phenomena, provided descriptive power and theoretical complexity... [Black]British cultural studies also... [engaged in] provocative investigations of contemporary social problems, demonstrating a sense of engagement between political practice and theoretical considerations within the public sphere. This [was] a qualitatively decisive difference from a system in which the nature and extent of social research depend upon the relationship between academic organizations [like the humanities], economic interests and the political system.<sup>12</sup>

In the British context, “culture” was deployed by the state and constructed by the humanities to delimit Britishness, and by extension, the right to belong and enjoy the entitlements of citizenship. Culture operated metonymically for race, ethnicity, nationality, and other markers of sameness and difference, and reproduced the logics of empire within the English nation-state.

Subjects of the former colonies were constructed as intruders, criminals, aliens, and “undesirables” that threatened the sanctity of the homogenous, monolithic British culture/nation. Those who were culturalized/ethnicized/racialized as not-British, while present and resident in the country, were discursively positioned on the constitutive outside of the nation. BPCS aimed to move cultural formulations and production away from their inegalitarian roots from which the masses generally, and racial and ethnic subjects particularly, were foreclosed. It aimed to do so by bringing attention to the cultural conditions of politics to the center of discourse. This was in response to what was seen as a narrowing of politics facilitated by cultural foreclosure.<sup>13</sup>

The challenge to Englishness as an exclusive cultural formulation emerged from the conditions of decolonization and the demand for labor related to Post World War II reconstruction. The latter was satisfied by the importation of cheap immigrant labor from the colonies and former colonies that reconstituted the relationship between colonizer and the (formerly) colonized by bridging colonial patterns of spatial relationships. With the influx of these new immigrants to satisfy a demand for labor that lasted from the end of WWII until the world economic crisis of the early 1970s, Great Britain became a multicultural society for the first time.<sup>14</sup> This incited anxieties about the sanctity of British culture, nationality, and society, especially as Britain receded as the dominant commercial, economic and imperial power.<sup>15</sup> State technologies were deployed through legislation, including a 1971 Immigration Act, to create different categories of British citizenship in order to preserve the exclusivity of Englishness. Distinctions came to be made through these legislative acts among British Nationals, persons from British Dependent Territories with a right to a status as British citizens, British Overseas citizens, British protected persons, and British subjects. In 1981, a British Nationality Act “reinforced the distinction between British Overseas subjects, who do not have rights of entry and residence in Britain, and United Kingdom citizens, who do have these rights.”<sup>16</sup> The act was in keeping with the need for respecification of understandings of nation, belonging, citizenship, and identity. This occurred in the wake of economic downturns of the early 1970s that curtailed the demand for overseas labor while producing economic anxieties among the English working class. These anxieties led to the election of Margaret Thatcher in 1980 on a conservative platform of nationalism as the touchstone for the implementation of economic reform—in other words, a neoliberal agenda. As Stuart Hall explains:

Socially, Thatcherism mobilized widespread but unfocussed anxiety about social change, engineering populist class from ‘below’ to the state ‘above’ to save the country by imposing social order. This slide towards a ‘law and order’ society was a key stage in the contradictory advance towards what has been called ‘authoritarian populism’... in the dark days of electoral unpopularity, Mrs Thatcher brilliantly summoned to the rescue, not market rationality but archaic British nationalism.... Nationalist discourse, with its imperialist undertow (what Paul Gilroy calls its ‘melancholia’, the unrequited mourning for a lost object) was haunted by the fantasy of a late return to the flag, family values, national character, imperial glory and the sprit of Palmerstonian gunboat diplomacy.<sup>17</sup>

All this is part of Thatcherism; it has to do with a profound crisis of national identity, of the national culture; it’s about the erosion and decline of the United Kingdom as a nation-state, about the threats Britain now feels itself facing, first of all from its own regions, second of all from Europe, thirdly from America, fourthly from Japan, and fifthly—and especially—from its own population. It is under threat from the ‘others’... It’s the

attempt of Thatcherism to discover who can really still be English; it's a tiny handful... Because, as Thatcherism has made the round of British society, it has, one after another, excluded everybody... all of us have been excluded from belonging to the national community at all.<sup>18</sup>

This disquietude about the presence of “others” combined with the absence of formerly colonized subjects from representations of the nation in literature and dominant discourse<sup>19</sup> to produce a respecification of Englishness /Britishness in terms that were fundamentally incompatible with Blackness/otherness. By the 1980s, “Britishness” came to be articulated as both ethnicity and nationality, and to be used as a basis of mobilization against the presence of “aliens” generally, and against Blackness and its metaphors particularly.<sup>20</sup> This built upon

...the long established tradition in Britain of attempting to define Culture from the perspective of the tastes and practices of the white upper middle-class English ‘gentleman.’ This tradition... established a gendered and racialized stratification which placed black and brown colonized people as ethnic inferiors whose own tastes and practices could not be considered within the same cultural frame except for reasons of adverse comparison—a means by which Anglo-British ethnicity might seek to define itself.<sup>21</sup>

This process of racialization of ethnic presences that were foreclosed from the dominant narrative of the nation solidified their absolute exclusion and concretized their conditions of unbelonging.<sup>22</sup>

Black British Cultural Studies challenged the silences around race and ethnicity in British Cultural Studies characteristic of the work emanating from “old left” scholars like Raymond Williams, Richard Hoggart, and E.P Thompson.<sup>23</sup> It sought to expose forms of racisms that were embedded in economic practice, domestic ideologies, and cultural formations.<sup>24</sup> Works like *Policing the Crisis* (1978), *The Empire Strikes Back* (1982), and *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack* ([1987], 1992) served to shift the focus of British Cultural Studies from culture and society to ethnicity and identity. The latter text inaugurated an antiessentialist turn in British Cultural Studies among “New Left” scholars.<sup>25</sup> According to Joel Pfister, “The New Left’s cultural studies was indivisible from the project of regrouping in response to the predicament of socialism within the crisis of cold war capitalism.”<sup>26</sup> It was an attempt to move beyond old left Marxist cultural studies, which began in 1968 but faltered with the Soviet Union’s loss of prestige.<sup>27</sup> Scholars of the New Left produced translations of the Frankfurt School, Louis Althusser, Walter Benjamin, and Antonio Gramsci to bring new understandings to the study of culture. BBCS engaged with the work of these thinkers as a reaction to the problems emerging out of the mobilization of the “national popular” and to analyze how knowledge was translated into the practice of culture.<sup>28</sup> This neo-Marxist critique informed the work of scholars such as Stuart Hall, who engaged questions of culture by challenging the base/superstructure bifurcation in traditional Marxism and the silences that this produced in dealing with questions of ideology, language, and the symbolic. The approach was to problematize Marxism rather than to adopt it whole cloth<sup>29</sup> so that it could “demand of culture what its synchronicities were with notions such as ‘class,’ ‘the state,’ and ‘false consciousness.’”<sup>30</sup> BBCS used the techniques of linguistics, discursivity, and textuality to provide a counterhegemonic discourse that: articulated ethnicity as an inclusive flexible site of representation; delinked “race” from the body to unpack how issues

of belonging, nation, and class were discursively inhered in processes of racialization; and enunciated Blackness through analytics including “diaspora” and “hybridity” to move beyond the nation as the site of belonging. Through its analysis, BBCS as a project sought to articulate counternarratives and counterhistories of modernity and to interrogate the role of knowledge and representation; to engage with the politics of knowledge; and to demonstrate and deploy the political power of representation. By offering “potentially revised visions of the past,” it attempted to point the way toward alternative futures.<sup>31</sup> BBCS sought to convert the “‘very sign of Britain’ into a metonym for international theoretical territories of debate concerning such matters as hegemony and subjectivity, essentialism and representation, diaspora and home.”<sup>32</sup>

BBCS as a project resisted and rejected the homogenizing narratives about Black people as products of nation-state discourse and as present in the ideologies of Black nationalism alike. For Hall,

What is at issue here is the recognition of the extraordinary diversity of subjective positions, social experiences, and cultural identities which compose the category ‘black;’ that is, the recognition that ‘black’ is essentially a politically and culturally *constructed* category, which cannot be grounded in a set of fixed transcultural or transcendental racial categories and which therefore has not guarantees in Nature... Once you enter the politics of the end of the essential black subject you are plunged headlong into... a critical politics, a politics of criticism.<sup>33</sup>

As such, concepts such as “translation,” “cultures of hybridity,” and “new ethnicities” became important in the articulations of “global generalizations of Blackness” to “local politics.”<sup>34</sup> Blackness became locally specified and historically contingent. In its formulation, “subjectivity” became an important analytic for the understanding of Blackness as a means of escaping statist pedagogies and universal nationalist specifications:

Subjectivity... highlights elements ascribed... to aesthetic or emotional life and to conventionally ‘feminine’ codes. It focuses on the ‘who I am’ or, as important, the ‘who we are’ of culture, on individual and collective identities. It connects with the most important Structuralist insight: that subjectivities are produced, not given, and are therefore the objects of inquiry, not the premises or starting points.<sup>35</sup>

Through its focus on subjectivities BBCS sought “to abstract, describe and reconstitute in concrete studies the social forms through which” those racialized as Black “‘live,’ become conscious, and sustain themselves subjectively.”<sup>36</sup> Signs, language, symbols, ideologies, and myths<sup>37</sup> became imperative to understanding the plurality and fluidity of Blackness, and to challenge notions of purity and cultural absolutism.

The difference in the cultural specifications of Blackness in the U.S. and Britain became evident. While BBCS sought to answer the question “what is culture and what is its relationship to material production?” the objective of Africana Studies in the United States was to seek an answer to the question “what is Black culture?”<sup>38</sup> For BBCS, “the inertly contextual was not the object of study; rather, the object was... the cultural formation, the historical process, the ‘conjuncture’... which places the analytical stress on social contradictions.”<sup>39</sup> And the context within which it was fashioned and its intellectual environment was significantly different from the institutionalization of Africana Studies in the U.S. “Black British Cultural Studies set to work

amid the articulation of poststructuralism, deconstruction, new critiques of Marxism, postcolonial inquiries, and Euro-American philosophies and critiques of representation.”<sup>40</sup> By contrast, in the context of the United States, Blackness was understood as an embodied set of historical, cultural, sociopolitical, and genetic properties and experiences constitutive of African descended people. Blackness was asserted as an “energetically nationalistic negation of the negation” of its foundation in material structure.<sup>41</sup> Blackness in Britain was ethnically, and not racially, specified. It was theorized as forms of representation articulated through cultural politics and the politics of knowledge.<sup>42</sup> Cultural Studies in the American academy, including Africana Studies, was the product of a conscription of the liberal arts by liberal imperatives of the capitalist state. In Britain it emerged as a focus on the predicament of socialism in era of late capitalism.<sup>43</sup> The former presented a moral critique of late capitalism, the latter, a materialist critique.<sup>44</sup> The following critique by Alan Trachtenberg highlights the distinction:

Most of the writers believed that socialism was the proper solution to certain problems, to inequality of wealth and social injustice. The change they hoped for most, however, was intellectual and moral, a change in consciousness, in culture... Socialism remained for most of them a rather abstract possibility... On the whole the critics of culture did no more than adumbrate in vague outlines a social and political program commensurate with their program for cultural change.<sup>45</sup>

Africana Studies represented a cultural politics that entered the academy in the wake of demands for the formal studies of Black life. Black British Cultural Studies on the other hand signaled the entrance of the “academy” into the political sphere in its quest to examine a particular set of issues and questions that were relevant to societal and political discourse. BBCS remained a project engaged with “real world” problems. Africana Studies in its move toward disciplinarity, became an academic project inscribed in a U.S. academy that was focused on “Americanism as a substitute, alternative, and antidote for Marxism.” While BBCS was able to wield political influence, Africana Studies became increasingly isolated from political movements. Because it had turned away from the Black left intellectual tradition,<sup>46</sup> it became deradicalized in an academy that sought to manage insurgent and potentially destabilizing student activists. It provided students with a discipline for self-study<sup>47</sup> with a focus on the academic humanities and with little engagement with social or political structures.<sup>48</sup>

The foundation of BBCS in the “politics of representation” served to attract those in the United States who were uncomfortable with hegemonic American notions of “Blackness” or those who eschewed notions of “roots” and rejected “essentialism.” Its focus on representations of race, postcolonial discourse, and the performativity of Blackness shifted the sites of enunciation. The casting of British Blackness as inclusive and capacious and its ability to incorporate new identities purportedly “reinvigorated” U.S. theories of Blackness that were stultified by majoritarian, referential politics.<sup>49</sup> In other words, the rigid, static, and essentialized ideologies of Blackness in the United States were believed to benefit from the flexibility, openness, and indeterminacy of Blackness when it was coded as ethnicity. The turn to “ethnicity” created the conditions for the decoupling of “Blackness” from “nationalism” and toward a new Black politics of knowledge understood through postcolonialism, psychoanalysis, and critiques of Marxism.<sup>50</sup> But, the accommodation of BBCS into an institutionalized Africana Studies was accomplished with the conspicuous absence of the Marxist critique. Africana Studies reproduced the general problem of American thought by “adapting and integrating



theoretical constructs [that] emerge[d] from a continuing intellectual exchange of social and political ideas located within the specific historical context of a Marxist perspective,” but excising Marxism re-creating social theories to fit the specific needs of American culture.<sup>51</sup> As a result, “...with few viable narrowly political alternatives apparently available, the apprehension that U.S. cultural studies [would] turn into a de-politicized ‘politics’ of the ‘cultural’” and into a post-political cultural studies that elided contradiction became a reality.<sup>52</sup> Instead of engaging culture as “a set of activities which is lived and developed within asymmetrical relations of power,” Africana Studies strove to give its students access to “that which represents a culture.”<sup>53</sup> In this conceptualization, culture provided access to a type of “wealth” that had a “humanizing” effect; but “that effect is a complicity with the economy which has produced that wealth for humanity.”<sup>54</sup> The study of culture effectively amounted to accumulation of knowledge about it, and cultural artifacts were examined as materials that made up dynamic and creative Black cultures, so that the focus became the creation of “storehouses of knowledge.”<sup>55</sup> This had little to do with the materialities of Black life, structural inequality, or the potential transformation of society. In effect, Africana studies created self-regulating discourses that were preoccupied with theories of the superstructure. Therefore, the conservatism and continued retreat from radicalism that characterized the 1980s produced a much more palatable form of BBCS<sup>56</sup> in its United States articulation that did not challenge the structural conditions of inequality that constituted U.S. race relations. As Hanno Hardt explains,

The development of social theories in the United States under the guidance of a liberal-pluralist perspective was based upon an assumption of consensual unity, and reduced complex social and political issues of power and authority to an examination (and legitimation) of the dominant social system; that is to say, the practice of normative functionalism... Furthermore, the influence of pragmatism, rising through the social reform movements of the 1920s and supported by social research of the 1940s and 1950s, had remained a strong and persistent element in the changing climate of the 1960s and guided the expressions of the social sciences in the 1970s and 1980s. Its prevailing disposition was the result of an optimistic belief in the individual as a free and creative participant in the social and political life of the community. The promise of a place and a share in the benefits of the ‘great society’ for everyone continued to be reflected in theoretical issues and practical concerns and produced a vision of mass society as a community of cultures.<sup>57</sup>

Even though Africana Studies was fashioned out of the world revolution of 1968 and challenged the epistemological racism of the academy, it nonetheless, came to resemble Hardt’s description because of it had been institutionalized in the image of American studies and area studies.

In its transition to African diaspora studies, Africana studies Americanized BBCS by “collecting and adapting [its] theoretical propositions and practical applications for the betterment of society [and] disregarding [its] cultural or political origins and ideological foundations.”<sup>58</sup> African diaspora studies represented “...a recognition of authority and a reconciliation with power; ... [that] work[ed] with the necessity for change within the dominant paradigm and argu[ed] for the convergence of existing theoretical or practical perspectives.... [that was] neither based upon a [structural] critique of society nor engaged in a questioning of authority in the populist, [radical] sense of traditional social criticism”<sup>59</sup> even as it moved beyond the nation-state as an organizing principle. Because traditional social criticism and Marxism

proved unacceptable given the challenges they posed to authority,<sup>60</sup> it was through liberal pluralist reformulation that BBCS became a part of the Africana Studies project. According to Stuart Hall, BBCS in the U.S. academy was subjected to extreme professionalization and institutionalization; the formalization of questions of power, reducing them to problems of textuality; and the emphasis on “fluency” as an end instead of a means.<sup>61</sup> Like all encounters with the “critical” in the American academy, the elaboration of Africana studies as a discipline and its transition to African diaspora studies reflected a particular tolerance for dissent under conditions that it did not contravene the theoretical paradigm of state and capital. This precluded the formulation of a Marxist theory of global Blackness, or even an engagement with the Marxist aspects of BBCS. Like all other American disciplines, African diaspora studies incessantly focused on the few cultural questions that constituted its specialized concerns—questions that were far removed from the structural and material controversies that inhered in global Blackness.<sup>62</sup> As such, African diaspora studies selectively incorporated aspects of BBCS that approached culture as a way of life without accommodating its interpretation of social structures.<sup>63</sup> It challenged identity fissures in the ideology of the dominant culture without engaging the power relations that gave them meaning.<sup>64</sup> And, “[i]n the absence of intellectuals who can critically analyze a society’s contradictions, the dominant culture continues to reproduce its worst effects all the more efficaciously.”<sup>65</sup>

### **Africana Studies “Culture Wars”**

The intervention of BBCS into discourses of Blackness provided fodder for the Africana Studies “culture wars.” In his article “Cultural Studies/Black Studies,” Manthia Diawara identified the two paradigms in Africana Studies as “victim studies” and “performance studies.” Martin Kilson’s conception of the Black racist/nationalist view describes Diawara’s notion of oppression studies:

For some Negroes, particularly those imbued with an intense black racist outlook... white police brutality against blacks in Harlem or Mississippi or South Africa or Rhodesia should constitute the contemporaneous yardstick for the historical delimitation of the black experience... one would select a historical event like the slave trade to the Western Hemisphere in order to find the ideological, emotional, and therapeutic sustenance for what I call the black racist or black nationalist view of the black experience... This horrendous historical act by ‘white devils’ has, in the black racist view of the black experience, endowed the black man with a special aura of righteousness...<sup>66</sup>

“Performance studies,” by contrast, introduced ideas of hybridity, anti-essentialism, identity politics, ambivalence, and Black ethnic community into Africana Studies<sup>67</sup> in ways that challenged the nationalist approach to culture without displacing its centrality to the understanding of the Black experience. Africana Studies “posit[ed] race at the center and use[d] metaphors of racial constructions to bring to light the ways of life of oppressed groups. It [was] concerned with issues of black appropriation of modernity, black performance as construction of identity, crossover texts, ambivalence, and the critique of sexism and homophobia in black communities. Thus, it [was] both ‘victim studies’ and ‘performance studies’ at the same time.”<sup>68</sup> Diawara asserted that the transformation of victim-studies-centered Black Studies into African diaspora studies was largely modeled on the approaches of the BBCS School in London (as

opposed to the Birmingham School of the 1960s and 1970s).<sup>69</sup> Similar to the ways in which “[B]lack British cultural studies took as its main subject the elaboration of black Britishness over and against ethnic absolutism in Britain, the hegemonic construction of blackness by black Americans, and other manifestations of diaspora aesthetics,”<sup>70</sup> the post-Civil Rights, post-Nationalist generation adopted an approach that focused on subjectivity as opposed to racial essence. No longer concerned with integrating into and belonging to the dominant society, Black students and scholars were primarily interested in producing knowledge that placed their lives “at the *center* of the books, the films, the visual arts and the music.”<sup>71</sup> Central to Diawara’s analysis is his concept of a Black “good life society” and the “Black public sphere.” He writes,

The old exclusionary themes of black nationalism are reversed in the works of [Black] writers... and filmmakers... into themes of the good life society for black people. As black nationalism becomes materially and culturally grounded as another version of the American dream, to be envied by Americans of different origins and races, what is good for black Americans becomes good for *capital*, that is, America... Today, black artists, from rap music to filmmakers and new writers, are deriving fame and success for exploiting the themes of a black public sphere... the consumers of the art about the Black good life society are black, white, and international.<sup>72</sup>

He is not describing a move away from the idea of integration and belonging, but rather a racially particularistic model for adhering to these goals. In other words, while the “good life society for black people” may be “another version of the American dream,” it nonetheless articulates a desire for equal citizenship through equal representation on the one hand, and equal access to capital on the other. By asserting a Black public sphere that can be circulated and consumed by “black, white, and international” constituencies, *Africana Studies* was essentially turning to the market to realize their desires for equality. *BBCS* provided it with concepts, discourse, and methods to rebrand Blackness as a complicated and important appendage to the American (capitalist) dream.

