

Black Social & Political Thought

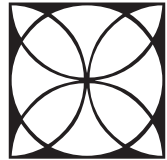
Selected Writings Volume II

By Dr. Muhammad Ahmad (Maxwell Stanford)

Included in this preview:

- **Copyright Page**
- **Table of Contents**
- **Excerpt of Chapter 1**

For additional information on adopting this book for your class, please contact us at 800.200.3908 x71 or via e-mail at info@universityreaders.com



Black Social and Political Thought

Selected Writings Volume II

Dr. Muhammad Ahmad



University Readers™
San Diego, CA

Copyright © 2009 by Dr. Muhammad Ahmad.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without permission in writing from the publisher. University Readers is NOT affiliated or endorsed by any university or institution.

First published in the United States of America in 2009 by University Readers

Cover design by Monica Hui Hekman

13 12 11 10 09 1 2 3 4 5

Printed in the United States of America

ISBN: 978-1-934269-42-8



University Readers™

800.200.3908 | www.universityreaders.com



Contents

1. The Black Intelligentsia	5
2. Black Studies and the Black Intelligentsia	35
3. Race and Class	37
4. Revolutionary Action Movement	41
5. When and How I Wrote <i>Toward Black Liberation Part I</i> and Malcolm X and the Black Liberation Movement	43
6. Free All Political Prisoners and P.O.W.S: A Personal Account	47
7. Malcolm X and the Black Liberation Movement	53
8. The Struggle for a Multi-Cultural Curriculum and the Pedagogy of Self-Reliance	101
9. On Culture, Political Socialization and Revolution: Part One	105
10. On Culture, Political Socialization and Revolution: Part Two	111
11. On Culture, Political Socialization and Revolution: Part Three	117
12. Internal Social Relations and the Liberation of the Black Nation	123
13. The Re-Education of the African American Child and Parent	127
14. The Present Status of African Americans	133
15. The Bourgeois Aspects of the African American National Democratic Liberation Revolution	137
16. The Struggle Against Racism and Imperialism	139
17. Avoiding the Dual Dangers: Why Marx Must Be Revised (Modified)	143
18. On Building Communications Networks	147
19. UJAMAA—Cooperative Economics	151
20. Building an African American Movement for Liberation in the Twenty-First Century	155

21. Revolutionary Internationalism and the African-American Student	181
22. The Need (Importance) for Student Activism in the 21st Century	187
23. The Process of Unlearning	209
24. The Black Liberation Movement at the Crossroads	213
25. Unity and Struggle: Cadre Building Through Consistency in United Front Work	231
26. War and Peace: The Politics of a Capitalist/Imperialist Settler State	239
27. African-Americans and Globalization: The New Stage of Capitalism	241
28. The Present Global Economic Crisis	249
29. Building Strategic Alliances in the African American Liberation Movement	253
30. An African American Minimum Program of Struggle	281
31. Building the People's Party	289
32. Challenges Facing Barack Obama: As We Go To Press	297
About the Author	305



The Black Intelligentsia

The Black Intelligentsia of America has been productive in its development over the last hundred years, but has not yet developed a cohesive ideology (theory) that the African American masses have utilized in an effort to obtain the overthrow of institutionalized racism.

WHAT IS THE INTELLIGENTSIA?

The intelligentsia are not an order, bound together by a historic vow, but the social stratum, which embraces all kinds of “brainwork” occupations. They are an interclass group, being the brainworkers (ideologists) for the class they identify with. Because of the “spiritual” nature of the work that the intelligentsia does, it inevitably forms a spiritual tie between them and the possessing classes.¹ The Black Intelligentsia “has been” alienated from its African roots, therefore, unlike other potential middle classes, it has not produced an effective leadership that could give a revolutionary ideological direction for the African American nationality. In various social movements of the 19th and 20th centuries, intelligentsias have emerged from the nationalities’ potential middle class or intellectual proletariat, giving a mass ideological direction. Though ideologies vary among intelligentsias, most have been motivated by the ethnic group’s “national and class interests.”

Being brainwashed, or whitewashed against having an “African Consciousness” with everything that it represents, the African American petty bourgeoisie could not develop a program around an African American national mass motivation. Psychological alienation led them to seek an economic and political solution that was against the nationality’s interests, (accommodation and black capitalism).

¹ Leon Trotsky, The Intelligentsia and Socialism, [London: Fourth International, 1959], p. 9

Instead of struggling for the development of collective power, they organized for individual power, material accumulation for members of their class.

The major intellectual contribution of the African American middle class has been of attempting to record African American history, which at times falls short of what it should be. Their conclusions draw from the principles and tactics of accommodation or achieving integration into a capitalist America, which is both unrealistic and impractical, if not a suicidal goal for the masses of African Americans.

The greatest spokesman to emerge from the African American middle class was Dr. W. E. B. DuBois, who, for fifty years tried to work out a theory for achieving integration in monopoly capitalist America, only to find himself in self-exile in Africa; admitting his mistake of opposing Marcus Garvey in the 1920s and advocating socialism as a solution to the plight of 40 million African Americans.

In all social movements, especially among the intellectuals, there have been differences. These internal differences or contradictions have occurred over tactics of how to achieve liberation, self-determination, and power for the masses (working class). The difference between militancy versus moderation, reform versus revolution, nationalism (separation) versus integration, or some form of cultural and political autonomy (pluralism), have occurred within the ranks of the Black Intelligentsia before the destruction of the chattel slave system. From the days of the Abolitionists' movement there has been differences over direction of whether African Americans' fate could, or should be left in the hands of white Americans. Differences can be traced back to the ideological arguments between Frederick Douglass, Martin Delaney and Henry Highland Garnet in the Colored People's Conventions from the 1830s to the late 1850s.²

Programmatic problems in ideological direction have arisen because the African American is in a condition of domestic colonialism or possibly neo-colonialism in a foreign country, separated from his historic native land; stripped of native culture, heritage, religions, languages, physically outnumbered, and trained to hate himself/herself for over four hundred years. This oppression has made African Americans other than themselves, even though they have retained some of their African heritage. Separation and return would almost be an automatic response among an oppressed people taken from their land, if allowed to retain their

² Howard Holman Bell, *A Survey of the Negro Convention Movement: 1830–1861*, [New York: Arno Press and The New York Times, 1968] pps. 111–123

folkways (culture), but for the African American, return becomes a more complex question, and alternative theories have emerged within the last 368 years. The most popular of the alternative theories among the African American middle class in recent years has been integration and/or assimilation into capitalist America.