Diawara’s view of Blacks in the United States—that they have been excluded from the benefits of modernity, that they have observed the progression of modernity from the margins, that they are a product of “uneven development” that gives them a unique insight—was culturally codified. The project of *Africana Studies*, as a result, became organized to produce cultural forms that combatted dominant stereotypes and created the conditions for Black people to represent themselves as modern subjects. He asserts:

The unique form of black life in America has endowed black Americans with a reflexive attitude toward modernity that is both innovative and anti-modern. Black Americans live in the most modern country; yet, until recently they have been excluded from the center of the inventions, the discourses, and the emancipatory effects of modernity... By being situated at the margins, black people were able to observe the advancement of the most efficient modernity in the world from upside down.<sup>73</sup>

This was precisely the reading of Blackness that led to Culturalism. It elided the centrality of Black Americans in all modern forms and relations of production with their social and cultural exclusion and marginalization. To place Black people solely at the margins of modernity erased the ways in which chattel slavery inaugurated the modern world; in which sharecropping and

forms of debt peonage kept remuneration costs low in the South and therefore kept American crops like cotton competitive on the world market; in which Black labor in Northern factories during WWI and WWII helped to catapult the U.S. into the richest and most powerful country in the world; and how the warehousing of surplus Black labor starting in the 1980s explains their proliferation in the prison industrial complex. If only the cultural effects of white supremacy were taken into account, then Black people did indeed see modernity from “upside down;” that is, from the superstructure/ideological position of white supremacy that excluded them discursively from modernity, instead of from the base/material position that elucidates the integrality of their insertion into it. From this perspective, political economy became superfluous to Africana Studies, and disciplines that lent to cultural narratives—like history and literature—become hegemonic. This understanding of American Blackness allowed Diawara to advocate for a move away from “victim studies,” or studies that analyzed the structural and material features of dispossession and exploitation. It explained his advocacy of “performance studies” as crucial to Africana Studies because,

It is through performance that we move away from stereotypes and fixed images of black people, toward great men and women, ordinary people, bad guys and good guys. It is also through performance that black people provide the most important critique of modernity, which continues to reify black lives. Performance is a political representation that enables the actor to occupy a different position in American society, and to interpolate the audience’s approval of the new and emerging images of black people.<sup>74</sup>

In other words, Africana Studies needed to emphasize Black cultural agency and representation to effectively critique modernity. It could only critique it from the outside or from the margins through performance. Wholly abstracted from the material conditions of Black life in the United States, “the different position in American society” that performance “enables” left intact the continuing position of economic dispossession and abjection. Africana Studies as performance studies engaged a focus on how Blacks were represented to an “audience”—whether Black or white—as a condition of their empowerment, but did little to improve that condition itself.

Diawara attributed the inability of Black people to access the entitlements of modernity until very recently to “uneven development” that resulted in a lack of cultural materials by and about themselves. He explains: “An important fact about uneven development is that while Americans as a whole are said to be reading fewer and fewer books, blacks are starved for books, films, and artwork about the black experience. The emergence of cultural identity among blacks... does not have an equivalent in white youth culture.”<sup>75</sup> Based on his logic, the development of Blacks would be accomplished through the proliferation of Black books, films, and artwork. Africana Studies, therefore, need not focus on redistribution, community development, or redressing the inequities in wealth; its primary *raison d’état* was to cultivate a sense of Black identity and achievement, primarily through cultural production. Ultimately, BBCS became essential to this project because it emphasized the necessity to come up with “definitions of the culture... [being] produc[ed] daily” and provided a set of discourses to “narrate the break with the first tenets of the civil rights movement and black nationalism, and move on to higher levels of abstraction along the lines of” identity politics and the politics of representation.<sup>76</sup>

In her article, “‘Where, by the Way, Is This Train Going?’: A Case for Black (Cultural) Studies,” Mae Henderson provided the following summary of Diawara’s position: “Calling

attention to the particularizing and homogenizing assumptions that he perceives to be prevalent in Black Studies, Diawara proposes that we abandon this area of study as traditionally conceived in favor of an approach that emphasizes the performative aspects of black culture in the public sphere.<sup>77</sup> While she agreed that the institutionalization of BBCS “represent[ed] a fruitful and necessary methodological direction” for Africana Studies in its interrogation of “not only the categories of race, class, and nationality, but also that of gender in the construction of socio-cultural experience,”<sup>78</sup> she argued that “by challenging the authority and dominance of Eurocentric institutions and paradigms from the perspective of the dominated and oppressed, Black Studies ha[d] established the conditions of possibility for the emergence of these areas of study in the American academy.”<sup>79</sup> In other words, Africana Studies created the conditions for the sustained study of marginalized identities by inserting race into the pedagogy of the American university. Essentially Henderson was arguing that Africana studies had always essentially amounted to cultural studies, and as such “the central concerns of black [British] cultural studies ha[d] been anticipated by the Black Studies project and the challenge it brought to the academy two decades ago.”<sup>80</sup> By her account, from its inception Africana studies was meant to “challenge the conventional disciplinary boundaries of humanistic study as well as to enlarge... conceptions of culture and its relation to history and politics.”<sup>81</sup> While she agreed that the culture concept needed to be made more capacious and expansive, she took exception to Diawara’s contention that BBCS provided the model for considerations of diasporic culture and aesthetics. She contended that BBCS merely provided a way to “recover” the “multidisciplinary, cross-cultural, and comparative model of study” upon which Africana Studies was founded.<sup>82</sup> Because the Black Studies Movement came out of “community culture” and had always privileged “vernacular and mass culture,”<sup>83</sup> the inclusion of BBCS became important only insofar as “these global theories of transnational culture [could] elucidate our understanding of black cultural practices within the contexts of various and specific localities.”<sup>84</sup>

Henderson argued that Black American “particularizing and homogenizing” challenges to hegemonic culture, and the connections they made between politics, culture, and value needed to remain prevalent in Africana Studies if it were to survive. To move away from critiques of the U.S. racial state emanating from the Civil Rights, Black Power, and Black Student movements in favor of Black British or other exogenous models would give credence the U.S. academy’s anxiety around legitimating Africana Studies as a field worthy of pursuit. What Diawara considered “victim studies” was constituted by an endogenous and historical critique of U.S. white supremacy and racialized dispossession, and therefore could not simply be replaced by “performance studies.” To do so would “subjec[t] [African Americans] to interpretation by scholars and theorists who dr[e]w on paradigms not grounded in African American history and culture.”<sup>85</sup> BBCS needed to be situated within the context of Africana Studies,<sup>86</sup> and the former should not be seen as a means of reconstituting the latter. Africana Studies needed to maintain its formulation in the process of extending cultural studies beyond the British context.<sup>87</sup> In doing so, American vernacular culture and theory remained central to its formulation; diasporic texts would be rearticulated to the American context; and “indigenous principles and methodologies that reflect[ed] the geographical and historical specificities of blacks in the United States” could be discovered.<sup>88</sup>

Like Diawara, Henderson took as a given the fact that cultural studies was the means by which Black people could best understand themselves, their condition, and their experiences. One of her central claims was that the study of Black culture had always been paramount in Africana Studies, given its entanglements with the Black Arts and Black Power Movements.<sup>89</sup>

Furthermore, she argued that Black cultural studies was attributable not to BBCS, but rather to the historical study of Black culture as exemplified in W.E.B. DuBois' *Souls of Black Folk*<sup>90</sup> and the Black intellectual tradition of the 20<sup>th</sup> century:

As the primary oppositional discourses in American political and social history, Black Studies draws upon a tradition that derives in large part from black American writers and scholars... [and] continued in the cultural criticism of Ralph Ellison, James Baldwin, Albert Murray, Angela Davis, Shirley Anne Williams, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Houston Baker, Jr., Hortense Spillers, bell hooks, Michele Wallace, Gayl Jones, and other contemporary artists and intellectuals.<sup>91</sup>

Her argument that Black culture is an oppositional discourse rooted in Black history, inscribed her critique of Diawara in Culturalist argumentation that constructed culture as the preeminent site of opposition and Black subjectivity. Henderson's critique of the "translation" of the Black British school into Africana Studies did little more than express reservations over African Americans being relegated to their previous status as "outsiders" in the academy, as "foreign" Blackness invaded the space that had been hard-won by Black (American) students. While she asserted that Black Americans had a unique history and experience vis-à-vis the U.S. state in which Africana Studies should be grounded, that uniqueness was culturally specified. She was entirely unconcerned with the distinctiveness of African American political economy; the historical materialism of enslavement, Jim Crow, urbanization, unequal wages, and deindustrialization; or the ways in which Black sociopolitical movements of the 1950s-1970s demanded some measure of redistribution. The value she saw in "diaspora" or "transnationalism" was in its facilitation of "intercultural exchange" and "rich intracultural dialogue,"<sup>92</sup> and its ability to "collaps[e] or rema[p] boundaries within the Black Studies project."<sup>93</sup>

Anne Duceille, in her article "Postcolonialism and Afrocentricity: Discourse and Dat Course,"<sup>94</sup> located Africana Studies somewhere in between Postcolonial studies (which operated analogously to Black British Cultural Studies in the U.S. academy) and Afrocentrism. As "discourse," postcolonial studies was acclaimed and endorsed by the academy, while Afrocentricity was discredited and "disclaimed," relegating it to "dat course."<sup>95</sup> She writes, "If postcoloniality is discourse—an exotic, foreign field whose time has come within the U.S. academy—Afrocentricity is "dat course"—local color... whose time has come and gone, if indeed it ever was... What does it mean... when Afrocentricity is dismissed as methodologically sloppy, anti-intellectual identity politics, while postcoloniality is affirmed as theoretically sophisticated oppositional discourse?"<sup>96</sup> Her argument was that the "familiar" and confrontational assertions of Blackness/Africanness that emanated from Afrocentricity, because they were insular, insulted the sensibilities of the academy because they could not easily be harnessed in the service of U.S. empire in a way that postcolonial studies could: "Where Afrocentricity is culturally exclusive and self-centered, postcoloniality is intellectually elastic and decentered... Where the one is 'unembarrassingly black'... the other is black only by default—default of being nonwhite."<sup>97</sup> Duceille agreed that Afrocentricity's "acts of political and intellectual exorcism" produced particular "blind spots" and could "misshape" reality.<sup>98</sup> However, the type of Blackness/Africanness affirmed by Afrocentricity not only made the academy confront its Eurocentrism<sup>99</sup> and white supremacy, but it was also grounded in the history of Black American struggle against U.S. empire: "this effort to read diasporic

experiences through reconstituted African ideals, belief systems, and cultural traditions has led other lives as Pan-Africanism, Garveyism, and back-to-Africa-ism in the 1920s, as negritude in the 1930s, and as the black-arts, black-power, and black-is-beautiful movements of the 1960s.”<sup>100</sup>

Given this history, she was equally critical of the sudden popularity of postcolonial cultural studies, especially its unquestioning veneration by the academy. She summarized a common critique of postcolonial studies in this way: “...once again foreigners have taken over *our* field, and [it] takes the interest of outsiders to legitimize a discourse of which the academy took little note when it was dominated by diasporic blacks.”<sup>101</sup> Many scholars in Africana Studies that were not seduced by this new approach felt that endogenous studies of race were again being marginalized, and that the future of the field was being staked on a method of studying Blackness that paid little attention to the history of (black-white) race relations in the United States. Relatedly, “Unlike African American and other local narratives of marginality, postcoloniality [was] being figured as a universal master narrative containing all difference.”<sup>102</sup> In other words, for all of its emphasis on particularity, anti-essentialism, flexibility, etc., postcolonialism tended to essentialize difference by claiming that it was a characteristic inherent in all “postcolonial” people and as such paid little attention to the specificities of difference. Furthermore, “...its ties to poststructuralism and the dissolution of the essential features of many minority discourses make postcoloniality not simply a resistance narrative but a containment strategy.”<sup>103</sup> Postcoloniality provided a challenge to colonialism and imperialism, but it also articulated “difference” in a way that demanded recognition but not remedy. This was the case because the specific forms of dispossession and exploitation experienced by a group, upon which demands for redress rested, were dismissed as “essentialist.” “The displacement of cultural and geopolitical difference has enabled an easier diversity, a ‘black presence without the historical and political particularities of Spivak’s ‘black blacks’... Among the ingredients it leaves out, however, are racial identity, geopolitical ethnicity, and cultural specificity.”<sup>104</sup> If the project of Africana Studies was to convey the idea that African-Americans, and by extension and analogy, Black people globally, had a history, literature, tradition—in effect, a civilization—that was on par with but distinct from Anglo-Americans, then the marginalization and discrediting of “black blacks” posed a fundamental challenge. DuCille would likely agree with Angela McRobbie that, “The problem in [Black British/postcolonial] cultural studies today... is the absence of reference to real existing identities in the ethnographic sense. The identities being discussed... are textual or discursive identities. The site of identity formation in cultural studies remains implicitly in and through cultural commodities and texts rather than in and through the cultural practices of everyday life.”<sup>105</sup> The assertion of Black American identity and culture required the “everyday life” of race, which was dismissed by postcolonial studies.

The solution suggested by DuCille was “African American Studies,” which combined the “oppositional minority discourse” of postcolonial studies with the local, albeit non-essentialist, politics of Afrocentricity: “What I would wish for Postcoloniality... is not the therapeutic essentialism of Afrocentricity but the strategic essentialism of an interculturally oriented African American studies... Among other things, in its insistence on a local place, African American studies implicates the same United States that postcoloniality, for the most part, lets off the imperialist hook.”<sup>106</sup> African American studies resolved the tension between the global and the local, the hybrid and the essential, and geospatially and historically specific articulations of difference and the universal and decentered notions of particularity. The problem with this analysis is that it assumed that one form of Culturalism was more or less acceptable or insurgent

than another. She writes, “Whereas the critique from African American studies and the alternative worldview from Afrocentricity cut uncomfortably close to home, postcoloniality seems to pose its opposition from a distance...”<sup>107</sup> In reality, the U.S. state, and by extension, the U.S. academy was not particularly “uncomfortable” with any cultural specifications of Blackness, because in the final analysis, they failed to challenge the structural and material implications of capital, imperialism, and coloniality. The epistemological challenges of Afrocentricity were undermined by its abstraction from the specific material realities of Black people wherever they are located. It was dismissed by the academy on the one hand, and Black scholars on the other, because it did not provide an enunciation of Blackness that was useful to empire on the one hand, or citizenship on the other. In other words, “the ultimate punishment [was] exclusion. [Afrocentricity] ceased to speak within the discourse of the discipline, [so it was] no longer [considered] part of it. This [did] not [mean] that heretics [were] prohibited from teaching or even from publishing; rather, they [were] simply marginalized.”<sup>108</sup> If postcolonial cultural studies let American empire “off the hook,” then DuCille’s version of African American Studies only held America accountable to the extent that it confronted how conditions of racialization and domination foreclosed Blacks discursively from history and culture. To a great extent, the debate over hybridity, authenticity, subjectivity, agency, historicity, etc. obscured the fact that Afrocentricity, African American Studies, and postcolonial studies constituted a trifecta that differed in degree as opposed to kind.

This intramural Culturalist dispute was anticipated in Barbara Christian’s seminal article “The Race for Theory,”<sup>109</sup> written in 1987. Organized around a critique of postcolonial, postmodern, and poststructural theories in literary criticism, it was ultimately a Culturalist criticism. Her basic argument was that the way culture was being engaged was reproducing colonial elisions and representations that were ostensibly the object of critique. In doing so, she took for granted that culture was the means by which Black people should be understood, and that Blackness, as culture, was an embodied, experiential reality in and through which each woman/person lived their lives. The overdetermining of Africana studies by culture was not understood as problematic. This was in large part because Christian located the founding of Black Studies in the Black Arts Movement. She writes, “The Black Arts Movement did result in the creation of Afro-American Studies as a concept, thus giving it a place in the university where one might engage in the reclamation of Afro-American history and culture and pass it on to others.”<sup>110</sup> The problem, as understood by Christian, was that the theories she was critiquing foreclosed the possibilities of a Blackness based on orientation and focus rooted in its own realities. Christian’s critique of the “posties” could also be applied to herself and other literary/cultural theorists because they themselves were creating a narrow set of possibilities, in this case regarding the means by which Blackness could be theorized and studied in the academy. Her claim that the writer and the artist were “*persona non grata*” was equally applicable to the erasure of the whole history of radical intellectuals who were the actual targets of state-sanctioned violence and who became marginalized in the academy because of their material analysis and critique. She reduced the site of radicalism to literature and art, (re)producing the fundamental distortion that continues to pervade Africana studies.

For Barbara Christian, “literature is, of necessity, political;” and in literature there was “the possibility of the integration of feeling/knowledge, rather than the split between the abstract and the emotional in which Western philosophy inevitably indulged.”<sup>111</sup> Inasmuch as the study of literature (and history) became foundational to Africana studies programs and departments throughout the United States, the “politics” of the discipline focused on how Black ways of



being, emoting, and moving through the world provided a fundamental challenge to structures of domination. Agency came to be understood as enunciations of Blackness that contested power by undermining the discursive imperatives of Eurocentrism and white supremacy. For Christian,

“Variety, multiplicity, eroticism are difficult to control. And it may very well be that these are the reasons why writers are often seen as *persona non grata* by political states, whatever form they take, since writers/artists have a tendency to refuse to give up their way of seeing the world and playing with possibilities; in fact, their very expression relies on that insistence. Perhaps that is why creative literature, even when written by politically reactionary people, can be so freeing, for in having to embody ideas and recreate the world, writers cannot merely produce ‘one way.’”<sup>112</sup>

Her position elucidates why Culturalism was at the core of Africana studies. The institutionalization of cultural nationalism in Africana studies programs throughout the United States created the conditions for the study of culture as its primary focus. By the 1980s, Black women, queer, and other subjectivities that did not fit into patriarchal, sexist, and androcentric nationalist notions of culture used the extant Culturalist framework to articulate their positionality, through an emphasis on “variety, multiplicity, eroticism.” Literature became a site through which intraracial difference could be enunciated without fundamentally challenging the foundations of Africana studies. Christian’s understanding of writers and artists as the targets of the state misrecognized the project of Africana studies and the multiculturalist discourse of the 1980s and 1990s, both of which depended upon the work of writers and artists for the realization of their projects. Because the “way of seeing the world” for Black artists and writers revolved around culture as the site of agency and resilience for Black people, their “possibilities” and politics tended to dovetail with the imperatives of the state. The ideas of freedom made possible by creative literature in Africana studies tended to “recreate [a] world” abstracted from the material realities of the Black condition, and produced only one way—the way of the cultural.

For Christian, the real problem with “new philosophical-literary-critical theory of relativity” was its Eurocentric critiques of Eurocentrism.

...in their attempt to change the orientation of Western scholarship, they, as usual, concentrated on themselves and were not in the slightest interested in the worlds they had ignored or controlled. Again I was supposed to know *them*, while they were not at all interested in knowing *me*. Instead they sought to ‘deconstruct’ the tradition to which they belonged even as they used the same forms, style, language of that tradition, forms which necessarily embody its value... the literature of blacks, women of South America and Africa, etc., as overtly ‘political’ literature was being preempted by a new Western concept which proclaimed that reality does not exist, that everything is relative, and that every text is silent about something...<sup>113</sup>

This approach not only reproduced, respecified, and reinscribed the marginalization of racialized and gendered subjects who were just making inroads in the academy by the 1980s, but it also created a hierarchy between “theoretical criticism and practical criticism, as mind is deemed superior to matter.”<sup>114</sup> Her critique is summed up by Alan O’Connor’s in his critical assertion that, “[a] work of theory and criticism [was] valued more highly than the actual cultural production upon which it is a commentary.”<sup>115</sup> Christian failed to recognize this hierarchy

already endemic in Africana studies by its privileging of the cultural and creative over the material and economic. In her assertion that, “For me literature is a way of knowing that I am not hallucinating, that whatever I feel/know *is*. It is an affirmation that sensuality is intelligence, that sensual language is language that makes sense,”<sup>116</sup> she is ultimately positioning literature and culture as the preeminent ways of knowing, especially in regard to Blackness. The privileging of sensuality and language over the structural and material reproduced the hierarchy of mind over matter that she found problematic in the scholarship of other literary critics. Christian avers, “Because I write about writers who are now writing, I hope to help ensure that their tradition has continuity and survives... I, therefore, have no set method, another prerequisite of the new theory, since for me every works suggests a new approach... [and I have] a tuned sensitivity to that which is alive and therefore cannot be known until it is known.”<sup>117</sup> As relevant as her project of Black feminist criticism is, the tradition she was trying to preserve also served to marginalize others, especially the Black radical tradition. While she had no set “method,” she has a set approach—to construct literature as the preeminent site of understanding Black experience, life, and condition—an approach that came to dominate Africana studies. Additionally, her attention to “that which is alive” and “known” required an inattention to that which had been all but annihilated by anticommunism, antiradicalism, and multiculturalism. Since there was no “tuned sensitivity” to political economy in Africana studies, intellectuals and scholars like Barbara Christians created a framework for Africana studies that was only inclusive of difference that was culturally specified.

Perhaps the most dismissed and discredited perspective in the “culture wars” was Afrocentricity, notwithstanding the fact that it had gained considerable currency by the 1980s with its institutionalization of cultural nationalism and its challenge to Eurocentric hermeneutics, epistemology, and pedagogy. Tunde Adeleke<sup>118</sup> identified Afrocentricity as the most egregious form of Black identity politics emanating from cultural nationalism and Pan-Africanism. Eurocentrism was understood by the latter as the preeminent threat posed to the political, economic, social—and most importantly—cultural conditions of “African” people. Through “Pan-African ethics,” “Africans” wherever they were located became linked through their experiences of similar forms of oppression, including, “economic marginalization, political domination, and cultural alienation in the United States [and] political instability, poverty, and neocolonialism in Africa,” all of which were grounded in Eurocentric exploitation and domination.<sup>119</sup> Eurocentrism negated the historicity, heritage, and identity of Black people, rendering them susceptible to the “manipulation and domination” of Euro-Americans.<sup>120</sup> The remedy, according to proponents of Afrocentricity (“the intellectual arm of the cultural-nationalist and politico-nationalist struggle within the American university system”),<sup>121</sup> was “awareness and appreciation of shared historical experiences, cultural values, and interests.”<sup>122</sup> Adeleke found the vindicationist narrative of “an unbroken chain of history, culture, and identity” in which Afrocentricity was inherited to be reductive, uncritical, pseudohistorical, and oversimplified.<sup>123</sup>

Tracing a long history of Pan-Africanism through intellectuals and activists including Paul Cuffe, David Walker, Martin Delaney, W.E.B. DuBois, Alexander Crummell, Henry Turner, Marcus Garvey and the Pan-African Congresses of 1900-1945, Adeleke essentially made the point that Afrocentric and postcolonial Pan-Africanism was much more idealist, utopian, and contingently based upon an assumed racial unity.<sup>124</sup> The conflict between structural/historical materialist and idealist/cultural understandings of Pan-Africanism manifested itself during the 1974 Pan-African Congress in Tanzania:

Walter Rodney... envisioned Pan-Africanism ‘not as a utopian blueprint of *a priori* racial unity, but rather as the means of forging empirical criteria for assessing the social bases of contemporary African and Caribbean states and the function of their structural integration within the world capitalist system’... ‘We have allowed illusions to take the place of serious analysis of what actual struggles are taking place on the African continent; what social forces are represented in the government and what is the actual shape of society’... He wanted Pan-Africanism directed against the exploiter class, whoever exploited blacks/Africans and circumscribed their opportunities, regardless of race or color, both within Africa... and outside.<sup>125</sup>

For Rodney, the basis of Pan-African mobilization was a sustained challenge to structures of capitalist domination that, while effecting Black people wherever they were, could not be reduced to mere racism and Eurocentrism. Capitalist domination was historically and geospatially specific, and in the postcolonial moment, was being perpetuated by elite Africans and Blacks as well as Euro-Americans. As such, unity based on common culture and heritage was dubious at best. Adeleke points to the cultural ambivalence toward Africa expressed by many early Pan-Africanists, who were often guilty of seeing the Continent as uncivilized, savage, primitive, and barbaric. He writes, “Though [early Pan-Africanists] expressed pride in being of African ancestry, and felt a genuine desire to initiate contact between black Americans and Africans... [they] also imbibed the prevailing paternalistic and racist culture and world view that later unleashed the colonization impulse.”<sup>126</sup> This exposed as myth the notion of a transhistorical, great African culture that had served as a model for Blacks across the Atlantic and that was specified in the American academy around African-American formulations. Adeleke took issue with this form of cultural identity politics that had become infused in Pan-Africanism-cum-Afrocentricity because it erased the historical rootedness of Pan-Africanism in the struggle for survival, mutual uplift, ambivalence, complexity, and contradiction.<sup>127</sup>

Pan-African identification with Africa had always revolved around the contradictions of desire and alienation, “admiration and revulsion;”<sup>128</sup> and was generally predicated on the spread of commerce, industrialization, and “civilization” so that both the African and the African descendant could rise up against European imperialism and colonization. In this sense, the means of self-determination were specified in structural and material terms. This became evident in the “mutuality ethos” of the “twentieth-century Congress tradition” of Pan-Africanism that advanced the notion of a common history and culture not for itself, but rather as the “basis of mutual struggle for advancement and development.”<sup>129</sup> Adeleke criticized the idea that there was an unproblematic, shared identity between Africans and Blacks outside of the continent as ahistorical.

The actual practicalization of ideals of mutuality, shared identity, and cooperation between the two is a twentieth-century phenomenon associated with the Congress movement, inspired by colonialism and the global advance of imperialism. Colonialism made real unity and cooperation between Africans and black diasporans possible and sustained that relationship through the anticolonial phase and independence... Colonialism energized Pan-Africanism and strengthened... their resolve and struggle... They stuck together, Africans and black diasporans, regardless of obvious cultural differences.”<sup>130</sup>

Adeleke was making the argument that identity was not based on a shared culture, but rather on a shared struggle against coloniality, imperialism, marginalization, and racism. After the goals of political Pan-Africanism—decolonization and civil rights—had been nominally achieved, Culturalist formulations of Black linkage began to undercut the structural underpinnings that had created the conditions for mutual recognition. Pan-African nationalism came to be replaced by state-centered nationalism, ethnic, tribal, and religious loyalties, and other forms of identification in postcolonial realities; thus the perspective shifted to shared values, traditions, heritage, cultural identity, lifestyle, ethos, and worldview.<sup>131</sup> The focus on the performance of Africanness and Blackness through dress, music, religion, etc. negated historical and geospatial specificities that would have challenged narratives of agency, resiliency, and vindication that constituted Culturalist articulations of Africanness and Blackness. The new emphasis and focus on culture, and its consequences in the marginalization and displacement of structural and material understandings of Black linkage as conditions for Black agency became evident not only in Afrocentric specifications, but in Africana studies generally. The focus of study on mass, folk, and transnational culture(s) served the function of bridging class and national divides evident through a focus on material conditions. It acted in effect to bridge, by rendering invisible, the deep class differences between the Black “masses” and Black elite scholars and intellectuals. It also provided a basis for drawing connections between Blacks in the Global North and the Global South, the former, generally speaking, enjoying a substantially higher standard of living than Africans and West Indians in the Global South.

Adeleke’s focus on the problematics of constructing Black Americans as transhistorical, essential “Africans” misses the larger issue of the centrality of culture that beleaguers all of Africana Studies, not just Afrocentricity. The conflation of experience and condition with identity and culture have the effect of erasing the political economic and material conditions that are integral to Blackness. For instance, slavery, understood as an institution of terror and cultural erasure, became overdetermined by a focus on resistance versus accommodation, retention versus destruction—specified as conditions of identity formation—to the exclusion of its analysis as a system constituted by relations of production that were integral to building of the modern world. The cultural focus on the replacement of ethnic identity with imposed racial identity marginalizes forms of analysis that centered on ways in which accumulation, property, and labor status played central roles in the social production of the subjectivities and representations of the slave/Black. Africana studies came to be built upon the assumption that “ethnicity is the bearer of culture.”<sup>132</sup> This explains its central assumptions that Black people need to create and critique literature and need to discover and understand history. It also explains its need to study and research behaviors and habits presumed to be constitutive of Black being in the United States and/or transnationally.

Like Adeleke, Barbara Ransby<sup>133</sup> excoriated the institutionalized—that is, Molefi Asante’s—version of Afrocentricity for what she saw as a number of its missteps, including its overdetermination of historical Afrocentrism, its ahistorical analysis, its essentialist understandings of race, its patriarchal notions of sex and gender, and its homogenization of Africa. Historically, in her view, Afrocentrism:

simply reflects a perspective that places people of African descent—our concerns, culture, and interests—at the center of a particular inquiry, struggle, strategy, or analysis. It certainly does not mean that African people are viewed in some sort of artificial

historical vacuum divorced from other sets of historical experiences... Otherwise we are left with a very distorted and one-dimensional view of our history and, most important, one that negates the ways in which the dynamics of power and exploitation have helped to shape the African and African American experiences... To employ an Afrocentric approach in studying the culture and history of African and African American people is to view people of African descent as subjects and conscious actors in the creation of history and culture rather than the passive recipients of someone else's actions.<sup>134</sup>

This distorted, misrepresentative, and one-dimensional version of Afrocentricity, according to Ransby, was characteristic of the work of its scholars, including Molefi Asante, Na'im Akbar, Haki R. Madhubuti, and Leonard Jeffries.<sup>135</sup> She highlighted this by making reference to the work of Molefi Asante:

One such weakness is his subtle endorsement of essentialist arguments about race and, by extension, gender. Although, to his credit, he rejects some of the crudest theories of biological determinism, his Afrocentric paradigm, nevertheless, serves to reinforce rather than refute the idea that race is some type of ahistorical phenomenon rooted in a shared genetic heritage. Readers are told there is something intrinsically African within us, rooted in a great and distant African past, that we must get in touch with in order to know our true selves and become truly Afrocentric, something that Molefi himself has achieved but, according to him, the great black leader W.E.B. DuBois never did... This view suggests definitions of race and ethnicity that transcends social, historical, and even cultural realities. It belies the reality of Africa itself: an immense, diverse, and complex continent.<sup>136</sup>

Ransby's issue was not with the fact that these scholars "see culture, narrowly defined, as the principal arena for black political struggle;"<sup>137</sup> rather, she found the "distortions" inherent in Asantean articulations of culture to be fundamentally problematic. She continues, "These erroneous notions of race are predicated upon equally erroneous notions of culture itself. Culture is not something fixed, static, and ahistorical. Culture is dynamic and constantly in flux; it is a process..."<sup>138</sup> Thus, Asante's error was that he understood culture incorrectly. His framework could only account for *the* African-American or *the* African, as opposed to a more fluid and representative understanding of African-Americans or Africans. Indeed, "Most Africans do not think of themselves as simply Africans. Such a broad and homogenizing categorization is a luxury more easily imposed from afar. It is also easier to view Africans as one monolithic mass, irrespective of class and politics, when one is concerned primarily with the 'rhythms of the universe... [and] cosmological sensibilities' rather than the concrete realities of people's day-to-day lives."<sup>139</sup> Ransby attributed Asante's homogenizing tendencies to his geospatial distance, ideological imperatives, and penchant for abstraction as opposed to "concrete realities." Lost in her analysis was the ways in which his understanding of "the African" was grounded in Culturalist logics that do not account for the material realities of Africanness/Blackness. These realities cannot be universalized or generalized. While she mentioned "class and politics," she did so to make the case that peoples of Africa are *ethnically/culturally particular*, so African Americans cannot truly possess some African personality or cosmology. The problem with Asante's Culturalism was that it was not particular enough to account for individual

subjectivities. The inability of institutionalized Afrocentrism to account for particularity was made all the more egregious by its patriarchy, misogyny, and homophobia.

In Ransby's analysis, "This failure [to account for difference/particularity] makes certain strains of the Afrocentric tradition essentially backward looking and conservative rather than progressive and liberating."<sup>140</sup> This backwardness was most manifest in Afrocentric gender and sexual politics. Black women figured into Afrocentricity as either silent, antagonistic, or irrelevant. LGBT communities were downright problematic and dangerous. Ransby was particularly concerned with the ways in which Afrocentric perceptions of Black women dovetailed with the dominant discourse that constituted Black women as the absolute antithesis of the American citizen. She asserts,

At a time when African American women are under heavy assault by popular cultural forms that denigrate us as 'bitches and whores,' and by cuts in welfare that threaten our very survival and that of our children, such scapegoating of black women for the suffering of black men is not only offensive and misleading but dangerous and reactionary as well. It fits squarely into the conservative victim-blaming scenario propagated by most contemporary culture-of-poverty theorists. This view is also consistent with the notion that it is black men, and not black women, who are the principal targets of oppression and racism today.... The reality is that in comparison to white women, white men, *and* African American men, black women are still the most exploited and impoverished.<sup>141</sup>

It was through her defense of Black women that Ransby's structural and material considerations appeared. However, while she identified popular and scholarly representation of Black women as "bitches as whores" and their exclusion from state entitlements as *parallel* attacks on Black women, she missed the explicit link between Culturalism and the reification of Black women's exploitation. In other words, if the source of Black liberation was patriarchal and sexist "African" culture that was abstracted from the material realities of the Black condition in the United States, then institutionalized Afrocentricity in no way challenged the relations of production that have a particularly detrimental effect on Black women. The primary issue with Afrocentric Africana Studies is not the problematic representation of women in its cultural nationalist discourse, but rather that its Culturalist objectives are fundamentally unable to deal with the radical decrease in Black women's ability to escape poverty and structural violence, and that its discourse lends to the legitimation of this reality. Ransby continues, "These women, mischaracterized as immoral, irresponsible, and lazy, have become the prototypical 'undeserving poor'—a stereotype fueled by racism and sexism—which serves as justification for the erosion of a whole array of public services and minimum access to resources many fought so hard for in decades past."<sup>142</sup> Ironically, while she contended that it was for public services and access to resources that Black women had fought historically, she seemed to articulate the primary problem as one of representation, stereotype, and mischaracterization. That is, because Black women were seen as "bitches and whores," "immoral," and "irresponsible," they then became transformed into the "undeserving poor." Based on this logic, culture, or representation, was the arena of struggle and should be the focus of Africana studies. Thus the critique of Asantean Afrocentrism was that he was doing culture badly and incorrectly; the representation he was putting forth was inflexible, inadequate, ahistorical, and didn't account for gender or difference.

Sidney Lemelle<sup>143</sup> provides a historical materialist critique of Afrocentrism that is also an instructive critique of Culturalism in Africana studies. Describing Afrocentricity as “liberal cultural nationalism,”<sup>144</sup> Lemelle critiqued Asante for ahistorical idealism that privileged great (male) heroes in the making of history over the ordinary masses. This he saw as reproducing a form of Eurocentric knowledge, “which maintains that, in the evolution of social life, the basic factor is not the productive forces in society, but the ‘unity of soul and will’ among ‘Africans.’”<sup>145</sup> Like Ransby, Lemelle criticized Asante’s essentialism, but he moved beyond her contention that “culture is not something fixed, static, and ahistorical,” to critique Culturalism itself. He argued that the attempt to fight oppression with a search for identity and culturally constructed African traditions rendered the struggle wholly ideological, existential, and intellectual.<sup>146</sup> Further, “The characteristic assumption of idealistic philosophy is that an idea has an external existence, immune to change and independent of concrete reality. However such notions (Afrocentricity included) indirectly lend support to the efforts of exploiting classes to justify the conception of a changeless and hierarchical order of society—an order permeated by class and masculine privileges and racial/cultural oppression.”<sup>147</sup> In other words, the problem with Afrocentricity particularly, and Africana studies generally, is that their emphases on culture as the primary means of liberation, agency, and eradication of oppression are not counterhegemonic because they tend to be divorced from the material conditions of Black abjection. While these approaches challenged white supremacy as a cultural logic and Eurocentrism as a means of organizing knowledge, “much of this work is abstract and disconnected... it replicates the stilted, obtuse language which characterizes much of the western intellectual tradition.”<sup>148</sup> Whether or not Afrocentricity accounted for particularity and difference and the flexibility and flux of culture was a red herring, and such critique reinscribed the hegemony of culture in understandings of the Black experience. Both the critique and its object failed to analyze and explain the relations of exploitation and production that continued to entrench the majority of Black people globally in a state of impoverishment, debt, diminishing access to resources, and declining terms of trade. Manning Marable is quoted by Lemelle to make this point:

What is important to recognise here is that while Afrocentricity may give insight into identity and racism as social practices with their changing history and symbolic regularities, it cannot explain how both capital and the state—indeed, some members of the working class—use these social practices for their own instrumental purposes. Eurocentric racism was not invented by capitalists simply to confuse the white working class. The Afrocentric approach advocated by Asante does little to explain the specifics of economic and political exploitation... Consciousness and culture... do not proceed in an unmediated fashion—either from the manipulations of state and capital or from the direct experience of discrimination and class struggle.<sup>149</sup>

This critique is applicable to Africana studies generally—not just to the Afrocentric paradigm—because the emphasis on culture tends to focus on creating subjectivities and shaping identity as opposed to reshaping the structures of societies built upon the domination, marginalization, and oppression of Black people. And, as Ambalavaner Sivanandan argues, “once a culture loses its social dynamic, identity becomes an indulgence. It becomes, that is, an end in itself and not a guide to effective action.”<sup>150</sup>

Molefi Asante responded to this materialist critique of Afrocentrism in an article entitled, “Are You Scared of Your Shadow? A Critique of Sidney Lemelle’s ‘The Politics of Cultural Existence.’”<sup>151</sup> Asante asserted that as a reconstructive and interpretive theory, Afrocentricity was meant to “pose different terms of the debate around race, culture, and community.”<sup>152</sup> As such, Western/Eurocentric theories and methodologies, like Marxism, could only serve to distort the authentic experience of African people. He writes, “I have defined my own project as an attack on bourgeois and Marxist ideology because they both are conceptual prisons for Africans. No people can ever free itself from domination by resorting to the same language of its oppressor... The historical realities of Africans and Whites are different and have been made so by the 500 years of European exploitation of Africa, which few Marxists care to admit.”<sup>153</sup> Interestingly, Asante’s emphasis on “difference” and its role in distinguishing Blacks from whites, especially in terms of culture, dovetailed with the position of others who emphasized “performance studies.” Indeed, Afrocentricity is largely performative inasmuch as it is dependent on “fashion, styles, art, and music.”<sup>154</sup> Aside from that, the scholarship is meant to bring to the fore the agency, creativity, resilience, and survival of African people: “To speak of an African perspective is to speak of rationality, of vision, of history, of agency, and of culture. To deny this to Africans is one of the most important tenets in the maintenance of Eurocentric hegemony.”<sup>155</sup> In this way, Afrocentricity has more in common with the African American School and the Black British School than it does with any form of critique that engages structures and materialities. The purpose of this type of scholarship is to challenge the hegemony of forms of knowledge that assert the dominance of Europe and whiteness to the subordination and detriment of racialized peoples. It is meant to construct a body of scholarship that, in the final analysis, asserts that *despite* enslavement and colonialism, Black people have been able to survive and thrive, by the retention of African culture, hybridity, the creation of New World cultural forms, etc. The disagreement between these approaches boils down to what types of agency can be gleaned from the particular constructions of Blackness (or Africanness). Asante’s assertion that, “The African experience is a global one, and the beliefs and institutions that existed prior to and during the enslavement and colonization by Europe have been able to facilitate our survival on both sides of the West African Ocean despite the incredible brutality of White racial supremacy,” with a few modifications or variations, is essentially representative of the Africana studies project.<sup>156</sup>

### ***The Black Atlantic and the Formation African Diaspora Studies***

*The Black Atlantic*, written by Paul Gilroy and published in 1993, is one of the most influential texts in African diaspora studies. It was seen as one of the major and original contributions to the field.<sup>157</sup> In many ways, it solidified the shift to African diaspora studies through its insistence that racial purity in Black politics was dangerous; ideas and identities within the Black Atlantic were hybrid, mixed, unstable, and mutable; and Blackness was always unfinished, open, and subjected to refashioning.<sup>158</sup> Gilroy’s text inspired the turn to hybridity, syncretism, performativity and cultural form that was part of the intellectual climate of the 1990s.<sup>159</sup> His analysis incorporated all of the strands of Black Culturalism: “To name the integrated components of the black Atlantic... one would have to include primarily British cultural studies, African American literary and cultural studies, and a latter-day Pan-Africanism which maps the landscape of ‘race’ in its cultural sprawl, not in its essentialist homeland(s).”<sup>160</sup> In his text, he sought to critique theories of Black nationalism and their reproduction of the “negative” racialized technologies of modernity; to elucidate the entanglements of racial slavery,



white supremacy, and modernity/modernisms; to use music as a means of articulating an anti-anti-essentialist Blackness that is intercultural, fluid, and in motion; and to theorize the “changing-same” through the insertion of “diaspora” as an analytic into Pan-African discourse. The lives of two Black American scholars, W.E.B. DuBois and Richard Wright, provided “case studies” for his argument that ideas about Blackness are not nationally bounded and actually gain complexity and richness when they are routed through exilic travel. Gilroy made the claim that DuBois’s notion of double consciousness and his understandings about race became more fully developed after his travels to Europe, and that Black Atlantic political culture moved his work beyond African-American cultural history. Additionally, Gilroy defended Richard Wright’s European writings from attacks by African-Americans who stated that they were inauthentic. Gilroy applauded these writings because they moved beyond African American understandings of race to link the struggles of Blacks in America with those of other oppressed groups.<sup>161</sup> Taken together, his analysis was meant to upend the nation-state as an organizing principle of race; essentialized American notions of Blackness; and modernity as a race-neutral and Eurocentric phenomenon in which Blacks had taken no part. Many of these themes continue to preoccupy debates in African diaspora studies and to influence scholarship about transnational Blackness.

The critiques of Gilroy’s seminal work are numerous.<sup>162</sup> One such critique focused on the utility and constitution of the Black Atlantic as a unit of analysis. Others challenged its scope, its inclusions and exclusions, and its historical specificity.<sup>163</sup> Alasdair Pettinger, for example, described the text as “*militantly* cosmopolitan” in its attempt to expel both Afrocentrism and Eurocentrism from analyses of the Black condition, and as such, it was haunted by the logics of nationalism.<sup>164</sup> Others still argued that Gilroy was too dismissive of nationalism and the nation-state, their relevance, and their potentialities.<sup>165</sup> Another object of critique was Gilroy’s overreliance on African-American lives and experiences to construct his theory of the African diaspora, his American-centeredness generally, and his elision of other important regions, like the Caribbean.<sup>166</sup> Natasha Barnes writes, “Reading Gilroy, one gets the unsettling feeling that America is the Diaspora, and that black modernity cannot take place without it.”<sup>167</sup> A related critique dealt with the gendered and heteronormative nature of *The Black Atlantic*, which all but ignored the lives of women and queer people, and which presented travel, exile, and displacement as a straight, masculine phenomenon.<sup>168</sup> Other critics argued that Gilroy’s project was simply meant to write Black Britons into an intellectual discourse that has historically been overdetermined by African Americans. His project, located “somewhere between New York and London,” necessarily “privileges the experiences of black cultures in exile.”<sup>169</sup> *The Black Atlantic* was also criticized for its treatment—or lack thereof—of the cultural traditions of the African continent.<sup>170</sup> This critique was linked to issues raised around Gilroy’s use of “modernity,” specifically how he conflated it with “Western civilization.”<sup>171</sup> If modernity was synonymous with Western Civilization, then only diasporic Blacks that were in the “belly of the beast” could produce the counterculture to it.

Generally, the issues taken with *The Black Atlantic* had to do with what was left out, undertheorized, overgeneralized, etc. Few of his critics took into account the ways in which Gilroy’s text, inhered as it is in Culturalism and “aestheticism,”<sup>172</sup> produced a work that was antiradical and anti-materialist.<sup>173</sup> While Gilroy levied a critique of bourgeois ideology<sup>174</sup> and presented a historical materialist reading of race<sup>175</sup> and historical memory, he did so selectively and generally in the service of a larger idealist, Culturalist argument abstracted from the specifics of material conditions. What was advanced was a particular pedagogy that worked in the service of state and capital. And, because his text became the defining work for/of African diaspora

studies, it entrenched and reified these dynamics in the academy. Of the many important contributions made by *The Black Atlantic*, the following section will focus on three: first, the constitution of Blackness as a “counterculture” to modernity; second, his conflation of ethnicism and nationalism; and third, his idealist treatment of Trans-Atlantic enslavement. The way in which these thematics were engaged in the text elucidate its inscription in Culturalism and its complicity with the logics of the state, capital, and hegemonic power.