Historic analysis of the Black Intelligentsia is difficult because they often waver between the national/class aspects of national liberation and integration, militancy and moderation, reform and revolution, either national or international. The basic difference between the national/class aspect of national liberation often is that one believes a socialist revolution is necessary to achieve parity. The issue of militancy versus moderation is a tactical question while the national class question, self-determination versus integration under capitalism relates to the means of obtaining African American goals; that of using reform demands or engaging in mass revolutionary action to achieve the objectives of self-determination and national liberation. To achieve self-determination involves African Americans “laying down the tools,” participating in a general strike and allying themselves with Chicanos, Latinos, Puerto Ricans, Asians, Native Americans and white workers to bring forth a Socialist America.

WAVERENCE AND AMBIVALENCE

Wavering between the national/class aspects of national liberation, nationalism and integrating comes from ambivalence. Ambivalence comes from historical and present day systematic brainwashing (false class, national, and race consciousness). This brainwashing over a period of years has produced a self-destructive masochistic self-hatred complex within the African American psyche. So complete has been the brainwashing that it has produced a conditional inferiority reflex in the African American.

The very nature of American society causes each African American to have negative traumatic experiences, sometime in their life about being born African or having African features. The African American is constantly bombarded with an anti-African image, through radio, television, movies, videos, DVDs, CDs, newspapers and magazines, because all of the heroes, power symbols, etc., are Caucasian in America. This is backed up with a 368-year negative complex towards African existence. This has left the African American with a complexing personality.

Ambivalence is the mixed or conflicting feelings about the oppressor and comes from the desire to be like the power or dominant symbols. The ambivalence occurs between intra (in) –group emotion directed toward self or group and extra (out) –group emotion directed toward the oppressor. The most common conflict occurs between intra-hatred and extra-hatred, intra-love and extra-love. From traumatic experiences of racism in America, the African American develops an extra-hatred for the oppressor (Caucasian-Anglo-American nationality). But, the African American, through the conditioned reflexes, also develops a false extra-love for the oppressor, which comes from fear and respect for power and success. Also from the conditioned reflexes comes intra-hatred, being that the love and beauty symbols are Caucasian. These intra-hated feelings constantly conflict with the natural intra-love feelings. The African American both loves and hates himself/herself and also hates and loves the oppressor. While four hundred years of traumatic experience would seem to be rational proof that the oppressor will not reform, the African American still wants to believe that they will reform. Therefore, the more intimate the relations between Caucasians and African Americans, the more African Americans will have intra-hatred and external love, unless the traumatic experiences have destroyed them. There will be a higher degree of ambivalence among those who have a high respect for the Caucasian culture and intellectual capacities. Ambivalence has been one of the main problems among the Black Intelligentsia in past years.³

Not having knowledge of the past, or of African American history, and being psychologically cut off from the outside world through conditioned reflexes, the African American has been like a piece of driftwood. The driftwood theory is that, if the historical continuity of a people is destroyed and if influences from other peoples or cultures are denied them, then they become susceptible to suggestions. Only the present concerns affect them because they have no conception of the past and have lost the ability to perceive the future to their advantage. *To destroy ambivalence*

3 E. Franklin Frazier, Black Bourgeoisie, [London: Collier Books, 1957]; Nathan Hare, Black Anglo-Saxons, [Chicago: Third World Press, 1967]; Frantz Fanon, Black Skin, White Masks, [New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1967]; Frantz Fanon, Wretched of the Earth, [New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1963], William H. Grier and Price M. Cobbs, Black Rage, [New York: Bantam Books, 1968]; Robert Staples, Black Masculinity, [San Francisco: The Black Scholar Press, 1982]; Abram Kardiner, M.D., and Lionel Obesey, M.D., The Mark of Oppression, [Cleveland and New York: Merian Books, 1962]; Na'im Akbar, Chains and Images of Psychological Slavery, [Jersey City, New Jersey: New Mind Productions, 1984]

among a colonized people, a national intelligentsia must constantly present them with the traumatic experiences of the past and present, and intensify their group anger until they judge the oppressor as the enemy and conclude from group action that the oppression must be destroyed. The intelligentsia must show the group its link with the past, the past relationships with the present, and how it applies to the future. This is how ambivalence, conditioned reflexes and driftwood thinking can be destroyed.

HISTORICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL ROOTS OF THE BLACK INTELLIGENTSIA

To understand the contradictions in the content of African American ideology, we have to go to the late 1700s and early 1800s, when major differences emerged within the African American nationality over destroying the slave system. Differences first emerged during the process of the slave revolts between the house slave and the field slave. The house slaves were the slaves the Caucasian overseer trusted. They were loyal to the master, and sometimes were the master's offspring from the rape of slave women. Many were raised, from birth, in the master's house, and as a result of the breeding system, were mulattos.

The chattel slave system developed a racial caste system in America. At the top of the caste was the Anglo-Saxon image and at the bottom of the caste was the African image. Features and skin pigmentation closest to the Anglo-Saxon determined prestige among the African captives. This superimposed caste system remained prevalent within the social life and culture of African Americans until the late 1950s and early 1960s.

The house slave, treated better than the field slave and directly trained by the Caucasian overseer, was more prone to be ambivalent about the overseer and emotionally tied to him. As a whole, he sought a peaceful solution with the oppressor, one of integration (reform or compromise). The field slave, on the other hand, was isolated from the overseer; his only contact was in the form of exploitation, brutality, and oppression. He hated the master and sought separation and a violent and revolutionary means to end slavery.