### **Counterculture to modernity**

The purpose of Black Atlanticism was to rearticulate modernity as a transcultural, diasporic, hybrid, and international formation. It was meant to contest the misconception that modernity was the achievement of Euro-Americans, that Black relationship to it was engaged from the outside, and that the nation-state and nationalism were the best units through which modernity could be understood.<sup>176</sup> Gilroy made this point through reference to Black expressive culture. The Black Atlantic was a cultural world, a cultural formation, and a “new” space beyond the nation-state. He used this conceptualization to remap and recast the transnational routes of Black expressive culture. As Pettinger writes, Gilroy emphasized the rhizomatic<sup>177</sup> because “even when they [theories of culture] do cross borders and broaden their perspective, there remains a tendency to think of black expressive cultures in terms of a single narrative trajectory that runs either back to Africa (the pull of the ancient homelands if you like) or forwards to (nowadays usually) North America, the promise—however distant—of full participation in modernity.”<sup>178</sup> Against this tendency, Gilroy made assertions that “the hybrid, restless character of the literary and musical forms... are *typical* [and] represent the normal condition of black cultures everywhere.”<sup>179</sup> The Black Atlantic abstracted “culture” from historical and geospatial specificity so it could readily be understood as “counterculture.” This rendered invisible its role as an instrumentality to gain modern entitlements, i.e. citizenship, recognition, and belonging. In other words, when Black culture was abstracted from the nation-state and recast in the idealist space of the Black Atlantic, it became a challenge to, and a critique and constitutive feature of modernity. This formulation served to negate the ways in which Black culture has actually reproduced the logics of the nation-state and capital and has been deployed to mark the Black as abject.

The construction of the Black Atlantic as an idealist space complimented Gilroy’s idealist notion of modernity, which could be apprehended through its counterdiscourses and counterfactual elements, and through “the phatic and ineffable.”<sup>180</sup> As ontological rupture, modernity as revealed in the Black Atlantic could be understood as “a decisive break in Western consciousness,”<sup>181</sup> “cultural and political flux,”<sup>182</sup> and “a period and a region characterized by the collapse of old myths.”<sup>183</sup> For Gilroy, reading Richard Wright, “[a]midst this turbulence, racism [provides] a momentary stabilizing force for the white rulers who employ it to secure their precarious position. Racial subordination is integral to the processes of development and social and technological progress known as modernisation. It can therefore propel into modernity some of the very people it helps to dominate.”<sup>184</sup> In this treatment, modernity was primarily a space of racialized, myth-making that helped to stabilize white identity and consciousness; more important than the material processes of progress were the ideological forces, racism and racial subordination, that made modernization possible. Black expressive culture was thus a “counterculture” because it exposed the white supremacist and Eurocentric aesthetics and politics that constitute modernity. This was possible given the Black’s “frog’s perspective,” a type of consciousness that derived from the Black subject who was “internally divided by

cultural affiliation, citizenship, and the demands of nation and racial identity.”<sup>185</sup> That is, a Black subject that was both inside and outside of the West. Gilroy quotes the following from Richard Wright: “A certain degree of hate combined with love (ambivalence) is always involved in this looking from below upward and the object against which the subject is measuring himself undergoes constant change. He loves the object because he would like to resemble it; he hates the object because his chances of resembling it are remote, slight.”<sup>186</sup> Since modernity was culturally and aesthetically specified, the Black asserted its desire to “resemble” a modern subject through cultural expression; however, because it was a cultural expression that was unique to the Black, a result of “looking from below upward,” it could not resemble that of the white modern subject. Black expressive culture was thereby a participation in, but a critique of—a counterculture to—modernity. For Gilroy, Black expressive culture was the means through which the revelation of modernity was revealed.

As Neil Lazarus asserts, Gilroy’s emphasis on cultural practice as a means of understanding modernity and “Black Atlantic sociality” was not an unwitting cultural bias, but rather a “self-consciously assumed position on the status and meaning of culture in the lives of blacks in the West.”<sup>187</sup> For Gilroy, culture was inherently agentive (whether positively or negatively) and redemptive, and as a kind of philosophy, Black culture could be understood as an embodied critique of the given world. In this way, it was inherently political. This was the case because aesthetic forms staged acts of remembrance and were therefore able to facilitate consolation. These acts of consolation provided Blacks with the expressive materials to move beyond and transfigure the modern world, and remembrance, inhered in expressive culture, provided Black with a utopianism that was both inside and outside of the “given world.”<sup>188</sup> Always morally situated, oriented toward a better future, and critical, Black expressive culture—especially music—constituted a counter-culture.<sup>189</sup> It challenged white hegemony and dominant notions of Blackness through style and sound. As such, it was anti-anti-essentialist, shorthand for the assertion that expressive culture was the modality through which Blackness was lived as a syncretic, performative, fragmented, populist, changing same. Black cultural practice, especially music, moved Black identity beyond simple social and political categories toward “outernational” “intimate interaction(s),” processes of identification and recognition, and creative micropolitics.<sup>190</sup> For Gilroy, political economy and the materialities of the state, understood in terms of production, circulation, and consumption, would necessarily distort this Black Atlantic “politics of race and power.”<sup>191</sup> Thus, cultural practice was a counterculture to the state’s appropriation and distortion of the modern condition.

Positioned both inside and outside the West, Black expressive culture avoided the conventions of a political movement so as to escape becoming conscripted into Enlightenment instrumental bureaucratic rationality.<sup>192</sup> Black Atlantic counter-culture was, therefore, “...born in modernity but denied by those who have spoken in its name; exist[ent]... in the cracks of modernity, as a counterdiscourse to the prevailing ideologeme of the modern; flourishing there, despite everything; consolidating itself, regenerating itself; and possessing, initially as a latency, increasingly as a concrete potential, the capacity to explode the pretensions of ‘the modern.’”<sup>193</sup> By contrast, “in the critical thought of blacks in the West, social self-creation through labour is not the centre-piece of emancipatory hopes. For the descendants of slaves, work signifies only servitude, misery, and subordination.”<sup>194</sup> In this way, Gilroy refused to “cede political and labouring activity any transformative capacity...”<sup>195</sup> Only “artistic expression” could provide the means of “individual self-fashioning and communal liberation.”<sup>196</sup> Based on this conceptualization, Blacks saw no value in work and conceived of their labor only in terms of

exploitation and domination. Therefore, analysis of capitalist exploitation and the material conditions of Black abjection could not provide the basis for a liberatory politics or a discourse of freedom because it was external to Black understandings of emancipation. Only through culture—the site of self-fashioning—could Blacks challenge the vicissitudes of the modern.

Gilroy's cultural tunnel vision resulted in the complete elision of any sustained engagement with Marxism or other forms of structural critique. This oversight was more than a scotoma insofar as Marxism had provided arguably the most sustained exegesis of capitalist modernity. It is Marxist exegesis which, in Gilroy's conception, had overdetermined both the ideology of the state and of modernity, that allowed Black cultural expression to be the primary means of political challenge. By assuming that racial and ethnic essentialism were the domain of the state, Gilroy conflated diaspora, transnationalism, and cultural expression—the constitutive features of the Black Atlantic—into the preeminent anecdote to modernity's distortions. Furthermore, by asserting that only a culture form that was derivative of chattel slavery could challenge the conceits of Euro-American modernity, Gilroy was able to insert Blackness into the discourse of modernity without fundamentally displacing Europe and America (the United States) as its principal—though not its leading—architects. He challenged the racial, but not the geographical, ideology of modernity. For this reason, Africa and the rest of the Third World were geospatially and analytically beyond his theoretical framework. By culturally inserting Blacks into the West, Black Atlanticism could ignore issues of development/underdevelopment, imperialism, and formal colonial administration, all of which would require attention through a Marxist framework.<sup>197</sup> In effect, as a culturally hybrid transnational space, the Black Atlantic neglected and negated “the determinative role of capitalism—a global system of combined and uneven development based on the private ownership of the means of production, the [racialized] exploitation of labor power, and the priority of profit over need—in the structuring of modernity.”<sup>198</sup>

As Laura Chrisman writes, “In presenting modernity as the exclusive object of black Atlantic critique, Gilroy has made it difficult to consider how black Atlanticism articulates specific intellectual and cultural relationship with imperialism and capitalism.”<sup>199</sup> In other words, Gilroy presented modernity—understood as a cultural formation—as the primary object of critique of Black Atlantic subjects. This meant that challenges to imperialism and capital accumulation were either marginal or were implied in cultural challenges. Both of these assumptions collude with antiradicalism and anti-Marxism that are constitutive features of Culturalism. Stated differently, the Black Atlantic as a geospatial imaginary derived from both capitalistic and imperialist imperatives, so to construct it as a purely cultural and aesthetic space rendered it complicit with the reification of racialized dispossession and exploitation through omission, erasure, and distortion. As an analytical unit, the idea of the Black Atlantic derived from the desire to hybridize African-American cultural expression, to insert other subjectivities into the discourse, and to create a cultural cartography that challenged the role of the nation-state in articulating modernity as the sole domain of Euro-America. This was evident in Gilroy's belief that the Black Atlantic as a “single, complex unit of analysis” provided an “explicitly transnational and intercultural perspective” of the modern world.<sup>200</sup> What resulted was a distortion of the fact that on the one hand, cultural expression was bound up in historical and material realities that, while not reducible to the nation, were experienced and lived within a specific state. On the other hand, Black expressive culture does not have to be transnational in character to be hybrid or intercultural inasmuch as it emanates from all different sources of everyday life. Hybridity does not only exist in the domain of the transnational.

Black expressive culture, hybrid, transnational, and transcultural in character, became the counter-culture to modernity in Gilroy's understanding of the Black Atlantic as a cultural formation that challenged the myths of the nation-state and of modernity as primarily a crisis in the articulation of white, Eurocentric cultural and aesthetic politics. His position rehearsed, reaffirmed, and expanded the Culturalist constitution of Africana studies, especially as it helped to abstract Blackness from the material specificities of the state and recast it in the idealist space of the Black Atlantic.

### **Nationalism as Ethnic Absolutism**

Paul Gilroy's critique of nationalism and the nation-state was not so much about its hegemonic position as a unit of analysis so much as it was an indictment of ethnic absolutism, racial essentialism, and inelastic articulations of identity that ultimately precluded the recognition of racialized subjects who are left out of hegemonic discourses of (Black) identity. Chrisman makes the critique that: "His intolerance towards all nationalisms reaches new heights in *The Black Atlantic*, where his emphasis falls on a black trans- and anti-national identity and politics as an antidote to the pernicious exclusivisms heralded by black-nationalism-as-ethnic-absolutism."<sup>201</sup> Gilroy conflated ethnic absolutism and nationalism as articulations of cultural authenticity, integrity, purity, and immutability that emanated from Enlightenment insistence on "cultural insiderism"<sup>202</sup> and which (only) asserted themselves at the level of the nation-state. As Chudei-Sokei explains, "In the focus on culture and movement, race is not only being appropriated from an African American context—which Gilroy rightly calls absolutist and parochial—but it is being criticized, or rather, vigorously rehistoricized against the tendency on all sides of political opinion to whittle it down from its historical complexity and root it in some all too specific geography."<sup>203</sup> For Gilroy, moving beyond the "national and nationalistic perspectives" means moving beyond "the tragic popularity of ideas about the integrity and purity of cultures."<sup>204</sup> Lazarus writes, "Clearly, Gilroy's insistence on the transculturalism, internationalism, and irreducible hybridity of black Atlanticism—and behind it—of modernity itself is vastly to be preferred over the essentialism and unidimensionality of nation-centered culture studies."<sup>205</sup> However, the attempt to create a theoretical framework for a multivalent understanding of Black expressive culture became subsumed under Gilroy's primary thrust: "...underneath it all *The Black Atlantic's* cultural project—its attempt to develop a chronotope that connects black subjects in several continents—is in conflict with its theoretical agenda—the need to question ethnic absolutism by appealing to the universal figure of modernity."<sup>206</sup>

Ironically, it was Gilroy himself that imposed homogeneity onto Black nationalisms; he "seems to be addressing himself to all forms of Black nationalism that invoke a racial and cultural identity constructed in reference to Africa. In fact, he reduces the various projects called nationalist to those of a single place, the United States..."<sup>207</sup> In his conceptualization, all Black nationalism had the same (ir)rationality, myopia, and conceit irrespective of their iteration. Based on his reading, whether articulated by Martin Delaney or Molefi Asante, Black nationalism represented a refusal "to accept the complicity and syncretic interdependency of black and white thinkers," and "overintegrated conceptions of pure and homogenous culture which mean that black political struggles are construed as somehow automatically *expressive* of national or ethnic differences with which they are associated."<sup>208</sup> Gilroy's argument that Black politics needed to "crisscross" the boundaries of the nation-state to have a chance at being effective<sup>209</sup> stemmed from his conflation of the nation-state, nationalism, and ethnicism. As metaphors of stasis and homogeneity, nation-state/nationalism/ethnicism had no material relevance but were rather the

antithesis of movement, fluidity, and transfiguration. In other words, the nation-state had to be overcome because it precluded an understanding of transculturalism, which was the essential component of Black countercultural articulation. Gilroy made the fallacious assumption that movement beyond the geography of the nation-state facilitated a movement beyond nationalist logics, hence his emphasis on the ‘routes’ of American intellectuals like Richard Wright and W.E.B. DuBois. In this way, movement beyond borders equaled a contestation of modernity.

The problem with the idealist conflation of the nation-state, nationalism, and ethnicism is that in its formulation it became abstracted from the material and historical structures that give shape to the state and concomitant ideologies of nationalism. This allowed Gilroy to reject Black nationalism as being synonymous with European nationalism. Gilroy assumed a common origin of both forms of nationalism because “the intellectual heritage of Euro-American modernity determined and possibly still determines the manner in which nationality is understood within black political discourse.”<sup>210</sup> Both, he asserted, were grounded in an understanding of invariant, natural, stable, and rooted identity that constitutes racial selfhood.<sup>211</sup> This was an obvious distortion of Black nationalisms, which tended to be more aligned with Third World nationalisms as articulations of anticolonialism, anti-imperialism, liberation and self determination; than with European nationalisms that were often meant to shore up colonialism and imperialism, and to rationalize economic exploitation. This distinction is important because Black/Third World nationalisms were making material claims in their demands for such things as redistribution, equitable access to resources, and an end to dependency and underdevelopment. As such, they cannot simply be reduced to ethnicism as Gilroy does. Such a reduction negates the ways in which Black and Third World nationalisms were making material claims that provided a fundamental challenge to the intellectual heritage and authority of Europe. George Lipsitz argues that Gilroy “often underestimates how national experiences give particular inflections to local identities, how they sometimes require narrowly national as well as broadly international responses...” and that “[he] on occasion [underestimates] the strategic importance of the state itself for many diasporic Africans struggling against exploitation and oppression.”<sup>212</sup> Another problem emerges from the understanding of Black Atlanticism/transnationalism as mutually incompatible with African nationalism. This acted to reify the former as modern and the latter as traditional and/or backward. Even though articulations of nationalism provided the foundation for the end of colonial administration, in Gilroy’s formulation they effectively remained on the constitutive outside of modernity because their challenges were not seen as constitutive of the “counterculture” of New World Blackness. Chrisman agrees that “[t]he emphasis on transatlantic modernity can exclude important considerations of the anti-capitalist as well as the anti-colonialist constituencies of African [nationalist] political cultures.”<sup>213</sup> Furthermore, “Black Atlanticism... construct[s] African America, or the African diaspora, as a sovereign class or icon of modernity that then gets imposed upon” and/or excludes continental Africans.<sup>214</sup> As Shalini Puri asserts, the move from the nation-state displaced power from the periphery to the metropole and consolidated European and North American power.<sup>215</sup>

*The Black Atlantic* made the case that, in the final analysis, ethnicism and racialism could be overcome through transnationalism and hybridity, and that this was the goal of liberation. In other words, the overarching assumption was that if Blackness was moved beyond the nation-state and enunciated through cultural production and expression instead of political or material categories of identity, the problems of oppression, domination, marginalization, and abjection would essentially be solved. This position dovetails nicely with the emphasis on culture in

Africana studies based on the multicultural assumption that recognition and representation would afford Black people the entitlements of citizenship.

### **Slavery, Terror, and the Return of the United States**

Racial slavery was essential to Gilroy's use of double-consciousness as an analytic and to his reconstitution of modernity. His engagement with slavery served two related and mutually constitutive functions: "the first is to situate slavery and its legacy as constituting in black people a distinct 'counterculture of modernity[.]' [T]he second is to argue slavery as a condition which forces a reconceptualisation of Enlightenment modernity, even as it calls the project into question."<sup>216</sup> Since *The Black Atlantic* situated modernity in the West, it was the role of Western/diasporic Blacks, the descendants of slaves, to "propel into modernity"—as the arbiters of culture and civilization—the subjects who could engage in new world acts of cultural self-fashioning. It was through slavery, then, that double consciousness was revealed as it became manifest in the nexus of racial particularism, nationalism, and diasporic/hemispheric/global/universalist Culturalism.<sup>217</sup> Gilroy argued that slavery was the founding and overdetermining moment of Black Atlantic sociality in the past as well as the present.<sup>218</sup> Despite his emphasis on the Black Atlantic, Gilroy's understanding of slavery was based solely on the United States context. He made no mention of the Caribbean, Brazil, or other territorial places to which Black captives were transported. This erasure was explained because, given its enduring Black/white racial dynamic, racial slavery was seen as the unique and peculiar condition of the United States. Gilroy thus reproduced both the Americanism and the nationalism that he was trying to challenge through tropes of "routes" and transnationalism. The collapsing of the totality of trans-Atlantic slavery into its U.S. iteration underscores the point that "...[*The Black Atlantic*] is awkwardly caught between national and transnational frameworks, unable to wrench itself from the former despite its repeated denigration of the nation-state's 'ethnic absolutism.'"<sup>219</sup> Even as Gilroy denies the nation-state, he unintentionally reinscribes it.<sup>220</sup>

Gilroy's conceptualization of slavery was idealist, isolated from its economic context, and organized around the trope of terror. Slavery was less important as an economic system than as a sociocultural formation that created the conditions for countercultural articulations. He ascribed to enslaved Africans and their descendants a racial-cultural consciousness that was a product of the violence and terror of slavery, and that resulted in creative and emotive resilience. The "imaginative proximity to racial terror" produced both the ambivalence toward modernity and the expressive forms that provided the basis for counterculture.<sup>221</sup> Terror was central to "stimulating black creativity and cultural production" and to the revelation of "the failures of modernity."<sup>222</sup> Because racial terror organized the public and private violence that constituted and structured the racialized social order of slave society,<sup>223</sup> it also provided the imprint for historical memory. Gilroy grounded the Black Atlantic in historical memory as opposed to shared history because, like Black cultural expression, this allowed him to emphasize agency. As Colin Dylan aptly observes, "Gilroy, in choosing hermeneutics over history, gives culture a vast and vague power to enhance 'life.'"<sup>224</sup> Memory opened up space for multiple articulations of the past that did not need be nationally situated. As Pettinger argues, "...his argument only works to the extent that memory is understood in strictly *cultural* terms... All the talk of invented traditions and imagined communities has fostered the impression that the past is merely a cultural construct; the psychical—unconscious—forces that these constructions must take into account have gone largely unacknowledged."<sup>225</sup> Through the nexus of trans-Atlantic slavery, culture, and memory, the role of other structural and economic relations, such as indentured

labor, wage labor, and colonization, were erased as co-constitutive challenges to and “bearers of modernity.”<sup>226</sup> Gilroy writes,

Plantation slavery was more than just a system of labour and a distinct mode of racial domination. Whether it encapsulates the inner essence of capitalism or was a vestigial, essentially precapitalist element in a dependent relationship to capitalism proper, it provided the foundation for a distinctive network of economic, social, and political relations. Above all, its demise threw open the most fundamental questions of economy, society, and polity,<sup>227</sup> and it has retained a central place in the historical memories of the black Atlantic.

This logic continued through the assumption that contemporary Black art derived from the primal and violent moments of slavery that were transmitted through the historical memory of trauma. The emphasis on the racial terror of slavery as an impetus for Black creative expression created a historicity of Black artistic production as the most significant aspect of the Black condition, and therefore constitutive of the meaning and experience of Blackness. While labor was the source of liberation for workers, art possessed the liberatory potential for slaves and their descendants. Gilroy’s argument that “the slave trade and the plantation were a legitimate part of the moral history of the west” that were not “aberrations from the spirit of modern culture” and could not be “overcome by inexorable progress toward a secular, rational utopia,” allowed him to assert Black expressive culture as the only means by which modernity could be challenged, through a “hermeneutics of suspicion and a hermeneutics of memory.”<sup>228</sup> In other words, “Gilroy’s examination of the ‘Eurocentric rationalism’ of the Enlightenment project, and its complicity with the institution of slavery, means that his sense of modernity’s ‘counterculture’ is necessarily tied up with the subjugation, resistance and emancipation of enslaved Africans.”<sup>229</sup>

Because Gilroy believed that race was the modality through which class and gender were lived,<sup>230</sup> and the “realities of labor and economic subordination”<sup>231</sup> were at best marginal, slavery could be abstracted from its role in the development of capitalism, and thus relations of production and the centrality of labor could be ignored. He culturalized Toni Morrison’s proposal that “modern life begins in slavery,” construing it to mean that slave life was modern because they were required to navigate the contradictions of modernity through expressive culture as a means for their survival. In actuality, Black people were the first modern subjects in material terms, inasmuch as their labor was integral to the building of the modern world; they had command of the most advanced and modern technological skills; and they were subjected to modern forms of violence and subjection. While the historicist and statist ideology of modernity excluded Blacks/slaves, it was their contribution upon which rested, almost wholly, the production of its materialities. Because the plantation was a modern site of accumulation, plantation culture was in fact a *modern* culture produced out of the material conditions of slavery: “If slavery... [is a] products of modernity and constitutive of its assumptions, one does wonder how the black diaspora could possibly be counter.”<sup>232</sup> It is only by ignoring the structural and material conditions of modernity, and the integral role of enslaved Blacks to it, that Gilroy could theorize Black cultural expression as a counterculture to modernity.