Through David Walker's appeal, and among two major insurrectionists, (Denmark Vesey and Nat Turner), we find their intentions were the total destruction of the slave system, then establishing an African American state. Historical evidence show that Vesey was heavily influenced by the success of Toussaint

L'Overture and Desalines, leaders of the Haitian revolution. The Vesey Revolt was one of the first indications of international awareness and scope on the part of the Black Intelligentsia.⁴

The contradiction between reform, integration versus revolution, self-determination, nationalism, was an internal conflict, even among the freedmen (captives who were freed by their masters) and those who fled from slavery or who bought their freedom. Many of the freedmen became the leadership for African Americans. African American class structure then was similar to now:

Conservative bourgeoisie (old middle class)

Radical bourgeoisie (young middle class)

Intellectual proletariat (working class, artists, writers, musicians, intellectuals)

Mass proletariat (working class)

During slavery it was:

House slaves or conservative freedmen

Radical freedmen

Revolutionary freedmen

Field slave

Denmark Vesey was a freedman who bought his freedom and attained a prosperous economic status, but never negated his field slave heritage. In 1829, David Walker, a freed slave, wrote an appeal calling for the overthrow of the slave system worldwide. His appeal had electrifying results, stimulating rumors of revolt.⁵ Contradictions began to arise among the freedmen (young developing African American bourgeoisie), as they began to organize. These contradictions became apparent in the National Colored People's Conventions, first held in the United States in the 1830s among the African American abolitionists in the Abolitionist movement. A spokesman for revolution and insurrection against the slave system was Rev. Henry Highland Garnet. Garnet updated David Walker's appeal to the Colored People's Convention and urged its adoption. Frederick Douglass opposed

4 C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins*, [New York: Vintage Books, 1963]; David Robertson, *Denmark Vesey*, [New York: Albert A. Knopf, 1999]

5 William Loren Katz, *Breaking the Chains: African American Slave Resistance*, [New York: Atheneum, 1990], p. 117

the appeal as being unrealistic and it was voted down by one vote. As frustration grew with the rate of change occurring among the freedmen, Garnet's appeal was eventually adopted in 1847.

Within the African American faction of the Abolitionist movement, as well as at the conventions, were discussions of forming African colonies, as well as in Canada and several thousands did emigrate to Canada. Returning to the motherland, Africa was also a very strong desire among the freedmen. The desire to return to African was soon exploited by opportunistic Caucasians, who saw the freedmen as a threat to the institution of slavery.

In the 1850s, reacting to the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 which threatened the status of freedmen, Martin Delaney was in the leadership of a Back-to-Africa movement. But the movement soon lost popular support when the American Colonization Society (a group of white slave owner financiers) began advocating repatriation for the freedmen. The freedmen saw that the American Colonization Society wanted to use them to establish an American colony in Africa. Some freedmen did return and formed the state of Liberia. This produced the sentiment to remove the words "Afro-American" or "African" from African American institutions. In 1835, at the Fifth Annual Convention of Colored People of America, a resolution was passed which recommended, "as far as possible" to our people to abandon the use of the word "colored" when either speaking or writing concerning themselves, and especially to remove the title of Africa from their institutions, the marbles of churches, and so on.⁶

The Civil War temporarily submerged the debate. After the Civil War and Reconstruction, when it became obvious that African Americans weren't going to be accepted as equals, the term 'colored' became prominent in African American's self-consciousness.

Two classical debates that occurred in the early 20th century between three men left a haunting legacy on the Black Intelligentsia. The first debate was between Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. DuBois in the early 1900s, and the second, between DuBois and Marcus Garvey happened in the 1920s. These debates were over the classical contradiction of which direction the movement should take, and still have not been solved. Rather than debate the contradictions in the varying

⁶ Howard Holman Bell, *A Survey of the Negro Convention Movement: 1830–1861* [New York: Arno Press and The New York Times, 1969], p. 77

ideological viewpoints, we will try to describe them and establish a sense of analysis and continuity in the molding of an African American ideology.

Booker T. Washington was a reform integrationist with strong bourgeois nationalist leanings, who believed in moderation and peaceful co-existence. His tactic of submission and moderation stemmed from his belief that that was the only way African Americans could and would survive. It should be remembered that Anglo-European American labor was hostile toward the African American people during this period. Dr. Washington's concept of building African American businesses to secure an independent economic base seemed feasible at the time. Since the 1870s, small businesses had little chance to compete against large companies. Booker T. Washington felt that after African Americans had obtained capital and technical skills, they would be respected and eventually accepted into the mainstream of American life. He felt that African Americans should strive to obtain economic clout first, not antagonizing the Caucasian majority by striving for political equality.

It must be remembered that northern capitalist industrialists were instrumental in the destruction of southern planters, the aristocracy of the chattel slave system and as a result many of the new African American middle class had faith in the capitalist class, and the capitalist system. While Marxism had been heard of, there was no intense Marxist analysis or struggle at that time dealing with the plight of African Americans and the expanding capitalist system as it related to the realities of America.

Dr. W. E. B. DuBois advocated full equality like his predecessor, Frederick Douglass. He advocated agitating through peaceful direct action, for integration, voting rights, full equality, and the destruction of the Jim Crow system. He was a militant integrationist, though he advocated cultural pluralism, peaceful coexistence with the existence of African American culture. While he advocated cultural pluralism and integration, he also, (at the same time), advocated Pan Africanism—the fraternity of people of African descent, united for the liberation of Africa and persons of African descent everywhere. The debate between Washington and DuBois was of a rational character over tactics, militancy versus moderation, and political emphasis versus economic emphasis. DuBois believed the economic solution was socialism, and Washington believed it was African American capitalism. While DuBois had been highly respected as an intellectual, the African American bourgeoisie followed the pattern established by Booker T. Washington. Their

major goal has been economic gain, and just recently has emphasis been placed on militant political action.⁷

The second major debate occurred in the 1920s between Marcus Garvey and W. E. B. DuBois. It was over the concepts of integration versus separation and revolutionary reform integration versus revolutionary reform nationalism. Garvey's position was the building of African American businesses and capturing parts of the national African American market, combined with the concept of the eventual return to Africa. While Garvey sympathized with some of the goals of socialism, he had faith in the capitalist system and the illusion that he could establish an African empire. DuBois objected to Garvey, not because of his concepts of returning to Africa, but because he de-emphasized agitation in the U.S. Garvey also opposed the concept of cultural pluralism (the mutual respect and co-existence of various cultures integrated into the same state). Garvey favored a separation of the races, and did not believe that the race question could be peacefully resolved in the U.S., therefore advocated a return (separation) of African Americans to Africa. Garvey also advocated that African Americans control their own community, forming a 'nation within a nation' with a semi-autonomous African American capitalist economy with the political objective of the liberation of Africa. The argument was over tactics on the national and international levels. Garvey favored revolutionary tactics internationally (liberation of Africa by force if necessary), and was attempting to organize an army to liberate Africa. He formed a provisional African government in exile, but refused to agitate for social change within the U.S.⁸

DuBois, at this point in his career, believed that racial inequality in the U.S. could be solved through agitation against segregation and through securing the vote and support of the liberal wing of the capitalist class. DuBois, whose Pan Africanism had preceded Garvey's, was petitioning the European Colonial and Imperialist powers for the right of self-determination in the African colonies. The Garvey/DuBois debates of the 1920s had a haunting legacy for the debates that

7 David Levering Lewis, W. E. B. DuBois: Biography of a Race, 1868–1919, [New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1993], pp. 297–342

8 David Levering Lewis, W. E. B. DuBois: The Fight for Equality and the American Century, 1919–1963, [New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2000], p. 37–84; *also see* Theodore G. Vincent, Black Power and the Garvey Movement, [San Francisco, California: Ramparts Press, 1971]

re-occurred much later, in the 1960s between Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Elijah Muhammad, Robert F. Williams and Malcolm X.⁹

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. advocated nonviolent civil disobedience against the system of segregation, voting rights (racial equality) and in the last year of his life, resistance and economic inequality (poor people's march—Memphis garbage workers' strike).¹⁰ His philosophy was one of direct action against an unjust system and one of total integration into the U.S. capitalist system. This contrasted greatly with Elijah Muhammad, who advocated unarmed self-defense, racial separation and the formation of an African American state, an African American religious eschatology, the building of African American businesses, and political noninvolvement in trying to change the political and social system.¹¹ Both Robert F. Williams and Malcolm X tried to develop a synthesis between King and Muhammad's ideology, and develop an alternative. While Malcolm later (in 1964) advocated armed self-defense against racist groups, Robert F. Williams practiced armed self-defense against the KKK from 1957 to 1961, and later (in 1964 to 1968) advocated mass collective violent civil disobedience to bring for the "potential of a minority revolution." The failure of the urban rebellions from 1964–1968 to produce any consolidated results tended to prove that a minority revolution was also an "impossible revolution."¹² Both Malcolm and Williams advocated the organization of independent political action. Malcolm X supported the efforts of the Michigan based Freedom Now Party and Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer and the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP). Williams stated that the question was neither integration nor separation, but one of self-determination. Malcolm charged that the United States government was responsible for the crime of genocide against the African American people. Both

9 Harold Cruse, *Rebellion Revolution*, [New York: William Morrow and Company, 1968], pp. 156–167

10 Michael K. Honey, *Going Down Jericho Road: The Memphis Strike, Martin Luther King's Last Campaign*, [New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2007]

11 Karl Evanzz, *The Messenger: The Rise and Fall of Elijah Muhammad*, [New York: Pantheon Books, 1999]

12 Timothy B. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power*, [Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999]

*The RNA advocated the partitioning of the states of Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and South Carolina to become an independent self-governing New African State.

were members of the Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM), with Malcolm forming the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) and Williams eventually becoming the president of the provisional government of the Republic of New African.* While neither worked out the dialectics of the day-to-day struggle of how to achieve their objectives, their attempted synthesis was an advancement of the two polarities in African American thought.¹³

To date, the struggle still continues, to work out a transformational program, one that explains the steps or stages to advance democracy and to achieve the long-range goal of national liberation. The leadership of the Black Panther Party made an attempt at this process in the late 1960s and early 1970s, but was set back in its premature confrontations with the police apparatus of the state.¹⁴

Among the Black Intelligentsia, E. Franklin Frazier and Oliver C. Cox were among two of the most comprehensive social scientists to investigate some of the base causes of African American oppression. E. Franklin Frazier's historical analysis and studies of cultural differences and the African American bourgeois, the African American church and the African American family have been a tremendous help towards laying the groundwork for a scientific African American ideology. In his *Race and Cultural Contacts in the Modern World*, Franklin states:

The problem of nationalism among the colored peoples who have revolted against white demonization is not simply one of securing political power. The development of national consciousness is a long and difficult process depending on the traditions and stages of social development of peoples...The aim of all nationalistic movements is to acquire the status of a nation-state....¹⁵

While Frazier goes on to explain why the African American bourgeoisie, unlike other colonial petty bourgeoisies failed to transform itself into a nationalist intelligentsia, he exhibited the Garvey-DuBois legacy (as many scholars did) as

13 Muhammad Ahmad, *We Will Return in the Whirlwind: Black Radical Organizations, 1960–1975*, [Chicago, Illinois: Charles H. Kerr Publishers, 2007]

14 Mumia Abu Jamal, *We Want Freedom: A Life in the Black Panther Party*, [Cambridge, Massachusetts: South End Press, 2004]

15 E. Franklin Frazier, *Race and Cultural in the Modern World*, [New York: Knopf, 1957], p. 5

displaying confusion in their conclusions. Conclusions are most important parts of an ideology. Oliver C. Cox, on the other hand, is one of the most shunned African American ideologists because he says that class and class exploitation are the basis for racial, national and cultural oppression. Cox's *Caste, Class and Race*, is a classic study today.

DuBois, Cox, Frazier, C. L. R. James and George Padmore, have been five major theorists of the Black Intelligentsia that have tried to formulate a scientific ideology for persons of African descent. These five men have laid the theoretical foundations for a scientific African American ideology. DuBois, through historical analysis, has given us a historical and philosophical approach while Cox, through his class/racial stratification theory, has given African Americans a construct for national analysis. Frazier, with his sociological method of analysis has given African Americans a foundation of scientific empirical content, and Padmore has laid a political interpretation to social history.

Paul Robeson in the 1930s and 1940s arose to speak of internationalism. He was a staunch fighter against U.S. imperialism. Harry Haywood and George Padmore and C. L. R. James each have contributed national and international historical analysis toward the foundation of African American ideology. Harry Haywood's *Negro Liberation* is the best statistical based account and argument that African Americans constitute a "nation within a nation" in the black belt South having the right to self-determination up to and including the right of secession. Padmore's *Pan Africanism or Communism* argues that Africans have been manipulated by orthodox Marxist states and should form an international of their own. In recent years Harold Cruse and James Boggs have both given critiques of contemporary African American political thought.