*The Black Atlantic* was not unique in the central role it ascribed to trans-Atlantic slavery and the middle passage in the understanding of diasporic Blackness, or in its privileging of the U.S. slave system. The Black Atlantic was presented to function as an analytic, theoretical framework, and methodology that moved away from and that presented new and novel



understandings of Blackness. However, in many ways, the text reproduced American-centeredness, the logics of the nation-state, and, most importantly, Culturalism as the organizing principle in the study of Blackness. As such, it contributed to and reified the antiradical, anti-Marxist, and idealist pedagogy of African diaspora studies.

### Conclusion

African diaspora studies has been transformed into a theorization of Blackness and Africanness as a set of subjectivities and identities tied to processes of globalization that are always in motion. The project of Gilroy and other Diaspora scholars, has been to upend the centrality of Black nationalism, which they contend is “marked by its European origins, [and] has always been more interested in the relationship of identity to roots and rootedness than in seeing identity as a process of movement and mediation that is more appropriately approached via the homonym routes.”<sup>233</sup> In order to challenge the nation-state, race, and essentialism as hegemonic organizing principle, the African diaspora is reduced to a cultural process of transnational/trans-Atlantic circulation. Blackness is articulated as errant and always in search of a totality that it can never possess. It is “the thing that is relayed as well as the thing that is related,”<sup>234</sup> in an ongoing process of subject formation, that transcends material and structural realities. African diaspora studies downplays the homogenizing and unifying currents of Blackness and focuses on how the global nature of racialization has produced myriad and varied identities and cultures. The specification of Diasporic identities as “hybrid” is intended as a negation of the notion of racial purity, racial essentialism and absolute racial difference. Hybrid identities are incomplete, relational, fragmented, and ever-changing. African diaspora studies emphasizes identity as something that has been recreated and reproduced through processes of racialization globally, nationally, and locally. Its primary assertion, in the final analysis is that, as borders erode, cultural penetration blurs the lines between local and global cultural formations. Even while complicating the Eurocentric notion of cultural hybridization as a one-way flow from North to South, culture is proffered as a marker of difference that signifies the “elsewhere at home” or “the Other within,” with difference” understood as a productive, counterhegemonic site of identity production.<sup>235</sup> In this manner, culture becomes unhinged from the material conditions of its circulation. What tends to go untheorized is the manner in which culture can become a marker of the exotic in its attempt to accommodate difference and the manner in which focus on the aesthetics of such difference and their celebration renders invisible the political and economic underpinnings of Black dispossession.

The intensification of global flows has certainly produced an intensification of cultural exchange argued by Diaspora theorists, but such a focus tends to foreclose analysis of the increasing polarization of wealth that is a constitutive feature of the African Diaspora. The emphasis on the potential empowerment of culture and the focus on its aesthetics, poetics, and performatives leads naturally to the fallacious assumption that neoliberal globalization has, in one way or another, benefited all. Colin Dayan argues:

What are the connections between our theoretical discussions of cross-Atlantic perspectives and the deterritorial vision of the new multinationals?... Under the pretext of diasporic movement, the need for local knowledge is circumvented. Though the terms promise an alternative theorizing, they belie the fact of social and racial stratification. For example, instead of building up economies back home, transmigrants to the United States

become part of development schemes that further subordinate their deterritorialized nation-states—and their impoverished populations—to the needs of global capital.<sup>236</sup>

Economic inequality persists and is worsening. Increased technology and markets have facilitated increased contact between cultures (often for the purpose of finding cheap labor and resources), but transnational flows (theorized as cultural exchange) have been unequal and have contributed to black marginalization in the global political economy. The distribution of benefits that have come from global restructuring have been allocated extremely unevenly, intensifying conditions of class domination. Since 1977, in the United States, for example, the earnings of the top 20% have increased by 43%, and the top 1% by 115%, against a decline of 9% in the earnings of the bottom 20%.<sup>237</sup> A theoretical focus on the liberatory possibilities of culture serves to hide this reality and its disproportionate effect on Black populations globally. James Ferguson asserts, “In their eagerness to treat African people as (cultural) equals, Western anthropologists have sometimes too easily sidestepped the harder discussion about the economic *inequalities* and disillusionments that threaten to make any such equality a merely ideal or sentimental one.”<sup>238</sup> By catapulting the the cultural realm as the site of struggle and conflict, African diaspora studies ignores and negates conditions of systemic inequality. In this way, political economy has been rendered superfluous to its project. By emphasizing the democratizing tendencies and liberatory possibilities of culture, the economic realities are elided.

The racial axial division of labor is foundational to capital accumulation. It is the foundational condition for the exploitation, oppression, and dispossession of Black people. As Don Robotham explains, “Individualism no longer rests on the private acts of purchase in the market by the formally free individual consumer of classical liberal theory. It rests on a global division of labor. It is the scale and scope of this division of labor which make it possible for modern individualism to flourish. In this sense, individuality rests on large-scale global sociality and is clearly in need of being re-theorized.”<sup>239</sup> African diaspora studies should have provided the intellectual space for this re-theorizing. The problem with the elision of political economy is that any possibility to engage with the structural and material conditions of racialization becomes negated. While African diaspora studies argues for the possibility for racial erasure, as a social construct, and the necessity for such erasure as a condition of equality, its focus misrecognizes the conditions for its emergence. For African diaspora theory the erasure of the “color-line,” would open up space to consider other forms of culture and identity. In this sense, race becomes a product of discourse as the site of power relations. African diaspora studies, then, is predicated on the idea that with new forms of cultural specifications, as counterdiscourse, the conditions of power that produce (and reproduce) inequalities will disappear: “racial prejudice and racial discrimination would come to an end through an education in cultural diversity.”<sup>240</sup> Thus, the materialities of racialization are ignored and Diaspora becomes akin to colorblindness.

According to Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, colorblindness, “. . . Rearticulates elements of traditional liberalism (work-ethic, rewards by merit, equal opportunity, individualism, etc.) for racially illiberal goals.”<sup>241</sup> By asserting Blackness as a deterritorialized cultural identity with multiple axes and subjectivities, African diaspora theory masks the true conditions of exclusion of Black people. And, by asserting cultural performance as empowerment, it eschews policies that are specifically aimed at improving the material conditions of those who are racialized as Black. Like colorblindness, Diaspora becomes a form of epistemological regulation that manages diversity by articulating Blackness as infinite cultural possibility. The “diversity” of Blackness relativizes, and therefore effectively erases, particular histories of domination based on processes

of racialization: “the silencing of racialized experience from within... the space of diversity is part of, but not reducible to, the more widely accepted consensus that western postcolonial and/or immigration societies are beyond race, and hence over racism.”<sup>242</sup> The assumption that Black cultural performativity strategically challenges all forms of discrimination and inequality is applied to diverse experiences of oppression, universalizing these experiences while eliding their specificity. African diaspora studies becomes the embodied example of George Lipsitz’s assertion that, “Studies of culture too far removed from studies of social structure leave us with inadequate explanations for understanding racism and inadequate remedies for combatting it.”<sup>243</sup> African diaspora studies has become an easy conscript of neoliberal globalization because it fails to engage with the global axial division of labor, unbridled accumulation, and Black material dispossession.

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<sup>1</sup> African American Studies is used here to connote the explicit study of African American life and culture in the United States. This project differs slightly from the overall project of Africana Studies inasmuch as it emerged explicitly from the academy as an already professionalized version.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Giroux et al., “The Need for Cultural Studies: Resisting Intellectuals and Oppositional Public Spheres.” <http://theory.eserver.org/need.html>, 1.

<sup>3</sup> Martin Kilson, “Black Studies Revisited,” in *Dispatches from the Ebony Tower: Intellectuals Confronting the African American Experience* edited by Manning Marable, (New York: Columbia University, 1983), 174.

<sup>4</sup> Laura Chrisman, “Journeying to death: Gilroy’s *Black Atlantic*,” *Race and Class* 39 (1997), 52.

<sup>5</sup> Don Robotham, *Culture, Society, and Economy: Bringing Production Back In*, (London: SAGE Publications, 2005), 4

<sup>6</sup> Houston A. Baker et al, *Black British Cultural Studies: A Reader*, (Urbana-Champaign: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 3.

<sup>7</sup> Hanno Hardt, “British cultural studies and the return of the ‘critical’ in American mass communication research: Accommodation or radical change?” *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 10 (1986), 111.

<sup>8</sup> Alan O’Connor, “The Problem of American Cultural Studies.” *Critical Studies in Mass Communications* 6 (1989), 405.

<sup>9</sup> Hall, “Emergence of Cultural Studies,” 11.

<sup>10</sup> Harris, “Black British, Brown British,” 487.

<sup>11</sup> Hall, “Emergence of Cultural Studies,” 15.

<sup>12</sup> Hardt, “British Cultural Studies,” 111.

<sup>13</sup> Richard Johnson, “What is Cultural Studies, Anyway?” *Social Texts* 16 (1986-1987), 42.

<sup>14</sup> Harris, “Black British, Brown British” 483.

<sup>15</sup> Stuart Hall, “The Emergence of Cultural Studies and the Crisis of the Humanities,” *October* 53 (1990), 21.

<sup>16</sup> Roxy Harris, “Black British, Brown British, and British Cultural Studies,” *Cultural Studies* 23 (2009), 488.

<sup>17</sup> Hall, “The Neo-Liberal Revolution,” 712-713.

<sup>18</sup> Hall, “Emergence of Cultural Studies,” 21.

<sup>19</sup> Harris, “Black British, Brown British,” 484.

<sup>20</sup> Baker et al., *Black British Cultural Studies*, 4.

<sup>21</sup> Harris, “Black British, Brown British,” 486.

<sup>22</sup> Baker et al., *Black British Cultural Studies*, 4.

<sup>23</sup> Harris, “Black British, Brown British,” 484.

<sup>24</sup> Pfister, “Americanization of Cultural,” 208.

<sup>25</sup> Harris, “Black British, Brown British,” 495.

<sup>26</sup> Pfister, “Americanization of Cultural,” 201.

<sup>27</sup> Harris, “Black British, Brown British,” 497.

<sup>28</sup> Hall, “Emergence of Cultural Studies,” 16-18.

<sup>29</sup> Pfister, “Americanization of Cultural,” 202.

<sup>30</sup> Baker et al., *Black British Cultural Studies*, 3.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

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- <sup>33</sup> Harris, "Black British, Brown British," 502.
- <sup>34</sup> Baker et al., *Black British Cultural Studies*, 10.
- <sup>35</sup> Johnson, "What is Cultural Studies," 44.
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.
- <sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>38</sup> Pfister, "Americanization of Cultural," 213.
- <sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 216.
- <sup>40</sup> Baker et al., *Black British Cultural Studies*, 12.
- <sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.
- <sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.
- <sup>43</sup> Pfister, "Americanization of Cultural," 208.
- <sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 216.
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 226 note 20.
- <sup>46</sup> O'Connor, "Problem of American," 407.
- <sup>47</sup> Many of these insights came about through an intense and generative discussion with Professor Jovan Lewis, to whom I am immensely grateful.
- <sup>48</sup> O'Connor, "Problem of American," 406.
- <sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>50</sup> Baker, *Black British Cultural Studies*, 12.
- <sup>51</sup> Hardt, "British cultural studies," 103-104.
- <sup>52</sup> Pfister, "Americanization of Cultural," 205.
- <sup>53</sup> Giroux et al., "The Need for Cultural Studies," 5.
- <sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.
- <sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.
- <sup>56</sup> Baker, *Black British Cultural Studies*, 13.
- <sup>57</sup> Hardt, "British cultural studies," 104.
- <sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.
- <sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 107.
- <sup>61</sup> Pfister, "Americanization of Cultural," 204.
- <sup>62</sup> Giroux et al., "The Need for Cultural Studies," 3-4.
- <sup>63</sup> Hardt, "British cultural studies," 112.
- <sup>64</sup> Giroux et al., "The Need for Cultural Studies," 2.
- <sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>66</sup> Martin Kilson, "The Intellectual Validity of Studying the Black Experience," in *Black Studies in the University*, edited by Armstead Robinson et al., (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), 14.
- <sup>67</sup> Manthia Diawara, "Cultural Studies/Black Studies," in *Borders, Boundaries, and Frames: Cultural Criticism and Cultural Studies*, edited by Mae G. Henderson, (New York: Routledge, 1995), 206.
- <sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 203.
- <sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 207.
- <sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 208.
- <sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 209-210.
- <sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 209.
- <sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 210.
- <sup>77</sup> Mae Henderson, "'Where, by the Way, Is This Train Going?': A Case for Black (Cultural) Studies," *Callaloo* 19 (1996), 63.
- <sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 62.
- <sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 66.
- <sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.
- <sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 65-66.
- <sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

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- <sup>84</sup> Ibid., 66.  
<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 63.  
<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 64.  
<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 65.  
<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 63-65.  
<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 65.  
<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 63.  
<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 64.  
<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 64.  
<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 66.  
<sup>94</sup> Ducille, "Postcolonialism and Afrocentricity," 121-135.  
<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 123.  
<sup>96</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 128.  
<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 122.  
<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 127.  
<sup>100</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 125.  
<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 126.  
<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 127.  
<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 129.  
<sup>105</sup> Harris, "Black British, Brown British," 499  
<sup>106</sup> Ducille, "Postcolonialism and Afrocentricity," 134-135.  
<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 127.  
<sup>108</sup> Giroux et al., "The Need for Cultural Studies," 3.  
<sup>109</sup> Barbara Christian, "The Race for Theory," *Cultural Critique* 6 (1987): 51-63.  
<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 61.  
<sup>111</sup> Ibid., 54, 56.  
<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 58.  
<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 56-57.  
<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 57.  
<sup>115</sup> O'Connor, "Problem of American Cultural," 408.  
<sup>116</sup> Christina, "The Race for Theory," 61.  
<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 62.  
<sup>118</sup> Tunde Adeleke, "Black Americans and Africa: A Critique of Pan-African and Identity Paradigms," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 31 (1998), 505-536.  
<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 506.  
<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 505.  
<sup>121</sup> ibid 506  
<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 505.  
<sup>123</sup> Ibid., 510.  
<sup>124</sup> Ibid., 511-515.  
<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 514-515.  
<sup>126</sup> Ibid., 516.  
<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 517.  
<sup>128</sup> Ibid., 521.  
<sup>129</sup> Ibid., 521.  
<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 522.  
<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 525.  
<sup>132</sup> Ibid., 528.  
<sup>133</sup> Barbara Ransby, "Afrocentrism, Cultural Nationalism, and the Problem with Essentialist Definitions of Race, Gender, and Sexuality," in *Dispatches from the Ebony Tower: Intellectuals Confront the African American Experience*, Edited by Manning Marable, (New York: Columbia University, 2000), 216-223.  
<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 217.  
<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 217-218.

- <sup>136</sup> Ibid., 218.
- <sup>137</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>138</sup> Ibid., 219.
- <sup>139</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>140</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>141</sup> Ibid., 222
- <sup>142</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>143</sup> Sidney Lemelle, "The politics of cultural existence: Pan-Africanism, historical materialism, and Afrocentricity," *Race and Class* 35 (1993), 93-112.
- <sup>144</sup> Ibid., 95.
- <sup>145</sup> Ibid., 97.
- <sup>146</sup> Ibid., 98.
- <sup>147</sup> Ibid., 107.
- <sup>148</sup> Ibid., 104.
- <sup>149</sup> Ibid., 105.
- <sup>150</sup> Ibid., 103.
- <sup>151</sup> Molefi, Asante, "Are you Scared of Your Shadow? A Critique of Sidney Lemelle's 'The Politics of Cultural Existence,'" *Journal of Black Studies* 26 (1996), 524-533.
- <sup>152</sup> Ibid. 526.
- <sup>153</sup> ibid., 531, 528.
- <sup>154</sup> Ibid., 525.
- <sup>155</sup> ibid., 530.
- <sup>156</sup> ibid., 532.
- <sup>157</sup> Chrisman, "Journeying to Death," 51.; Christine Chivallon, "Beyond Gilroy's Black Atlantic: The Experience of the African Diaspora," *Diaspora* 11 (2002), 359-382.; George Lipsitz, "Review of Paul Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic*," *Social Identities* 1 (1995), 193-200.; Howard Winant, "Notes on Paul Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic*," *Found Object* 4 (1994), 7.; Alasdair Pettinger, "Introduction," in *Always Elsewhere: Travels of the Black Atlantic* (London: Cassell, 1998), x.; Pascale DeSouza and H. Adlai Murdoch, "Oceanic Dialogues: From the Black Atlantic to the Indo-Pacific," *International Journal of Francophone Studies* 8 (2005), 134.; Diana Brydon, "Detour Canada: Rerouting the Black Atlantic, Reconfiguring the Postcolonial," in *Reconfigurations: Canadian Literatures and Postcolonial Identities*, edited by Mark Maufort and Franca Ballasari, (Brussels Peter Lang, 2002), 114.
- <sup>158</sup> Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, (London: Verso, 1993), xi.
- <sup>159</sup> Chrisman, "Journeying to Death," 51.
- <sup>160</sup> Louis Chudei-Sokei, "The Black Atlantic Paradigm: Paul Gilroy and the Fractured Landscape of 'Race,'" *American Quarterly* 48 (1996), 740.
- <sup>161</sup> Ibid., ix-xi.
- <sup>162</sup> This is not meant to be an exhaustive or comprehensive list, but rather to present a diverse sampling of the numerous criticisms of *The Black Atlantic*.
- <sup>163</sup> Alasdair Pettinger, "Enduring Fortress—A Review of *The Black Atlantic*," *Research in African Literatures* 29 (1998), 142-147; David Chioni Moore, "Local Color, Global 'Color': Langston Hughes, the Black Atlantic, and Soviet Central Asia, 1932," *Research in African Literatures* 27 (1996), 49-70.; Robert Reid-Pharr, "Engendering the Black Atlantic," *Found Object* 4 (1994), 11; Brackette F. Williams, "Review of Paul Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic*," *Social Identities* 1 (1995), 188.
- <sup>164</sup> Pettinger, "Enduring Fortress," 147.
- <sup>165</sup> Lipsitz, "Review of Paul Gilroy," 194.; Chrisman, "Journeying to Death," 55.; Walter Goebel and Saskia Schabio, "Introduction: Relocating Modernization and Technology," in *Beyond the Black Atlantic: Relocating Modernization and Technology*, (London: Routledge, 2006), 3-4.; George Elliot Clarke, "Must All Blackness be American?: Locating Canada in Borden's 'Tightrope Time,' or Nationalizing Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic*," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 23 (1996), 67.; Dave Gunning, "Anti-Racism, the Nation-State, and Contemporary Black British Literature," *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature* 39 (2004), 29-34.; Shalini Puri, *The Caribbean Postcolonial: Social Equality, Post-Nationalism, and Cultural Hybridity*, (London: Macmillian, 2004), 28-29.; Paul Giles, *Transatlantic Insurrections: British Culture and the Formation of American Literature, 1730-1860*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 8-9.; Chivallon, "Beyond Gilroy's Black Atlantic," 364-365.; Neil Lazarus, "Is a Counterculture of Modernity a Theory of Modernity?" *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 4 (1995), 332.