C. L. R. James in "The Revolutionary Answer to the Negro Problem in the U.S." in 1948 stated, to paraphrase, the independent African American struggle has a vitality and validity of its own; that has deep historic roots in the past of America and in present struggles has an organic political perspective. This independent African American movement is able to intervene with terrific force under the banner of democratic rights upon the general social and political life of the nation. More importantly, it is able to exercise a powerful influence upon the revolutionary working class. The African American struggle has a great con-

tribution to make to the development of the proletariat in the United States and is a constituent part of the struggle for socialism.¹⁶

Bill Fletcher, an AFL-CIO intellectual said in a recent interview, “The African American worker tends to be the most pro-union of any demographic group and there are more African Americans in unions and a percentage of our population than any other demographic group. Sixteen to eighteen percent of African Americans are in unions compared to 11% Latinos...African Americans tend to be the most pro-union and among African Americans, African American women.¹⁷

Cruse in two of his books *Crisis of the Negro Intellectual*, and *Rebellion or Revolution* describes the internal cultural contradictions in the history of the movement and raises questions over direction. James Boggs in his *Racism and the Class Struggle* presents a strategy of workers from all nationalities in the U.S. to strive for people’s power. In his *Manifesto for a Black Revolutionary Party*, Boggs gives a very good political frame of reference to transform a political perspective into concrete organizational form. Boggs also forecasted the results of the increasing use of cybernation and automation in the production process and the de-industrialization of America would lead to the development of an underclass in his *The American Revolution: Pages from a Negro Worker’s Notebook*, in 1963.

Malcolm X, Robert F. Williams, Kwame Ture (Stokely Carmichael), James Forman, Huey P. Newton, Amiri Baraka and Manning Marable all talk about independent coalition politics solution to the oppression of African Americans.

ANALYSIS OF THE BLACK INTELLIGENTSIA

Within a 400 year span of the many who are, or were, in a position to contribute in national political thought, there are basically twenty secular African American scholars have contributed to formulating a body of thought leading to the formation and scientific articulation of an African American ideology. The twenty are:

Frederick Douglas

Dr. W. E. B. DuBois

Harold Cruse

George Padmore

¹⁶ C. L. R. James, *The Independence of the Black Struggle*, [Washington, DC: All African People Revolutionary Party, 1975], pp. 2–3

¹⁷ Norman (Otis) Richmond, “Bill Fletcher in Toronto,” Thursday, October 23, 2005, p. 2

Marcus Garvey	James Boggs
E. Franklin Frazier	Dr. Nathan Hare
Paul Robeson	Kwame Ture
Oliver C. Cox	Amiri Baraka
C. L. R. James	Malcolm X
Harry Haywood	Robert F. Williams
Richard B. Moore	Huey P. Newton
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.	Manning Marable

Intelligentsias usually come from the educated strata. Most of the time they come from university students. In most of the social movements in the 20th century, politically motivated workers and university students have provided the theory, leadership and cadre for the people's movement. This occurs when students, intellectuals from working class/peasant backgrounds, (sometimes hinging on the edge), often considered lower middle class (stable working class) become impatient with the established order and begin to agitate for change, action that's often considered radical. They in turn commit class suicide; give up the petty bourgeois privileges they would have if they remained conservative, and they unite with the working class/peasant class and fight for the majority of the people's interests. These individuals are referred to as intellectual proletariat. The intellectual proletariat is the element of the people that comes into consciousness of itself using its intellect and collective action in relation to power for the proletariat. The intellectual proletariat does not have to be university students, but often are self-educated and writers, artists, musicians, and poets directly connected with and coming from the masses. When the intellectual proletariat enters into conscious opposition with the established order, they make up the backbone for the social revolution and become the professional spokespersons for the masses in the struggle. The struggle then becomes a struggle for power between two intelligentsias, one representing the working class, the other the bourgeoisie.¹⁸ These intellectuals with working class backgrounds see the contradictions; that their class cannot obtain power as the society presently exists and they identify with the working class interests. This process will occur at

18 Robert Michels, "The Origins of the Anti-Capitalist Mass Spirit," in *Man in Contemporary Society*, [New York: Columbia University Press, 1955], pp. 754-755

a rapid rate if there is a barrier keeping the intellectual proletariat from achieving their class interests.

This is one of the reasons why the sit-in movement of 1960–61 and the freedom rides occurred. The new developing intelligentsia of Negro college students, unlike in the past, were students from working class backgrounds. Ascending to a new material status, they saw the contradiction of being able to have higher economic status, but yet an inferior social status. They were not from the old guard African American middle class families who had compromised social agitation in order to have a superior economic position. These youths were following in the footsteps of a member of the radicalized African American middle class who had rebelled against tradition and was starting a new trend. This man was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who had a middle class background but who identified with mass struggle in Montgomery, Alabama in 1955 and 1956. The movement used nonviolent direct action tactics to achieve its objective and Dr. King soon rose to become its professional spokesman. He later became the most influential “Negro” leader. He brought with him a battery of young ministers (new middle class intellectuals) frustrated because they could not obtain the social status of the white petty bourgeoisie (middle class). This can be viewed as the beginning of a social process of frustrated middle class intellectuals beginning to return to the masses.

Most of the students of the sit-in movement in 1960 were aspiring middle class students who were concerned over the contradictions they faced by submitting to the racist Jim Crow system. They sincerely wanted full equality, assimilation into the American mainstream of American life and they wanted to become petty bourgeoisie, but most of the leadership of the sit-in movement were of working class background. They soon formed an organization of their own and became more radical than the bulk of the sit-inners. This social process had gone so far that the student movement’s vanguard—SNCC, new leadership advocated armed self-defense, the philosophy of Robert F. Williams by 1966. Brother Malcolm X, in 1964, popularized the philosophy of self-defense and worked in coordination with Robert F. Williams. African American students in 1967 demonstrated across the country in a different form. The 1967 rebellion in Negro colleges were against the administrative policies of the Negro college administrations and then directed against the state when the state sent its army to suppress them. The rebellions ranged from expelling a professor, academic quality, to protesting against the draft (at Howard University). These rebellions were interlocked with a wave of urban

rebellions on the part of the people connected with the Black Power movement and had the potential of becoming the vanguard of an African American political cultural revolution. On November 17, 1967, four thousand African American high school students demonstrated for the inclusion of African and African American history in the public school curriculum in Philadelphia. The radicalization process had reached working class youth.

ANALYSIS OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT AS A SOCIAL MOVEMENT

All social movements that have been successful have been tight-knit movements having strong organization of the working class, symbols, strict rules of discipline for its members, with heavy emphasis on organization and ideology of its own, designating how the working class can come to power. All successful social movements have attempted to regiment the people. By successful we mean social movements that have seized state power; consolidating its power to achieve its control of the state. The structure of social movements can be broken down into the following:

- Intelligentsia
- Core/cadre
- Activists
- Working class/peasants/masses of the people

Revolutionary Intelligentsia

The intelligentsia is the vanguard of the intellectuals (intellectual proletariat) who came from the ranks of the proletariat/peasantry itself, who develop the revolutionary movement, become its theoreticians and who develop the ideology of how the working class can seize power. The intelligentsia formulates policy and structure for the movement.

Core/Cadre

The core/cadre is the second line leadership or technicians of the movement. They are the organizers, professional mobilizers, teachers, and propagandists who break down the movement ideology into simple doctrine the masses can understand; train elements of the masses of the people in special skills and organize them into the infrastructure of the movement and teach the intelligentsia's interpretation of the ideology of the movement. They are the enforcers of the movement carrying out the will of the intelligentsia. The core develops the defense of the social movement.

Activists/Cadre

Activist/cadre is the outstanding reliable members of a movement that show signs of potential leadership. Activist/cadre carry out directions (instructions) of the core/cadre putting into action the will of the intelligentsia. Activist/cadre are the mass agitators who mobilize the people or do the continuous present day-to-day direct organizing of the movement's objective.

Mass Cadre

Mass cadre are elements of the majority of the people. The masses are broken down into three basic strata: advanced, intermediate and backward elements. The intellectual proletariat, which constitutes the intelligentsia, emerges from the ranks of the advanced strata of the people, and guides the masses of working class/peasantry.

The Intelligentsia or Vanguard Theory

All successful social movements have had strong intelligentsias. The Leninist position is that an intelligentsia emerges from the ranks of the proletariat and introduces revolutionary politics from without, or outside of, the ordinary day-to-day economic struggle of the proletariat. The intelligentsia fuses its ideology back into the ranks of the proletariat, making it conscious of itself as a class. This process has proven successful for most social movements who have seized power in the 20th century. As a result a popular theory has developed, that the masses as a whole

cannot elevate above seeing the short range objectives of immediate economic gains, and that in order for it to come to power it needs a “professional” leadership trained in the art of political struggle.

Cell Structure

Social movements that have achieved state power have been structured into cells or small groups based on collective decision-making of three to five people. The cell is a small nucleus of people organized to complete a specific goal of the movement. These cells operate on their own, which enhances overall security for the movement, as well as making it organizationally independent. These cells are usually under a sector, or work area command, then city, county, regional, and national command.

Central Authority

Social movements are usually successful when they have a strong central (national) and consistent leadership that the masses respect. Most movements have had a central committee, or its equivalent, that welded ultimate authority. Its directives are considered ideologically sound, based on social practice, or the successes resulting from carrying them out. In order to be successful, the people’s movement should be centrally led, even though, (in order to keep it from being destroyed), it is at the same time decentralized into regional, county, and city area leadership. It must be tightly organized, but decentralized at the same time. The movement must be organized into independent cells operating on their own, subject to central committee direction.

Strong Personal Leader and Collective Leadership

Though very few leaders or followers of social movements will admit, much success of a social movement is dependent upon the skill in political strategy and tactics of the leadership. A social movement’s ideology is usually built around the thoughts of the elected personal leader. The personal leader becomes the ideal or model for the nationality to mold future generations on his/her actions and thoughts. *But in order for a social movement to have continuity and remain alive, the movement must have a strong continuous line of second and third line or collective leadership*

that never loses contact with the masses and rectifies the mistakes of the personal leader (or leadership) and replaces him/her if they should deviate from serving the interests of the majority of the working class people. Collective leadership is the concept of a battery of leaders, leading the movement with the mass leader serving as the administrator of the collective. It is built on the concept of the organization collectively deciding its goal and procedure of struggle.

Propaganda and Socializing Aspect of Social Movements

All successful social movements have had a propaganda organ to spread its views to the masses. In the African American experience in the 20th century, there has been *The Crisis*, journal of the NAACP; *The Messenger*, journal of A. Philip Randolph, Chandler Owen and the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; *The Negro World*, of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and Marcus Garvey; *Muhammad Speaks*, of the Nation of Islam and Elijah Muhammad; *The Student Voice*, of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee; *Black America*, of the Revolutionary Action Movement; *The Black Panther*, of the Black Panther Party; *Inner City Voice*, of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers; *Black Star*, of the African People's Party; and *Justice Speaks*, of the Black Workers for Justice; among others. Journals, newspapers, etc., of liberation organizations and movements are vital to their success and growth.

Dual Nature of Social Movements

Victorious social movements in the 20th century have had dual natures. One nature is public and open; the other is secretive and clandestine. Few social scientists have adequately explained these two seemingly contradictory concepts to date. Some say the vanguard (intelligentsia) organizes secret, clandestine organizing cells, working through fronts; then mobilizes the masses of working class people. Others say the intelligentsia mobilizes the masses; then organizes secret or clandestine cells. What is agreed is that successful social movements have had both. Mass membership in a social movement, then, also serves a dual nature. Social movements then, have both public and secretive members. The history of the U.S. government conspiracy and war against Black America (COINTELPRO) proves the necessity for both. The public members do the agitating against the system while the secretive wing

enforces the will of the movement, secures finances, etc., and intelligence through infiltrations of various sectors of society.

The Defense Question—Necessity of Social Movements

Successful social movements seemed to have been preoccupied with forming defense arms after establishing a firm based mass political movement in order to achieve their objectives. The base of all power is based on the mass support of the overwhelming majority of the people and their will to enforce that will in society. An important force of a social movement is its defense wing. Social movement's defense wings are political, prepared, organized and trained to carry out the objectives and ideology of the movement. In order for the defense wing to be correctly guided and not to set back the movement, the political section of the social movement should guide them.

Independent Means of Finance

We can't advance, without finance...

—Malcolm X

One of the severe weaknesses of the African American movement for self-determination has been the inability or unwillingness of African Americans to finance their own secular independent political movements. Social movements have used various means of obtaining finances to function. What has been consistent is the drive to establish an independent political economy for different movements. Every movement striving for power must have its own economic means of finance and its own means of sustaining itself (political economy).