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- <sup>166</sup> Natasha Barnes, "Black Atlantic, Black America," *Research in African Literatures* 27 (1996), 106-107; John Cullen Gruesser, *Confluences: Postcolonialism, African American Literary Studies, and the Black Atlantic*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2005), 96-98.; Lucy Evans, "The Black Atlantic: Exploring Gilroy's Legacy," *Atlantic Studies* 6 (2009), 260.; Norval (Nadi) Edwards, "And Some Routes Not Taken: A Caribcentric Reading of the Black Atlantic," *Found Object* 4 (1994), 29-33.; Clarke, "Must All Blackness be American?" 65-67.
- <sup>167</sup> Barnes, "Black Atlantic, Black America," 106.
- <sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, 106-107; Omise'eke Natasha Tinsley, "Black Atlantic, Queer Atlantic: Queer Imaginings of the Middle Passage," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 14 (2008), 191-215; Lipsitz, "Book Review," 3.; Reid-Pharr, "Engendering the Black Atlantic," 11.
- <sup>169</sup> Chudei-Sokei, "The Black Atlantic Paradigm," 743.
- <sup>170</sup> Charles Piot, "Atlantic Aporias: Africa and Gilroy's Black Atlantic," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 100 (2001), 155-170.; Douglas B. Chambers, "The Black Atlantic: Theory, Method, and Practice," in *The Atlantic World, 1450-2000* edited by Toyin Falola and Kevin D. Roberts, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008), 161; Chudei-Sokei, "The Black Atlantic Paradigm," 744.; Thomas Olver and Stephen Meyer, "Introduction: African Shores and Transatlantic Interlocutions," *Current Writing: Text and Reception in Southern Africa* 16 (2004) 5-8.; Ntongela Masilela, "The 'Black Atlantic' and African Modernity in South Africa," *Research in African Literatures* 27 (1996), 88.
- <sup>171</sup> Laura Chrisman, "Rethinking Black Atlanticism," *The Black Scholar* 30 (2001), 12-17.; Simon Gikandi, "In the Shadow of Hegel: Cultural Theory in an Age of Displacement," *Research in African Literatures* 27 (1996), 147-148.
- <sup>172</sup> Chrisman, "Journeying to Death," 52.
- <sup>173</sup> "Where Gilroy is a powerful, materialist deconstructor of the mystificatory and implicitly authoritarian agendas of other political projects and intellectuals, his own project subscribes to a decidedly mystical, idealist ideology and constructs a transcendental category of blackness..." Chrisman, "Journeying to Death," 53.; Paul Rothberg, "Small Acts, Global Acts: Paul Gilroy's Transnationalism," *Found Object* 4 (1994), 17-26; Dayan, "Paul Gilroy's Slaves," 10-13.
- <sup>174</sup> Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, 71.
- <sup>175</sup> Chudei-Sokei, "The Black Atlantic Paradigm," 742.
- <sup>176</sup> Lazarus, "Is a Counterculture," 324.
- <sup>177</sup> Chrisman, "Rethinking Black Atlanticism," 4.
- <sup>178</sup> Pettinger, "Enduring Fortress," 142.
- <sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*, 144.
- <sup>180</sup> Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, 49.
- <sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, 160.
- <sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*, 163.
- <sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, 165.
- <sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, 163.
- <sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*, 161.
- <sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>187</sup> Lazarus, "Is a Counterculture," 330.
- <sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>189</sup> Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, 36-39.
- <sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, 102-103.
- <sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, 103.
- <sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, 54-55.
- <sup>193</sup> Lazarus, "Is a Counterculture," 331.
- <sup>194</sup> Gilroy, *he Black Atlantic*, 40.
- <sup>195</sup> Chrisman, "Journeying to Death," 60.
- <sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>197</sup> Lazarus, "Is a Counterculture," 334.
- <sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>199</sup> Laura Chrisman, "Rethinking Black Atlanticism," *The Black Scholar* 30 (2001), 12.
- <sup>200</sup> Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, 15.
- <sup>201</sup> Chrisman, "Journeying to Death," 55.
- <sup>202</sup> Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, 2-3.
- <sup>203</sup> Chudei-Sokei, "The Black Atlantic Paradigm," 742.

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- <sup>204</sup> Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, 7.
- <sup>205</sup> Lazarus, "Is a Counterculture," 332.
- <sup>206</sup> Gikandi, "'In the Shadow of Hegel,'" 148.
- <sup>207</sup> Chivallon, "Beyond Gilroy's Black Atlantic," 362.
- <sup>208</sup> Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, 31.
- <sup>209</sup> Ibid., 112-113.
- <sup>210</sup> Ibid., 31.
- <sup>211</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>212</sup> Lipsitz, "Review of Paul Gilroy," 194.
- <sup>213</sup> Chrisman, "Rethinking Black Atlanticism," 13.
- <sup>214</sup> Ibid., 17.
- <sup>215</sup> Shalini Puri, *The Caribbean Postcolonial: Social Equality, Post-Nationalism, and Cultural Hybridity*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 28.
- <sup>216</sup> Chrisman, "Journeying to Death," 58.
- <sup>217</sup> Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, 127.
- <sup>218</sup> Lazarus, "Is a Counterculture," 337.
- <sup>219</sup> Evans, "The Black Atlantic," 264.
- <sup>220</sup> Puri, *The Caribbean Postcolonial*, 29.
- <sup>221</sup> Gilroy, *Black Atlantic*, 73.
- <sup>222</sup> Ibid., 131.
- <sup>223</sup> Ibid., 175.
- <sup>224</sup> Dayan, "Paul Gilroy's Slaves," 13.
- <sup>225</sup> Pettinger, "Enduring Fortress," 145.
- <sup>226</sup> Lazarus, "Is a counterculture," 334.
- <sup>227</sup> Gilroy, *Black Atlantic*, 55.
- <sup>228</sup> Ibid., 70-71.
- <sup>229</sup> Evans, "The Black Atlantic," 259.
- <sup>230</sup> Gilroy, *Black Atlantic*, 85.
- <sup>231</sup> Dayan, "Paul Gilroy's Slaves," 10.
- <sup>232</sup> Chudei-Sokei, "The Black Atlantic Paradigm," 745.
- <sup>233</sup> Gilroy, *Black Atlantic*, 19.
- <sup>234</sup> Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 17.
- <sup>235</sup> Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Global Transformations, Anthropology and the Modern World*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 32.
- <sup>236</sup> Dayan, "Paul Gilroy's Slaves," 12.
- <sup>237</sup> Clarence Lusane and Randolph B. Persaud. "The New Economy, Globalisation, and the Impact on African-Americans," *Race and Class* 42 (2000), 24.
- <sup>238</sup> Ferguson, *Global Shadows*, 34.
- <sup>239</sup> Robotham, *Culture Society, and Economy*, 4.
- <sup>240</sup> Pfister, "Americanization of Cultural," 208.
- <sup>241</sup> Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, *Racism without Racists*, (Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield, 2009), 27.
- <sup>242</sup> Alana Lentin, *Racism and Ethnic Discrimination*, (New York: Rosen, 2011), 163-164.
- <sup>243</sup> George Lipsitz, "The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: Racial Social Democracy and the 'White' Problem in American Studies," *American Quarterly* 47 (1995), 371.



## Conclusion

### Political Economy, African Diaspora Theory, and the New Global Architecture

By the late 1980s, when Africana Studies had become more or less fully developed, there was a noted and distinct absence of political economic and material critiques of racialized dispossession in its formulation. Two articles, “Excavating for Economics in Africana Studies,”<sup>1</sup> and “Why is Economic Content Missing From African American Studies?”<sup>2</sup> have commented on this absence and its pervasiveness. Mason and Githinji point to the overwhelming representation of the humanities in Africana Studies, and the relative absence of the social sciences, especially economics.<sup>3</sup> This was not always the case; in its early development, economics was an important subfocus. But by 2008 when the study was published only 1.75% of faculty members in the discipline were economists, and economics courses represented just over 1% of those that were offered.<sup>4</sup> By contrast, faculty members with specialties in literature, sociology, and history represented over half of the core faculty; and these disciplines, along with music, were the dominant fields among faculty affiliated with Africana Studies.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, according to Dr. Kenneth Hall, courses on history and culture, including film, music, literature, and drama, had become the most appealing to students in Africana Studies.<sup>6</sup> Africana Studies texts, including Maulana Karenga’s *Introduction to Black Studies* and Bill Banks’ *Black Intellectuals* became emblematic of the effects of the marginalization of political economy. They also became exemplary of the inattention paid to and the marginalization of the contributions of political economy to Black intellectual thought.<sup>7</sup> Mason and Githinji attempt to explain this absence by pointing to the fact that mathematical modeling, statistical analysis, and strategic analysis employed by economists and political economists are non-qualitative and therefore poorly developed in Africana Studies.<sup>8</sup> However, Julianne Malveaux makes a more relevant connection: “traditional and theoretical disciplinary formulations” of Africana Studies have been largely influenced by the exigencies of white accommodation.<sup>9</sup> Such exigencies are best served by the field’s Culturalist approach.

The cultural politics of recognition continue to dominate the conceptual and theoretical frameworks of Africana Studies, to the detriment of an approach focused on the practical necessity of economic praxis for the empowerment and development of the Black community.<sup>10</sup> According to economist and African American Studies professor Jessica Gordon Nembhard: “We are not training our students to be economic thinkers, nor are we training them to be creative economic agents... often we do just the opposite, if anything, and train them to eagerly seek their place in the status quo and follow the mainstream—hence, the unfinished project of economic liberation.”<sup>11</sup> Nembhard’s claim that economic thinking had largely receded and a focus on individual accomplishments had proliferated<sup>12</sup> is echoed in St. Clair Drake’s observation that, by the 1980s, Africana Studies was on its way to being transformed into a purely academic enterprise. Africana Studies, he asserted, overlooked the study of economic agency, economic resistance, the failure of the market, the relationship between labor and oppression, and economic development (or the lack therefore) in Black communities and Black nations.<sup>13</sup> This was notwithstanding the fact that the peculiar experience of inequality that characterizes the lives of those racialized as Black is rooted in the intersections of economics and racism. As Malveaux explains, “The massive export and exploitation of labor from the African continent was responsible for the contemporary development of the United States, the Caribbean,

and Latin America, as well as the underdevelopment of Africa.”<sup>14</sup> To her list can be added the development of Europe, and the reinscription of coloniality and imperialism in all stages of capitalist accumulation. Largely missing from Africana Studies curricula are political economic histories that can adequately explain the parallels in global Black economic conditions, and the gaps in income, wealth, and ownership of factors of production.<sup>15</sup>

As early as 1900, Pan-Africanism rendered legible the ideological convergences and structural imperatives of decolonization in Africa and the Caribbean and the quest for Civil Rights/Black Power in the United States. It provided a means of understanding the ways in which the rollback of the state and the turn away from developmentalism and embedded liberalism in both Africa and the “Black Atlantic” acted to produce striking convergences in the material conditions and racialized exploitation of Black people globally. The organization of Africana studies around the analytic of “diaspora” acted instead to reify the cultural specifications of Blackness through the transnationalization of the study of Black sociality and culture. The shift in global accumulation—that is, the transformation of capital from its liberal to corporate form<sup>16</sup>—precipitated by the the 1973 world recession and oil crisis<sup>17</sup> had homologous, albeit geospatially specific, effects on all African descendant peoples. Nonetheless, African diaspora studies was “content to confine itself to the surface of social, cultural, and economic life, to rely mainly on the ‘noisy sphere’ of everyday life while avoiding ‘the hidden abode’ of production.”<sup>18</sup> Given the cultural specifications of Africana Studies, the pivot to African diaspora studies became institutionalized as another Culturalist project. As a result, Africana studies failed to incorporate a structural and material critique of globalization that could have provided a deeper understanding of the ways in which Black people have been linked historically through the global axial division of labor.<sup>19</sup> Because Africana studies has essentially dubbed political economy anathema to its project, it has remained a largely academic enterprise incapable of influencing policies that impact the material realities of Black people.

### **Against Culturalism**

By way of conclusion, I contribute a materialist theory of the African diaspora, drawing on the political economic and structural conditions brought about by Neoliberalization starting in the late 1970s. Doing so corrects and supplements extant articulations of the African diaspora that, as I have argued, insufficiently engage with shifts in the global political economy and their effects on African descendants. In redressing the scotomas left by Culturalist assertions of Diaspora, I provide the theoretical tools to understand, for example, the impact of remittance flows from the Global North to the Global South; the effects of Structural Adjustment and Debt Relief programs on the reconstitution and maintenance of the Africa Diaspora; the potential of powerful economies in Africa, such as Nigeria and South Africa, to shape the economic future of the rest of the Continent; the economic viability of claims for reparations asserted by the Caribbean Community; or the entrenchment of the structural features of underdevelopment after the global recession of 2008. Until the materialities of the global Black condition are reckoned with and taken seriously, there is little hope for sustained and effective mobilization against economic dispossession that reproduces the niggerization of the Black.

In *Capitalism and Slavery*, Eric Williams challenged the moral and cultural grounds upon which narratives of British abolition of the slave trade rested. In doing so, he revealed the economic imperatives of African enslavement in the capitalist world-economy. He argued that the structural and material conditions of the modern world, especially the ascendance of the sugar plantation—not notions of inherent Black cultural inferiority—created the conditions for

the enslavement of Black people. The subsequent subordination, domination, and abjection of Black people were imperative and critical technologies of legitimating the exploitation of their labor, and negating their central role in the development of the modern world. Williams writes, “Negro slavery therefore was only a solution, in certain historical circumstances, of the Caribbean labor problem. Sugar meant labor—at times that labor has been slave, at other times nominally free... Slavery in no way implied, in any scientific sense, the inferiority of the Negro. Without it the great development of the Caribbean sugar plantations, between 1640 and 1850, would have been impossible.”<sup>20</sup> *Capitalism and Slavery* demonstrated and highlighted the connection between Trans-Atlantic enslavement and the imperative of a specific type of labor in the mercantilist and plantation regime of accumulation. In an identical manner, I make the argument that the requirements of global capital for a reserve pool of labor to satisfy its fluctuating demands ground the discursive production and reproduction of the Black for the satisfaction of these requirements. A materialist critique of the African diaspora is imperative to explain this reality. Notwithstanding the significant differences between the Neoliberal forms of black incorporation into labor and Black slavery, I argue that global capital, in its current manifestation, is equally dependent on black abjection, marginalization and exploitation.

Sustained dispossession prevents the Black from alternative means of sustenance, and abjection locates her/him on the constitutive outside of rights and citizenship upon which the legitimacy of claims to justice and liberty are predicated. Culturalism, through its distortions, renders invisible and even negates the structural and material dynamics involved in the production, maintenance, and reinscription of the African diaspora over time and space. It evades and undermines a political economy critique by diverting attention from the material conditions of black abjection and dispossession in a way that is similar to “the British abolitionists [who were] in large part responsible” for exaggerating “[t]he ‘horrors’ of the Middle Passage” in their campaign against slavery.<sup>21</sup> In other words, the narratives of white abolitions left intact the fundamental conditions upon which rested Black abjection, exploitation, and dispossession. Cultural narratives of Black equality and of Black global linkages serve the identical purpose. They become complicit with the modern capitalist state in accommodating Blackness in ways that maintain and preserve their instantiation in the modern political economy through the hegemonic discourse of their abjection. Culturalist specifications of the black condition function at the level of the superstructure, rendering invisible the true conditions of human reality that can only be revealed through an interrogation of political economy. In the final analysis, the integration of the Black into the global axial division of labor is inhered in the bad faith of antiblackness as a fundamental and necessary condition of capitalist accumulation. It is only through structural and antisystemic modes of critique that expose the material conditions of Blackness that fundamental challenges to capitalism can be mounted by the Black in a manner that resists reinscription into the statist project of global capital.

### **A Materialist Theory of the African Diaspora**

An examination of the political economy of the late 1970s and 1980s is instructive for the development a materialist theory of the African diaspora. The dramatic increase in global flows of people in the Neoliberal phase of global capitalism created the conditions for the intensification of contact among Black people in the U.S., Africa, the Caribbean, and Europe. Such intensification must be analyzed as the product of global changes in political economy and their demands if we are to understand the changing conditions of Diaspora. To do so, it becomes necessary to bring relations of production back into the cultural and social theorizing of the

African Diaspora because, “[t]he sphere of the economy—perhaps the most complex and many-sided form of action in the world today—is the central force in our social, political and cultural life and [any] cultural and social theory which aspires to effectiveness must therefore re-connect with the economics.”<sup>22</sup> This is not to deny the importance of cultural concepts like “hybridity” and “decalage.” They remain relevant to a materialist theory of the African diaspora, because economic processes, especially their global fragmentation and complexity, are always-already “hybrid” and “cosmopolitan” in any given historical moment.<sup>23</sup> This is especially the case given “the widespread failure of standard socialist and social democratic economic solutions (nationalization, central planning, price controls, the welfare state)” that all focus on the state. Such failure makes “the issue of workable economic alternatives... more important than ever”<sup>24</sup> to African descendants. Any critique of political economy needs to consider the abjection of racial others as a direct product of capitalist modernity and its need for reproduction. The analytics of hybridity, cosmopolitanism, and their relationship to diaspora serve to uproot critical political economy from its moorings in the state.

The result of two decades of the linked projects of development and modernization<sup>25</sup> has been an intensification of involvement of the majority of the populations of the Global South in international capitalism. The intensity and extensiveness of such participation increased exponentially from what it was under initial incorporation under formal colonial administration. According to Giovanni Arrighi, “The most important of these purposive actions was the pursuit of economic development by governments. By internalizing within their domains one or another of the features of the wealthier countries, such as industrialization and urbanization, governments hoped to capture the secret of their success and thus catch up with their wealth and power.”<sup>26</sup> Racial logics inhered in developmentalism, and in its corollary in the Global North, social democracy. The development project was rooted in the myth that the Global South could and needed to develop along the path taken by the Global North. In this way, the latter became the archetype of civilization and progress. Developmentalism “[s]tart[ed] with a model of an ideal world that [was] defined in European materialist terms. It assume[d] that all people of the world [were] on the same path, with the white West leading the way and the nonwhite Third World following.” Additionally, “development paradigms simply trie[d] to mimic... the economic, cultural, and social transformation that the Euro-based industrial societies went through, presumably toward similar ends. Development assistance... [was] designed to help people do the best they c[ould] within rigid constraints.”<sup>27</sup> Developmentalism was grounded in ideological understandings of who was and was not “modern.” It legitimized domination and control by those deemed “modern,” and justified their intervention in the social, political and economic lives of racialized “others.” Black countries in Africa and the Caribbean came to be understood as suffering “from some aspects of political, economic, or social underdevelopment...”<sup>28</sup> Therefore, “Development policy, in its application, pertain[ed] exclusively, and not surprisingly, to those countries that lie[d] outside the North Atlantic... The descendants of Western Europe... [were] located at the top of a development pyramid... The position of each on the pyramid relate[d] to its degrees of closeness to the Western European ideal, defined in terms of all or a combination of moral, ethical, charactological, and genetic traits.”<sup>29</sup>

The foundations of this arrangement were racialized and ethnocentric: “...Ethnocentrism influenced the form development took. Indigenous populations had to be ‘modernized,’ where modernization meant the adaptation of the right values... Development was—and continues to be for the most part—a top-down, ethnocentric... approach...”<sup>30</sup> The primary aim was not to bring countries in Africa and the Caribbean to the same level as Europe, but rather to reproduce

the superiority of whiteness in order to rationalize Euro-American economic and political hegemony. The possibility of “development” was negated at the outset not only because it assumed the inferiority of the Third World, but also because the accumulation of wealth in the West rested on forms of oligarchic control grounded in exploitation and exclusion. The claims proposed by developmentalist discourse that intensity or efficiency of effort would lead to prosperity was patently false, and the impossibility of its fulfillment rendered any struggle for black liberation organized around developmentalism as a condition of wealth accumulation inherently unfeasible and self-defeating.<sup>31</sup> The failure to achieve the material standards of the Global North not only reified the ideology of white superiority, but also legitimated intervention by the North Atlantic. According to Arrighi, “[T]he new hegemonic power itself (the US) proclaimed that under its leadership old and new nations alike could attain that standard, provided of course that they follow as best as they could the American way to economic prosperity... this doctrine conceived of nations as passing through an essentially similar series of stages of political and economic development.”<sup>32</sup> Any resistance was interpreted as indisputable evidence of the irredeemable inferiority of the Black. Resistance became used to explain and rationalize the resource and income gap between North and South.<sup>33</sup> In the context of the United States, post-WWII social democratic policies such as urban renewal, home ownership programs, and suburbanization contributed to the construction of white identity by destroying ethnically specified Euro-American neighborhoods and by largely excluding Black people from new concentrations of whiteness. Because of their racialized application, Black people benefitted far less than whites from New Deal and Great Society programs. Like countries in the Global South that “failed” to develop, Blacks in the U.S. were blamed for their “failure” to adequately take advantage of social democratic benefits. When these programs came under increasing attack by neoconservatives, it compounded black material dispossession and the discourses that legitimated it: “[t]he racialized aspects of fifty years of these social democratic policies became greatly exacerbated by the anti-social democratic policies of neoconservatives in the Reagan and Bush administrations during the 1980s and 1990s.”<sup>34</sup>

The emergence of the United States as the dominant capitalist power instantiated a process of standardization of global capitalist accumulation. With the help of a massive transfer of aid from the United States, Western Europe was able to restructure its economies in ways that approximated the U.S model.<sup>35</sup> This became the standard model for development, offering up possibilities for its replication elsewhere in the world-economy through the application of the “proper” efforts and policies.<sup>36</sup> Developmentalism had as its primary goal the further integration of the economies of the of the “core”<sup>37</sup> and the “periphery” so that the conditions for capital accumulation in the former would continue and would intensify even after the end of direct colonial administration. In effect, developmentalism ushered in a form of neocolonialism as “the international extension of corporatism to the peripheral economies of the South.”

Production of intermediate and capital goods distinguished the North from the South, and former colonies relied on the North for markets for their primary agricultural, food, and mineral produces. In exchange, the South imported wage, luxury, intermediate, and capital goods.<sup>38</sup> This relationship created conditions of “superexploitation,” because the terms of trade of primary commodities were dictated by the industrialized Global North. At the same time, development demanded the organization of centralized state powers not only to manage its implementation and organization but also to maintain political order. State-organized corporatism created an elite comprised of non-proletarian workers and an “aristocracy of labor” (political parties and

industrial unions) controlled by “professional and intellectual elites”<sup>39</sup> that operated in the interest of international capital. Hintzen writes,

This is what explains the historical and almost universal emergence of an elite social grouping from among the non-proletarian wage and salaried occupational categories. This emergent elite was historically produced out of colonial social formations... Their professional and intellectual leadership was involved, simultaneously, in formalising proletarian organisation into trade unions, political parties, insurgent armies, and guerilla groups. These became the bases of mobilisation against colonial domination. The legitimising ideology of the professional and intellectual leadership was anti-colonial or anti-imperial nationalism. While the appeal was for liberation from colonial domination, the goal was control of the bureaucratic apparatus of colonial government... [which had] become the primary instrument of accumulation and domination.”<sup>40</sup>

In other words, the former anticolonial nationalists morphed into the elite class that implemented developmental policies that would supposedly bring them closer to the material conditions of wealth enjoyed by the United States. Their power, authority, and control of the state rested in their meritocratic claim to cultural superiority as the agents of modernization.