Group Discipline

Most social movements have strict laws of discipline and punishment for breaking its laws. In this way social movements attempt to change individual social behaviors. Upon entering them the individual becomes a new person; a transformed person, part of a collective acting out his/her new role and destiny. Movements apply different methods of *judgment values* to change the new recruit. The *Nation of Islam* of the 1950s and early 1960s was a good example of this. This was before

a black mafia was formed inside the NOI, which was part of the plan of the F.B.I.'s COINTELPRO program, which destroyed the internal moral fiber of the NOI

A similar program was carried out in part of the leadership of the Black Panther Party. One of the most notable effects of a revolutionary secular social movement based on creating mass critical consciousness is employing the method of constructive self-criticism in which the individual, as well as the collective criticizes its faults in order to rectify (change) them. The Cuban revolution is a good example of this process.

Ideology, Symbols, Song and Slogans

Ideology and symbols play a very important part of any social movement. What is an ideology? An ideology is a systematic collective body of ideas representing the ideas for power. Working class ideology represents that ideology that describes, why, how, the means by which the working class can come to power and establish a workers' state.

A symbol and songs are a reflection of the ideology or central theme of a social movement. Through symbols and songs, the people can visualize the victory of the movement, and through slogans they can express their strength and ultimate success. Symbols are usually represented through insignias, salutes, uniforms, flags, methods of militant demonstrations, secret passwords, handshakes, etc. Slogans and songs are brief expressions that fire up the 'esprit de corps,' or movement morale. Ideology is a description of how the nationality/class is to reach its goal and what the organization thinks. Movements place heavy emphasis on ideology, because the people must have a *clear understanding* of the movement's program in order to know how to seize power.

In every revolution there is always involvement by people from very different tendencies who, nevertheless, come to agreement on action and on the most immediate objectives. It is clear that if the leaders have adequate theoretical knowledge prior to taking action, many errors can be avoided as long as the adopted theory corresponds to reality...¹⁹

¹⁹ David Deurschmann (ed.) Che Quevera and the Cuban Revolution, [Sydney: Pathfinder, 1987], p. 133

The role of theory of an intelligentsia is to develop the strategy and tactics of how the people are to achieve their liberation. A progressive or revolutionary ideology should have:

Historical analysis

Scientific deductive reasoning method based on the historical analysis; purpose is to critically interpret the present.

Perspective for success

Dialectical methodology of how to achieve it

To understand the past level of strengths and weaknesses, and successes and failures of the Civil Rights and Black Power movements, it is necessary to know the meaning and difference between a slogan, ideology, a mood, and a movement. *A movement is a collective social force to obtain a nationality or class goal.* Usually it is represented by an organization, or several organizations, dedicated to the group's goal.

The Civil Rights movement was a movement represented by various organizations: NAACP, Urban League, CORE, SNCC, SCLC; and various leaders, of which the major one was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The Civil Rights movement's ideology was bourgeois liberalism, which never allowed the movement to transform beyond securing limited bourgeois democratic rights that mainly benefited the petty bourgeoisie. When Dr. King began to talk of class issues, most of the Civil Rights leaders steered away from the class issue like it was the plague. Just when the working class had been aroused, and was beginning to mobilize their ranks, the Civil Rights leadership failed to develop a transitional program that would have advanced the movement forward. Dr. King was trying to address this when he wrote, *Where Do We Go From Here?*

The Black Power movement was more a mood than a movement, because it did not advance any tactics towards achieving power, and failed to mobilize the masses for such. Several organizations with varying ideologies vaguely made up the Black Power movement: Nation of Islam, SNCC, CORE, RAM and various local black nationalist organizations. The Black Power movement lacked two important things; an intelligentsia, and a comprehensive ideology. The Black Power movement was built upon a slogan, and represented more of a mass mood. The Black Power movement could have been classified as a mass mood represented by a slogan.

A slogan is a statement representing the general present, past or future mood of a people, or is a symbolic wording of an ideology. The greatest weakness of the Black Power movement was: there was little race, class or gender content to interpret its slogan. In order to be effective, the black liberation movement should have an African American working class based perspective; race, class and gender analysis; strong organizational structure (cell); working class structure; guidelines for discipline; and a socialist intelligentsia. The black liberation movement needs two million socialist cadres to be able to mobilize African Americans for prolonged revolutionary action. The prototype for this kind of development lay in the potential the Black Panther Party displayed in recruiting 30,000 members from 1966 to 1975. If the Black Panther Party had attempted to recruit the African American working class instead of the lumpen proletariat, and had not emphasized its early fixation with guns, it had the potential of attracting several millions to its ranks.

Training the Mass Intelligentsia

Re-education and indoctrination of the masses is one of the main efforts of a social movement, and represents 90% of its activity. The problem for the social movement is to make a new person out of the individual and to change the old habits and ways of the masses. Social movements are basically concerned with the future, though they deal with problems of the present. Therefore, they spend much time in training the next generation of youth with its ideology. Social movements are constantly concerned with expanding their intelligentsia, core and cadres. Prior to a social movement coming to power, it indoctrinates the masses in various ways; through newspapers, word-of-mouth, small group discussions, pamphlets, leaflets, movies, videos, records, parties, its own training schools, etc. During the rule of a social movement, all means of communication and education are under the control under their control, to insure complete re-education of the population.

The problem with most social movements is in training mass intelligentsias to show the masses that their economic and social future is connected to the political theory of the movement. To do this they much teach the masses complex concepts in simple terms. *The role of the intelligentsia is to take complex theories and systematize and clarify them for mass consumption.* Training is most effective when the masses are organized into a political organization, social power, then into political power. "Social power...is derived from private property or against..." "The single

most important instrument for the translation of social power into political power is the political “movement”....political men for the purpose of influencing the behavior of the state. The struggle for power is a...struggle aiming at control of the state machine”....²⁰ Political power is in this sense, a historical phenomenon.

In re-educating and training cadres from the masses, the intelligentsia must deal with the law of uneven development. The law of uneven development is when one section of the people advance the struggle before another. *A social movement cannot be successful until most of the people are evenly developed and basically understand the objective of their revolutionary intelligentsia.* This law of uneven development will often occur prior to the success of the group objective. *The role of the intelligentsia is to bring the people’s consciousness to an even level of development where they are in unity.* The people cannot achieve victory until they learn movement discipline and how to carry out the principles of the intelligentsia’s ideology. A movement of the people cannot emerge until the people embrace the intelligentsia’s ideology and become living examples of its principles (a new people). It will emerge when the people unite with the revolutionary leadership and its program, and organize themselves effectively in their struggle to seize power.