The oil shocks of 1973-1974 and 1979-1980 and the Mexican debt default of 1982<sup>41</sup> shattered the global order organized around the developmentalist state. These events inaugurated a new regime of accumulation predicated on international governance. Structural adjustment was its most effective instrumentality. Hintzen explains,

There is an essential link between programmes of structural adjustment and international interventionism... The former entails a dissolution of the nationalist elite alliance of professionals, intellectuals, and non-proletarian wage and salary workers. It also entails the dissolution of the welfarist structure of statist organisation. The consequences are a... curtailment of efforts at income redistribution to proletarian workers and the semi-proletarian peasantry... Nationalist ideology is replaced with that of international interdependence. The latter is quite consistent with the changing demands of international manufacturing and finance capital. The groundwork for programmes of transformation in keeping with these demands is laid by programmes of international political and economic intervention. These programmes come in the form of structural adjustment.<sup>42</sup>

The doubling of import commodity prices, quadrupling of oil prices, 43% increase in imports, and severely depressed prices and export volumes<sup>43</sup> created the conditions for the adoption of structural adjustment policies in the Caribbean. What resulted were IMF and World Bank imposed conditionalities in exchange for foreign exchange and development assistance. This assistance took the form of policies of monetary controls; the setting of quantitative macroeconomic targets; imposed contraction of credit to curb domestic demand; the lowering of state expenditure to reduce public sector deficits; revenue increase through increase in personal income taxes; trade liberalization and liberal concessions to foreign investors; and alignment of domestic prices with world market prices.<sup>44</sup> In Africa, the debt crisis also forced the majority of countries to seek structural adjustment assistance on the identical terms governed by the neoliberal logic of privatization, deregulation, trade liberalization, tax cuts, and reduction in public expenditures.<sup>45</sup> The adoption of structural adjustment policies exacerbated unemployment,

decreased spending on health care and education, destroyed localized economic organization, and ultimately led to increased underdevelopment throughout the Global South. Structural adjustment policies inaugurated national economies into international market policy where international financial institutions came to dictate the terms of trade, taxation, and finance.<sup>46</sup> The role of the state became restricted to the technical management of international interests.<sup>47</sup> This form of “global governance without global government” provided the conditions under which powerful financial and commercial interests—in collaboration with international institutions and banks<sup>48</sup>—were able to dictate policies in Africa and the Caribbean that facilitated increased capitalist penetration and exploitation. With increases in accumulation, economic growth, and profitability in the Global North came impoverishment and stagnation in Africa and most of the Global South. It was accompanied by forms of “official illegality,” particularly in Africa through corruption and elite exception from the law.<sup>49</sup> Under conditions of “increasingly interdependent state behavior,”<sup>50</sup> African states found their sovereignty severely compromised as they became accountable to a global system whose beneficiaries were located outside the continent. This ushered in a new form of coloniality, one that entrenched the African continent in the “shadows” of globalization. The effects of such an entrenchment became manifest in the inability of African states to dictate and determine the terms of their economic organization; the loss of their “strategic significance;”<sup>51</sup> and their marginalization internationally.

By the 1980s the Global North began to experience a decline in rates of profit as a result of relatively high wages to compensate for high productivity, and high corporate taxes.<sup>52</sup> The adaptation of new information technology by corporations for the purpose of increasing profit and efficiency produced a shift from hierarchical forms of managerial capitalism to a system of lean production that required less labor, less space, less investment, and less time to produce a greater variety of products. Production came to be organized around highly trained and educated work teams that defied the separation of physical and mental labor typical under the Fordist model. This allowed for cost-cutting, flexibility, information sharing, decision-making at the point of production, egalitarianism, and openness.<sup>53</sup> The change in production style relied much less on the unskilled and semi-skilled labor, and upon the cadre of middle managers. It created new jobs opportunities for the highly skilled and educated located at the top. It was dependent on horizontal flows of processed information that allowed for a much faster response time.<sup>54</sup> This had consequential effects on black aspirations for material betterment offered up by the developmentalist and welfarist state. The history of racial discrimination in the private sector had forced Blacks to seek government and public positions disproportionate to their numbers. As a result the rollback of the state and cuts in public-sector spending were particularly detrimental to Black workers.<sup>55</sup> The neoliberal mantra of individual responsibility was particularly damaging for those who relied on welfarist transfers from the state.<sup>56</sup> Black people, became particularly vulnerable because of their disproportionate dependence on these transfers. The intensification of conditions of black dispossession as a result of the structural effects of neoliberalism were almost identical throughout the Global North and the Global South. Deindustrialization in the “developed” world, and debt crises and the slowing down of investment in the “developing” world gradually reversed the gains achieved through the closing of income and wealth gaps in the 1950s and 1960s. The supersession of state management in the wake of the increasing internationalization of trade, investment, and finance exposed the limits of the developmentalist and social democratic model.<sup>57</sup> In short, the need to maintain and increase profit margins was met by enhanced productivity through forms of “corporate re-engineering” that eliminated jobs and reduced wages and salaries, and through increased use of sophisticated technology. The

result was a reduction in consumer purchasing power. These structural changes in the global political economy had particular racialized consequences.

Given this increased integration, the shift from embedded liberalism to neoliberalism had a similar effect on Black people irrespective of where they were located in the global axial division of labor. In the Global North and the Global South, "... governments and ruling groups lacked the means of fulfilling the expectations and accommodating the demands of the social forces that they ha[d] brought into existence through modernization... a general crisis of developmentalist practices and ideologies beg[an] to unfold."<sup>58</sup> Central to the development project had been the promise of industrialization, and the two often became conflated. Industrialization came to be pursued by Third World countries because of its association with the accumulation of wealth in the Global North. For Africa and the Caribbean, this promise remained unfulfilled leaving its adherents with large debt servicing obligations acquired in its pursuit.<sup>59</sup> In the United States deindustrialization produced a reversal of gains made by Black Americans as a result of Civil Rights legislation as factories began moving to a "semi-periphery" of industrializing countries in the Global South: "Although the [1964 Civil Rights Act] initially made real progress in reducing employment discrimination, lessened the gaps between rich and poor and black and white, and helped bring minority poverty to its lowest level in history in 1973, that year's recession initiated a reversal of minority progress and a reassertion of white privilege."<sup>60</sup> The shift to a Neoliberal agenda in Great Britain produced similar results: "The over-arching theme [was] the shift of power and wealth back to the already rich and powerful. A demonization of the working class—shifty, feckless, irresponsible, bad (and single) parents, with disorganized lives—Cameron's 'broken society'—[was] advanced."<sup>61</sup> The economic contraction of the late 1970s and early 1980s represented the general collapse and disavowal of the development and social democratic project in the face of challenges to global capital mounted by those who did not benefit from its promises of modernization.<sup>62</sup> A new model of accumulation was necessary for multinational corporations to remain profitable.

The "long march of the Neo-liberal revolution"<sup>63</sup> was undertaken as a means of managing diminishing returns, massive amounts of debt accumulated in the Global South due to the excessive lending practices in the 1970s, and the increasing costs of state-led accumulation. It did so through "intensify[ing] and expand[ing] surplus expropriation."<sup>64</sup> The conditions had been set by a Reagan-Thatcher "counterrevolution" that offered untethered freedom to capitalist institutions engaged in financial speculation and that led to the selling off of government assets cheaply and the mortgaging of future revenues by the accumulation of public debt.<sup>65</sup> Stuart Hall writes,

The crisis of the late 1960s-1970s was neoliberalism's opportunity and the Thatcher and Reagan regimes grabbed it with both hands. Neo-liberalism is also critical to contemporary geo-politics. Structural adjustment programmes forced the developing world to set market forces free, open their economies to free-trade and foreign investment, while promoting 'liberal virtues' of elections, multi-party politics, the rule of law and 'good governance'... Western super-powers have consistently intervened globally to defend it [liberal-democracy] in recent decades.<sup>66</sup>

The United States abandoned its commitment to development in favor of encouraging highly indebted poor countries to concentrate on adopting a set of policies that would allow them to service their debt and maintain their credit worthiness. Solvency became the new development



mantra, and governments in the developed core worked together to squeeze developing countries into the repayment of their debt obligations.<sup>67</sup> In the context of tightening credit, weaker economies were forced to sell off their assets and forfeit future revenues to service debt in order to keep their credit worthiness.<sup>68</sup> At the same time, the United States and other developed countries started to run massive deficits, borrow widely, and compete with poorer countries in financial markets.<sup>69</sup> In the United States,

changes in federal tax laws decreased the value of wage income and increased the value of investment income—a move harmful to minorities who suffer from an even greater gap between their total wealth and that of whites than in the disparity between their income and white income. Failure to raise the minimum wage between 1981 and 1989 and the more than one-third decline in value of Aid for Families with Dependent Children payments hurt all poor people, but they exacted special costs on [Blacks] facing even more constricted markets for employment, housing, and education than poor whites.<sup>70</sup>

As a political, economic, social, and ideological project, neoliberalism moved away from state-led development to the unrelenting belief in a rational free market. The sole function of the liberal state was to ensure the best possible conditions for profitable competition.<sup>71</sup> Neoliberal policy and practice was rooted in the idea that “[t]he market should be allowed to make major social and political decisions; that the state should reduce its role in the economy; that corporations should be given total freedom; [and] that trade unions should be curbed and citizens given much less rather than more social protection.”<sup>72</sup> It also represented the abstraction of the market from relations of production.<sup>73</sup> Furthermore, market metaphors began to overdetermine public discourse, and “the market [became] hypostacized: *it* ‘thinks’ this, ‘does’ that, ‘feels’ the other, ‘gets panicky,’ ‘loses confidence,’ ‘believes’... Every social relation [could] be bought and sold, ha[d] its ‘price’ and its ‘costs.’ Everything [became] a commodity. Nothing escape[d] the ‘discipline’ of the ‘bottom line.’ Exchange value [*became*] value... Exercising ‘consumer choice’ [was] the next best thing to freedom itself.”<sup>74</sup> Despite the promises of development, “the rule for low- and middle-income states and regions has been neither to catch up with the standards of wealth set by the West... nor even to maintain their distance below these standards... Rather, the rule has been (i) for the distance between wealthy and poor regions and states to widen and (ii) for wealthy regions and states to remain wealthy and for poor regions and states to remain poor with practically no turnover between the two.”<sup>75</sup> Most countries in the South, especially in the African diaspora, began to fall far behind the standards of wealth set by the North, and income differentials between poorer regions increased.<sup>76</sup>

The election of conservative parties in both the United States and Great Britain spearheaded an expansion of international markets and an increase in global financial transactions. Concomitantly, trade-liberalization agreements and the fall of command economies in Eastern Europe buttressed the spread of the Neoliberal project.<sup>77</sup> The market and the idea of competition based on comparative advantage at the international, national, and individual levels came to be propagated as the most efficient way to allocate resources for productive efficiency and economic growth. This implied the downsizing of the public sector because of its interference with profit maximization; a reduction in taxation and therefore social services; the free flow of goods and services but not labor; and an increase in the privatization of public assets and state services.<sup>78</sup> The implementation of these policies led to a contraction of the public sector that produced a rise in unemployment. An increasing supply of labor produced dramatic

declines in wages resulting in higher profits. Structural adjustment conditionalities restricted national governments from forms of welfare and social transfers and state subsidies producing less access by their populations to basic resources. Thus, there was a gross transference of wealth from the bottom to the top, the South to the North, and from the public to the private sectors.<sup>79</sup> With neoliberalism, democratic governance came to be understood and measured in terms of opportunities provided for increased consumption and access to markets rather than on the effective forms of representation and rights. Susan George argues that under neoliberalism, “radical exclusion [was] the order of the day.”<sup>80</sup> Such exclusion was particularly extensive and intensive in the African Diaspora. Neoliberalism and its entrenchment through global governance in the service of capital accumulation for a global “oligopoly, concentrated power and profit in the hands of the wealthy and privileged few. Its consequences were entrenched racialized inequality and dispossession.

Driven largely by innovations in information, communication, and transportation technology that lowered transaction costs, international corporations were able to use neoliberal policies implemented by international financial institutions and supported by the United States in what came to be known as the Washington Consensus to impose privatization, to open up markets, and to reduce and eliminate trade barriers. Financialization became much more important than manufacturing and industry for capital accumulation.<sup>81</sup> This meant that massive amounts of Black people, who were overrepresented in low-wage industrial and manufacturing jobs, became redundant labor.<sup>82</sup> In the Global South, there was a shift in foreign direct investment away from commerce and into rent-seeking sectors such as real estate and tourism as the dominant form of economic activity. These came with particularly detrimental consequences for people in Africa and the Caribbean. In the United States, the push for urban renewal in the cities accompanied deindustrialization and a shift in production to cheaper locations in the Global South with lower remuneration costs. Corporations benefitted from the lowering of transaction costs made possible by new technological innovations and the imposition of Neoliberal policies. This played an important role in transforming the urban economy in the United States away from manufacturing and into services. To attract the new service providers, city governments began granting tax abatements that exacerbated fiscal crises. To compensate, they increased taxes on residents and on businesses and industries that had already been there.<sup>83</sup> As working class urban residents dependent on jobs in these traditional sectors, Black people bore the brunt of this burden. The major cities in the United States became transformed into centers for providing services to a global economy catering to the needs of increasingly flexible international corporations as manufacturing shifted to locations beyond U.S. borders.<sup>84</sup> Flexibility as a production practice also came to be adopted by certain sectors of the service industry as they shifted to low cost locations globally. The result was an exponential increase in the outsourcing of both blue collar and white collar jobs, resulting in soaring unemployment among African Americans. This ushered in a new global division of labor that left intact the core/periphery divide globally and the racial divide in the North Atlantic. The economic, social, and political interests of highly skilled, upper class white workers in core countries became protected at the expense of an increasingly unprotected racialized lower class and of peripheral laborers who are much more unprotected. Protected workers came to enjoy relatively secure employment, health benefits, higher pay, and access to credit and modes of accumulation as well as access to financial and securitized means of wealth accumulation including stocks, bonds, IRAs, 401ks etc., all of which were unavailable to those at the lower end of the growing division of labor. The conditions of workers in the periphery and those who were peripheralized in the

core, including non-white proletarian and migrant workers, became highly unstable, insecure and vulnerable to volatility in the global economy.<sup>85</sup> An intensification of global labor flows added to this crisis as global cities became reconfigured to attract both immigrant cheap labor and highly skilled and educated professionals—the latter to work in highly specialized occupations that resist outsourcing. Immigrants began to satisfy the need for labor in the expanding service industry by providing care and other means of support to the growing professional class, making their lives more comfortable.<sup>86</sup> With a shift away from Fordism, conditions of working class labor became less standardized and stable and more fragmented and temporary.<sup>87</sup> This reconstitution of the economy in the United States, Great Britain, and other North Atlantic countries had profound consequences for Black people largely excluded from its professionalized beneficiaries.

The reformulation of global capitalism was organized around a shift in the role the state away from its welfarist function in the Global North and national development in the Global South. This was not, as some have argued, based on its growing irrelevance and impotence. According to Michele-Rolph Trouillot, there is need for flexibility in theorizing the capitalist state because it was always flexibly inserted into the global economy and was never organized around institutional fixity. Its power was never related exclusively to national institutions and governance. Its role in the global capitalist economy had simply become more pronounced due to Neoliberalization. A focus on the institutional and geographical fixity of the state hides this function. The processes and practices of a state can more accurately be recognized through their effects rather than the latter's institutional composition. The state, then, is “not an apparatus but a set of processes... its materiality resides much less in institutions than in the reworking of processes and relations of power so as to create new spaces for the deployment of power.”<sup>88</sup> The Neoliberal state throughout the African Diaspora became more regulatory and imposing when its role shifted to protecting the interests of multinational corporations. This had much to do with the imperative that its role in providing protections and entitlements to its citizens be reduced or curtailed in order to meet the demands of the new global agenda.<sup>89</sup> Through the rhetoric of personal responsibility the state became shorn of its responsibility to its citizens, not only by pathologizing the poor, but also by casting them as undeserving of the support previously provided through welfare and other forms of transfers. Increasingly, discourse about state and society began to center on the market and its ability to organize and rationalize society. Public service was transferred to private firms either directly or through management contracts and other forms of outsourcing, and state organization became modeled after the practices of the corporate private sector that emphasized “efficiency” as a condition for lowering costs.<sup>90</sup> This translated into lower wages and reduction in public sector employment in both the Global North and the Global South. Blacks globally were severely affected given their disproportionate dependence on public sector jobs both in the United States and in Africa and the Caribbean, where the state was the major employer.

Throughout the African diaspora, the welfarist function of the state was becoming quickly replaced by one of “containment.” Poverty became increasingly criminalized and associated with immorality rather than class exploitation and racism. With the rationalization of policing and punitive justice,<sup>91</sup> money once spent on health care and education became diverted to law enforcement. In Great Britain, “society [became] boxed in by legislation, regulation, monitoring, surveillance, and the ambiguous ‘target’ and ‘control’ cultures... Despite ‘liberalism’, punitive conceptions of punishment took hold... A new kind of ‘liberal authoritarianism’ turned out to be” central to Neoliberalization.<sup>92</sup> In the United States, starting in

the 1980s, the Reagan administration's law and order agenda in general, and the "war on drugs" in particular, led to the hyper-incarceration of Black males. The undeniable link between state policy toward crime, the private sector, prison industries, and disparities in the criminal justice system—the prison industrial complex—disproportionately affected Black people.<sup>93</sup> These policies and practices of criminalization spread from the United States and became a multinational project. Transnationally Black people, indigenous populations, and women became overrepresented in a rapidly expanding prison industrial complex. Privatization and incarceration became increasingly entangled as the necessity of warehousing surplus labor produced by Neoliberal policies grew. In the North Atlantic, the privatization of prisons came to be justified on the grounds that it would ostensibly curb overcrowding and reduce human rights violations. In the Global South private prisons became transformed into significations of modernization and development because they were modeled along the lines of U.S. practice. This was similarly the case with the replacement of welfare policies by a war on drugs, by the adoption of law and order policies, and by the replacement of programs geared toward income redistribution and poverty alleviation with programs aimed at strengthening the criminal justice systems. Rendered immobile and disenfranchised, the criminalization of this group of non-unionized, exploited workers was predicated directly upon their growing position as redundant labor. Sites of production, manufacturing, and farming came to be converted into prisons and jails to satisfy the growing demand for incarceration created by Neoliberalization.<sup>94</sup>

The collapse of developmentalism and the rise of Neoliberal globalization organized around international public policies that legitimate and enforce the grossly inequitable global distribution of wealth<sup>95</sup> figure only marginally into African diaspora theory. The wide-ranging catastrophic effects of the "Neoliberal new deal" on Black populations throughout the world have failed to provide the basis for theorizing the African diaspora, notwithstanding their roots in bad faith and antiblackness. The myopic focus on cultural conjunctures renders invisible the material, systemic, and structural realities that created the conditions for the African diaspora. It is only a materialist theory of Diaspora that provides a theoretically rich and politically relevant understanding of the structural realities of global Blackness.

### **Africa as the New Asia and the Diremption of the Black and the Nigger**

A repositioning of Africa in keeping with changing conditions of capitalist accumulation opens up the possibility of dirempting the Black from the Nigger. Such a diremption is necessary if we are to separate the material conditions of Blackness from the discourse of Black abjection that has produced processes of niggerization. Their entanglement is the product of the capitalist world-economy, beginning with the European expansion of the modern world-system through regimes of coloniality. This process has been reproduced and reinscribed in postcolonial formations that are constituted by emplaced and historically specific materialities of Blackness. These materialities are at the root of the articulation of African Diasporic subjectivity. Africa and "Africanness" are the transhistorical referents of origin that signify blackness. With the current need for the respecification of the role of Africa, they become the source of new possibilities for the negation of Black abjection. In its narration, Africa has provided the reference against which progress and development are measured. Blackness and Africanness became entangled as the antithesis of European formulations of the ideal, civilized, universal subject, with Africa reproduced and reified as the embodiment of the "Dark Continent" in the modern world. While the language used to distinguish Europe from Africa, and the Black from the universal human subject has changed over time, the hierarchical relationship of subject/object has remained the

same: “Transformation in racial attitudes... is not really a shift in the *content* of the stereotype of the black. As much in the early period as in the late, the standard and pervasive view of the Africans and their descendants... is as inferior savages... Africa is assumed to be a dark and debased place in need of civilization.”<sup>96</sup> The European/African imaginary has been discursively reproduced through ideas of us/them, white/Black, civilized/primitive, modern/nonmodern, developed/underdeveloped, rational/irrational, colonizer/colonized, such that the “series of binary oppositions... contrasted the virtues of European civilization with their supposed absence from Africa.”<sup>97</sup> This binary logic justified violence against Africans and naturalized the material conditions of Black abjection that are central to the articulation of the African Diaspora. Slippages between the African, the Black, and the abject other ensue: “From the standpoint of colonialism, the colonized does not truly exist, as person or as subject... The colonized does not exist as self; the colonized *is* but in the same way as a rock *is*... In the colonial principle of rationality, the native is thus that *thing that is, but only insofar as it is nothing*. And it is at the point where the thingness and its nothingness meet that the native’s identity lies.”<sup>98</sup> Since colonial commandment<sup>99</sup> in Africa—supported by and dependent upon the legitimating architecture of the Enlightenment—created persistent conditions of Black abjection, the reconstitution of Africa as the final frontier of capitalism opens up the possibility of moving the Black beyond his/her misrecognition as the Nigger, and toward true recognition as the product of colonial commandment and material dispossession.

In 2012, an article entitled “The Next Asia is Africa: Inside the Continent’s Rapid Economic Growth” was published in *The Atlantic*.<sup>100</sup> Reporting from Zambia, the author argues that the burgeoning “mall culture” in Africa, the modest levels of disposable income among teenagers, and the increase in the ability of the populations to consume represent new possibilities on the continent. These are linked to “Africa’s economic rise,” evident in growth rates approaching those of Asia, and in projections that Africa will be the fastest growing continent in the next five years. The sectors driving the continent’s economic growth are located in wholesale and retail commerce, transportation, telecommunications, and manufacturing.<sup>101</sup> This represents a fundamental change from extractive industries that were central to Africa’s role in the global economy—from the extraction of enslaved persons to the extraction of commodity exports including minerals, oil, and agricultural products—that dominated the economies of the Continent. This pattern continued in the postcolonial era with little or limited need for conditions of social, political, or economic stability. Indeed, foreign direct investment in extractive industries typically went to the most “unstable countries” because “thin” states allowed flexible, private actors to come in and extract resources because of their incapacity and inability to regulate the national space. Multinational corporations and Africa elites profited from the extraction of national resources, in practices that became akin to the privatization of the state.<sup>102</sup> The shift away from extractive industries to other forms of economic activity comes with opportunities for many countries in Africa to transform themselves from peripheral to semiperipheral status—that is, into the middle stratum of countries in the world-economy. Such a shift comes with the possibility for a comparative increase in global influence and for economic self-determination with control over the conditions of its industrialization.<sup>103</sup> Rising consumer demand could be the fulcrum around which continent-specific backward and forward linkages could be organized. Africa’s consumer spending is projected to reach \$2.2 trillion by 2030, attributed in large part to its growing middle class consumer base, said to be larger than that of India. Large multinational corporations, including Wal-Mart, Google, and IBM are relocating to the Continent and investing in “the new growth frontier.”

New measures of development are necessary in order to assess new possibilities for Africa. The African Development Bank's (AfDB) identifies the parameters of the "lower-middle class" as a daily per capita expenditure of \$2 to \$20 in 2005 dollars. By hegemonic standards, this may be problematically low. Much more importantly, however, is the AfDB's inclusion of variables like education, aspiration, and lifestyle as determinative.<sup>104</sup> These may be more important in assessing the possibilities for African and Black flourishing. I argue that given the connection between Africa and Blackness, their diremption from the discourse of abjection may very well rest on the Continent's success in challenging and contesting hegemonic development and growth standards and in overcoming the conditions of material dispossession. In the African Diaspora, particularly in the United States, cultural specifications of Blackness have served to distract, and even justify material dispossession, as, for example in propositions related to the "culture of poverty;"<sup>105</sup> or in notions of urban, inner city, "hip hop" culture;<sup>106</sup> and even in the specifications of African American religion and its focus on other worldly redemption.<sup>107</sup> Discourses of black dysfunction, evident in scholarship on the Black family and referencing culture,<sup>108</sup> promote aspirations to white middle-class status as solutions to lower income and wealth.<sup>109</sup> Culture becomes transformed as a measure of the degree to which Black people have the capacity to catch up to whites. Africa may offer possibilities to escape this trap because specifications of success and its possibilities are expressed in relation to the increased development potential of African economies. Education, aspiration, and lifestyle in the African context represent an expression of the potential to develop a different society that is not necessarily contingent upon the desire to "catch up" to the North Atlantic. This challenges the identification of Africa as a "shadow" of the Global North proposed by scholars such as James Ferguson.

The idea of a shadow indicates the impossibility, on cultural grounds, of "catching up" with Europe; it is a mere simulacrum: "A shadow is not only a dim or empty likeness. It also implies a bond and a relationship. A shadow, after all, is not a copy but an attached twin—a shadow sticks with you. Likeness here implies not only resemblance but also a connection, a proximity, an equivalence, even an identity. A shadow, in this sense, is not simply a negative space, a space of absence; it is likeness, an inseparable other-who-is-also-oneself to whom one is bound."<sup>110</sup> To escape from the shadow, one needs to become unbound. Ferguson attributes the inseparable connection to the historical underdevelopment of the Continent. As a result Africans seek to appropriate Western culture as a means of overcoming inequality and to increase their stature in the global order.<sup>111</sup> Here, culture becomes linked to political economy because Africans, in their mimesis, seek to reproduce the cultural forms of the West in their quest to overcome their economic marginalization. However, their marginalization is not rooted in culture, but in "social and economic subjection." The idea of the shadow is embedded in the discourse of the African as abject.<sup>112</sup> Cultural specifications serve to reinforce this idea. Frantz Fanon and Amilcar Cabral<sup>113</sup> are therefore correct in linking culture to the materialities of lived experience. This opens the way for tying African cultural aspirations to the quest for development and diversification of the economies of the Continent, and the possibilities therewith. The articulation of culture to the potentialities of endogenous development, rather than to discourses of marginalization, challenges the ways in which Culturalism acts to render invisible and distort the material and structural realities of the Black condition. It challenges anthropological notions of Africa as "culturally modern," which naturalizes economic underdevelopment as a feature of Africa's "alternative modernity."<sup>114</sup> The positioning of Africa as the savior of capitalism and as the fastest growing continent in the world creates the

possibility of decoupling the desire to “modernize” from a desire to emulate or mimic the West. It also has the potential to assert Africa’s integration into the global community of nations on its own terms in ways that are no longer contingent upon white/European recognition and white conditionalities of belonging—conditionalities predicated upon Westernized theories of modernization and development.

Of course, the possibilities for development in Africa have no guarantees. In the article “Is Africa really rising? History and facts suggest it isn’t,”<sup>115</sup> Grieve Chilwa argues that despite a steady Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita growth rate of 2% per year and a modest decrease in poverty since 2000, “Afro-euphoria,” the “Africa Rising” narrative, and declarations that “Africa’s time is now,” may be unwarranted. Even though these growth rates are almost identical to those experienced by the “Asian Tigers” in their period of “rising,” growth in Africa is not necessarily being driven by endogenous forces as they were, at least partially, in East Asia. Similar to the colonial and postcolonial national development phases, growth is being produced primarily by external factors, especially economic and investment activities generated directly or indirectly by phenomenal growth in the Chinese economy.<sup>116</sup> But, as Harvard economist Dani Rodrik argues, while accomplishing these goals may make economic crises less prevalent, they have little impact on efforts to make economic growth a permanent feature in an economy.<sup>117</sup> Development policy, based on the Western model, assumes the absorption of rural producers into urban manufacturing industries as a result of increasing labor productivity and efficiencies. This has not been the case for Africa. While African labor has moved out of agriculture—generally a feature of structural transformation—it has moved primarily into services or into informal activities, not into industry or manufacturing that provide the opportunity for higher wages due to increases in labor productivity.<sup>118</sup> The point that Chilwa and Rodrik are making is that given Africa’s inability and incapacity to reproduce the traditional industrialization path of Asia and Europe, its development possibilities are grim. According to Rodrik, “the African pattern of structural change is very different from the classic pattern that has produced high growth in Asia, and before that, the European industrializers.... The pace of industrialization is much too slow...”<sup>119</sup> There is a Culturalist argument that inheres in the Neoliberal calls, in their association with structural adjustment policies, for macroeconomic stability facilitated by a particular growth path, functioning “democratic” institutions of governance, and a Euro-American conception of “good government.”<sup>120</sup> These policy imperatives are embedded in the notion of African cultural inferiority, which, it is argued, manifests in Africa’s inability to follow the traditional development model.

It is quite possible, given the trajectory of structural transformation, that the levels of growth currently experienced in Africa are unsustainable. But this does not necessarily represent failure. It is that very assumption—that Africa must follow a particular path of development, and its failure to do so explains the persistence of poverty and marginalization—that could be challenged by efforts to chart an alternative development path. The “informal activities” written off by Rodrik as “not particularly productive” have lifted millions out of poverty and provided them with opportunities to enjoy a better life. This, combined with the persistence of rural subsistence or cash-crop agriculture, have led to lower levels of poverty than those experienced in Asian economies. The economy of the continent as a whole is larger than India, and this suggests considerable benefits to be derived from economic and political integration that rejects European-derived forms of statist organization. What is being indicated is an ability of the African middle classes to reproduce themselves inter-generationally—on their own terms—and this augurs well for the possibilities to build upon their successes.<sup>121</sup>

According to the African Development Bank, the informal sector contributes 55% of GDP in Africa south of the Sahara and 80% of its labor force. It employs the poorest segments of the population, including women and youth.<sup>122</sup> The point is not to valorize or to romanticize the informal sector; it is often associated with increasing poverty, weak employment conditions, a weak tax base, lax regulation, and limited access to capital.<sup>123</sup> At the same time, the informal sector offers opportunities to deeply impoverished populations to contend successfully with conditions and changes in the global political economy when faced with the ineffectiveness of “traditional” development models that tend to neglect those at the bottom, and to exacerbate dispossession. The informal sector also provides a means of accumulation not contingent upon the state, which increasingly serves the interests of global capital.<sup>124</sup> Thus, an alternative path to development that incorporates the informal sector can open up the possibility of challenging historical narratives of development and modernization in which the Black/African is always-already marked by lack; of recognizing endogenous economic formations that endure despite Neoliberal imposition; and of articulating an identity, culture, and subjectivity related to material realities. As previously argued, the constitution of the modern world-system precludes accumulation by developing countries that can match the levels experienced historically by the developed countries. The negation of Black abjection may rest in the turning away from this system in which Blacks are inscribed and which not only reifies such abjection but also its condition of poverty. In other words, pursuing an alternative path to development brings with it the potential for antisystemic challenge.

The image of Africa presented in *The Atlantic*, one of increased participation in and importance to the world-economy, also opens up the possibility of challenging previous imaginings of Africa. According to James Ferguson, Africa has been marginalized from the global economy in a number of ways, including allocations of foreign direct investment and declining terms of trade, which has resulted in increased impoverishment. The very processes that produced global integration and convergence have simultaneously resulted in the exclusion of non-usable parts and segments of Africa, including people and regions, from engagement with these processes. He argues that the persistent image of Africa as “the dark continent” has legitimated its peripheral status.<sup>125</sup> A materialist theory of the African diaspora opens up the path of revelation of the true conditions of Blackness through analysis of the integral connection between naturalist and historicist narratives of Africa, discourses of Black abjection, and the development, constitution and reconstitution of the capitalist world-economy. It provides the necessary condition for the negation and rejection of discourses of the Dark continent, and its concomitant distortion of its descendants in the figure of the Nigger. Africa can become “the New Asia” not by following a particular development path, but by disrupting white supremacist and Eurocentric notions that locate the space of modernity exclusively in the West. In this way, it will follow the example of countries like China, India, and Taiwan whose ascendance in the world-economy was based precisely in similar disruption. The inscription of Africa into the current phase of capitalist development has the potential to liberate the Black from its niggerized position on the constitutive outside of the modern world.

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<sup>1</sup> Patrick L. Mason and Mwangi Wa Githinji, “Excavating for Economics in Africana Studies,” *Journal of Black Studies* 38 (2008), 731-757.

<sup>2</sup> Julianne Malveaux, “Why is Economic Content Missing from African American Studies?” *Journal of Black Studies* 38 (2008), 783-794.

<sup>3</sup> Mason and Githinji, “Excavating for Economics,” 731.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 732-733.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 739.



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- <sup>6</sup> Harris, "The Intellectual and Institutional," 19.
- <sup>7</sup> Mason and Githingi, "Excavating for Economics," 743.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>9</sup> Malveaux, "Why is Economic Content," 785.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid., 786.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid., 787.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>16</sup> Don Robotham, *Culture Society, and Economy: Bringing Production Back In*, (London: Sage Productions, 2005), 4.
- <sup>17</sup> Giovanni Arrighi writes that, "there occurred the first 'oil shock' of 1973, itself the most visible sign of a more general increase in the prices of primary products after twenty years of relative losses. Reduced by both rising wages and rising prices of imported raw materials, the profitability of productive expansion in core location declined and capital sought valorization in new directions." Arrighi, "World Income Inequalities and the Future of Socialism," *New Left Review* 189 (1991), 59.
- <sup>18</sup> Robotham, *Culture Society, and Economy*, 21.
- <sup>19</sup> See Immanuel Wallerstein, *Geopolitics and Geoculture: Essays on the Changing World-System*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991), 144-180
- <sup>20</sup> Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 29.
- <sup>21</sup> Robotham, *Culture Society, and Economy*, 34.
- <sup>22</sup> Ibid., 12.
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid., 18.
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid., 8.
- <sup>25</sup> Because the United States wielded so much power, it was also able to dictate the terms of development for peripheral nations. The Truman Doctrine, issued in 1946 was able to combine isolationism and independent national development—a result of the cold war between the US and the USSR—with internationalism through multilateral security alliances The United States was able to impose its economic agenda on Western Europe through the Marshall Plan, and on the Global South through lending. The imperatives of national economic production, technological advancement for progress, and societal modernization permeated the world-system and resulted in further integration based on market logic. David Craig and Doug Porter, *Development Beyond Neoliberalism?*, (London: Routledge, 2006), 47-48
- <sup>26</sup> Arrighi, "World Income Inequalities," 40.
- <sup>27</sup> Nazir Ahmad, "Multilateralism, Racism, and the Culture of Altruism," in *The Color of Hunger* edited by David L.L. Shields, (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1995), 77-78.
- <sup>28</sup> Howard Handelman, *The Challenge of Third World Development*, Upper Saddle River: Prince Hall Publishers, 2006), 3.
- <sup>29</sup> Percy C. Hintzen, "Racism in Foreign Policy and Development Programs," in *The Color of Hunger* edited by David Shields, (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1995), 56.
- <sup>30</sup> Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 88-91.
- <sup>31</sup> Arrighi, "World Income Inequalities," 57-58.
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid., 50.
- <sup>33</sup> Percy Hintzen, "Racism in Foreign Policy and Development Programs," in *The Color of Hunger* edited by David L.L. Shields, (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1995), 58.
- <sup>34</sup> Lipsitz, "Possessive Investment in Whiteness," 377.
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid., 44.
- <sup>36</sup> Ibid., 44.
- <sup>37</sup> Arrighi, "World Income Inequalities," 42. Arrighi argues that the organic core of the capitalist world-economy is that, "consisting of all the states that over the last half-century or so have occupied the top portions of the global hierarchy of wealth and, in virtue of that position, have set (individual or collectively) the standards of wealth which all their governments have sought to maintain and all other governments have sought to attain." The core/West/North is as follows: Western Europe (UK, Scandinavian and Benelux countries, West Germany, Austria, Switzerland, France), North America, Australia and New Zealand.

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- <sup>38</sup> Ibid., 58, 59.
- <sup>39</sup> Percy Hintzen, "Structural Adjustment," 57.
- <sup>40</sup> Ibid., 59.
- <sup>41</sup> Arrighi, "World Income Inequalities," 61.
- <sup>42</sup> Percy Hintzen, "Structural Adjustment," 66.
- <sup>43</sup> Arrighi, "World Income Inequalities," 64.
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid., 65.
- <sup>45</sup> Steger, *Globalisms*, 13.
- <sup>46</sup> Patrick O'Meara et al., eds. *Globalization and the Challenges of a New Century*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 226
- <sup>47</sup> Percy Hintzen, "Structural Adjustment," 53.
- <sup>48</sup> Joseph Stiglitz, *Globalization and its Discontents*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003), 21.
- <sup>49</sup> Ferguson, *Global Shadows*, 35.
- <sup>50</sup> Steger, *Globalisms*, 30.
- <sup>51</sup> Hopkins, *Globalization in World History*, 218.
- <sup>52</sup> Bob Jessop, "What follows Fordism? On the periodization of capitalism and its regulation," in *Phases of Capitalist Development: Booms, Crises, and Globalization* edited by Robert Albritton et al., (Groningen: Angus Maddison, 2001), 293.
- <sup>53</sup> Moishe Postone, "Theorizing the Contemporary World: David Harvey, Giovanna Arrighi, Robert Brenner," in *Political Economy of the Present and Possible Global Futures* edited by Robert Albritton et al., (London: Anthem Press, 2007), 97-99.
- <sup>54</sup> Postone, "Theorizing the Contemporary," 101-102.
- <sup>55</sup> Lipsitz, "Possessive Investment in Whiteness," 377.
- <sup>56</sup> Hall, "The Neo-Liberal Revolution," 719.
- <sup>57</sup> Jessop, "What follows Fordism," 293.
- <sup>58</sup> Arrighi, "World Income Inequalities," 40.
- <sup>59</sup> Ibid., 60.
- <sup>60</sup> Lipsitz, "Possessive Investment in Whiteness," 376.
- <sup>61</sup> Stuart Hall, "The Neo-Liberal Revolution," *Cultural Studies* 25 (2011), 721.
- <sup>62</sup> Ibid., 51. "[O]ver the last decade or so [there] have been variants of the resistance of Third World peoples against developmentalist ideologies and practices that imposed exorbitant social and human costs on subordinate groups and classes without delivering much or anything of what they promised." Ibid., 52.
- <sup>63</sup> Hall, "The Neo-Liberal Revolution," 704.
- <sup>64</sup> Hintzen, "Structural Adjustment and the New International Middle Class," *Transition* 24 (1995), 56.
- <sup>65</sup> Arrighi, "World Income Inequalities," 61.
- <sup>66</sup> Hall, "The Neo-Liberal Revolution," 707.
- <sup>67</sup> Arrighi, "World Income Inequalities," 61.
- <sup>68</sup> Ibid., 60.
- <sup>69</sup> Ibid., 51-52.
- <sup>70</sup> Lipsitz, "Possessive Investment in Whiteness," 378.
- <sup>71</sup> Hall, "The Neo-Liberal Revolution," 707.
- <sup>72</sup> Susan George, *A Short History of Neoliberalism*, (Bangkok: Conference on Economic Sovereignty in a Globalising World, 1999), 7.
- <sup>73</sup> Robotham, *Culture Society, and Economy*, 4.
- <sup>74</sup> Hall, "The Neo-Liberal Revolution," 722.
- <sup>75</sup> Arrighi, "World Income Inequalities," 54.
- <sup>76</sup> Ibid., 48.
- <sup>77</sup> Steger, *Globalisms*, 29.
- <sup>78</sup> George, *A Short History of Neoliberalism*, 10-11; Immanuel Wallerstein, *World Systems Analysis: An Introduction*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 86.
- <sup>79</sup> George, *A Short History of Neoliberalism*, 12-13.
- <sup>80</sup> Ibid., 15.
- <sup>81</sup> Michel-Rolph Trouillot, "The Anthropology of the State in the Age of Globalization," *Current Anthropology* 42 (2001), 130.

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- <sup>82</sup> Lipsitz asserts that deindustrialization destroyed the industrial infrastructure that formerly provided high-wage jobs and the possibility of upward mobility to black workers. Lipsitz, "Possessive Investment in Whiteness," 380.
- <sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 375.
- <sup>84</sup> Saskia Sassen, *Cities in a World Economy*, (Los Angeles: Pine Forge Press, 2012), 1-44.
- <sup>85</sup> Persuad and Lusane, "The New Economy," 22-24.
- <sup>86</sup> James B. Stewart, "Globalization, Cities, and Racial Inequality at the Dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," *The Review of Black Political Economy* 32 (2004), 21.
- <sup>87</sup> Persuad and Lusane, "The New Economy," 22.
- <sup>88</sup> Trouillot, "The Anthropology of the State," 127.
- <sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.
- <sup>90</sup> Stewart, "Globalization and Cities," 15.
- <sup>91</sup> Hall, "The Neo-Liberal Revolution," 725-726.
- <sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 714-715.
- <sup>93</sup> Persuad and Lusane, "The New Economy," 32.
- <sup>94</sup> Ruth Wilson Gilmore, *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007); Frances Fox Piven, "The New American Poor Law," *Socialist Register* 48 (2012), 108-124; Loic Wacquant, "Ordering Insecurity: Social Polarization and the Punitive Upsurge," *Radical Philosophy Review* 11 (2008), 9-27; Loic Wacquant, "The Place of the Prison in the New Government of Poverty," in *After the War on Crime: Race, Democracy, and a New Reconstruction* edited by Mary Louise Frampton et. al, (New York: New York University Press, 2008), 23-27; Loic Wacquant, "From Slavery to Mass Incarceration: Rethinking the 'race question' in the US," *New Left Review* 13 (2002), 41-60.
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- <sup>98</sup> Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 212.
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- <sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*
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<sup>113</sup> See Frantz Fanon, "On National Culture," in *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963), 145-180; and Amilcar Cabral, "National Liberation and Culture," in *Return to the Source: Selected Speeches of Amilcar Cabral*, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1973), 39-56. Also see Reiland Rabaka, *Reconstructing the Black Radical Tradition, From W.E.B. DuBois and C.L.R. James to Frantz Fanon and Amilcar Cabral*, (Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009); Reiland Rabaka, *Concepts of Cabralism: Amilcar Cabral and Africana Critical Theory*, (London: Lexington Books, 2014); Frantz Fanon, "The Lived Experience of the Black," in *Race* edited by Robert Bernasconi, (Malden: Blackwell, 2001), 184-202.

<sup>114</sup> Ferguson, *Global Shadows*, 176.

<sup>115</sup> Grieve Chelwa, "Is Africa really rising? History and facts suggest it isn't," *Africa is a Continent*, June 15, 2015, accessed July 1, 2015, <http://africasacountry.com/2015/06/is-africa-really-rising-history-and-facts-suggest-it-isnt>.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

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<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, 9-11.

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<sup>121</sup> Paul Tiyambe Zelela, *Africa's Resurgence: Domestic, Global, and Diaspora Transformations*, (Los Angeles: Tsehai Publishers, 2014), 33.

<sup>122</sup> African Development Bank Group, "Recognizing Africa's Informal Sector," 27 March 2014, accessed February 15, 2015, <http://www.afdb.org/en/blogs/afdb-championing-inclusive-growth-across-africa/post/recognizing-african-informal-sector-11645>.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> Percy Hintzen, "Structural Adjustment," 57; Ferguson, *Global Shadows*, 11, 85-86.

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