Organizing the masses is a tremendous undertaking and requires great patience and strategy. In order to organize the masses, one must know the masses better than they know themselves. *The intelligentsia must know the history of the people and must know how to make this historical experience useful in the people’s struggle for power.* The intelligentsia must know the history of the people in order to organize them. It will be very hard for the intelligentsia to relate to the people and hard for them to differentiate a real situation from a false one without knowing their history. The intelligentsia must constantly study the people, and the enemy, in order to better understand their strengths and weaknesses.

The social movement must have the support of a majority of the people in order to be successful. To have the support of the people, the movement must be active among the people and must have thousands of cadres constantly spreading the movement’s ideology. The cadre must teach the people how to organize to broaden the struggle for a people’s democracy. The social movement must be on the lips of all the people. All the people must know about it and it must have the total respect

²⁰ Franz L. Meeaurmann, “Approaches to the Study of Political Power,” *Political Science Quarterly*, Volume LXV (June, 1950), p. 4

of the vast majority of the community. It must infiltrate all organizations. No movement has been able to physically organize all of the people, but they have had the support of at least 85–90% of the people. The movement must be well known among the people and its program must be clear to get the support of the people.

The intelligentsia should always be prepared for a rising tide of *national consciousness* of the people; should be a master of expressing the will of the people through all types of media and in the streets. The intelligentsia should be a master of symbols and should give the people symbols that will strengthen their ‘*esprit de corps*’—national consciousness. It must be remembered that the masses will never get the full meaning of the ideology of the revolutionary movement (socialism) until after the seizure of power, when they experience the benefits of the new society and when all forms of mass communications are under the influence of the working class. In most colonized countries the emerging national intelligentsia come from the mobile strata of working class youth who get a chance to advance within the oppressor’s educational system. They (potential intelligentsia) become exposed to liberation, class concepts (Marxism, internationalism), the contradictions and hypocrisies of the capitalist system. Then they return to the masses in the community to mobilize, recruit and train the most aware elements around the liberation outlook.

The most aware elements of the masses is usually the marginal sector of the working class, the “semi-employed,” the so-called “criminal element” that is rebelling against the norms of capitalism in an antisocial, alienated manner. The core of social movements usually comes from the oppressor’s jails and becomes the backbone of the movement. They unite with the stable element of the working class, mobilizing them to become active in the liberation struggle, (Fanon). The best of the core elevate to become part of the intelligentsia, after political training, practice and tested experience in the class struggle in the movement. The core becomes the semiprofessional to professional organizers of the movement. The core organizes the activist cadres, who are less aware, less informed, or less disciplined. The purpose of the grooming process is to mold the masses into one gigantic collective, functioning in “collective unity.” At the peak of judgment for training the core cadre is to mold them to the ideal reflection of the movement’s “collective leadership.” The movement attempts to teach the thoughts, ideology and action of its leadership into the masses through engaging in class struggle and developing a

“pedagogically of self-reliance.” *The purpose is to build a future nation or leaders embedded with the spirit (emotional content) of the movement.*

Once the tide begins to rise and the masses begin to understand the concepts of the intelligentsia’s program, it should then begin to mobilize the section of the masses most receptive to its program. They should organize the people around their most *basic needs* without creating any false illusions; “tell no lies, claim no easy victories,” (Cabral). The intelligentsia should create a cultural movement making the knowledge of its ideology a way of life, “spiritual food” among the masses. Socialist ideology should influence all spheres within the community.

Black Studies and the Rise of Black Public Intellectuals

The motion to develop black studies came directly as a mass movement from the Civil Rights and Black Power movements. Bobby Seale, (later Chairman of the Black Panther Party), was so incensed about the assassination of Malcolm X that he decided to start a Black History course at Merritt College in April 1965. He organized a group with other African American students called the Black History Fact Group. After outlining and summarizing books, developing a tentative curriculum of African history and African American history, and meeting with Dean Olson, a Black History class was included at Merritt College in the Fall of 1965. By 1968, Merritt College had a newly formed Black Studies Department.²¹ Also on the east coast, students at Howard University in 1967, in conjunction with Dr. Nathan Hare, who headed the *Black Power Committee*, were trying to turn Howard into a ‘Black’ university. In Philadelphia, led by the Black People’s Unity Movement headed by John Churchville, Walter Palmer and a young 19 year old David P. Richardson²² decided to mobilize African American high school students to demand the inclusion of Black History in the Philadelphia public school system. A demonstration was called for November 17, 1967 in front of the school district’s administration building at 21st Street and the Parkway. Frank Rizzo, the noted, racist

21 Cecil Brown, [Dude, Where’s My Black Studies Department?](#) [Berkeley, California: Atlanta Books, 2007] pp. 67–68

22 Muhammad Ahmad, [We Will Return in the Whirlwind: Black Radical Organizations 1960–1975](#) [Chicago, Illinois: Charles H. Kerr Press, 2007], pp. 150–151

police commissioner, ordered the demonstration to be attacked.²³ Demonstrations by African American high school students demanding Black History spread to other places in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and by 1968, to 30,000 African American students demanding Black History to be included in their curriculum in Chicago.²⁴

On March 19, 1968, a sit-in at Howard University became the first building takeover on a college campus. This event marked the beginning of widespread student activism on college campuses across the country.²⁵

In the spring of 1968, campus buildings were seized from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, to Columbia University in New York. By 1969, the Black student revolt, calling for Black Studies departments and other demands had reached at least fifty campuses.²⁶

The first African American Studies department was achieved at San Francisco State College between November, 1968 and March, 1969. George M. Murray, a member of the Black Panther Party had been hired at San Francisco State University, but was fired September 29, 1968. In November 1968, led by the Black Student Union and the Third World Liberation Front, students at San Francisco State College went on strike to demand a Black Studies and Ethnic Studies Departments, among other demands. Dr. Nathan Hare became the first chairman of the Black Studies Department.²⁷

Between 1967 and 1975 inner city youth were recruited en masse into white colleges and universities in a hope to develop a buffer group to delude the movement in the community. As African American students came into a hostile, racist environment on these campuses, they began to demand Black Studies programs or departments among other issues. Between 1968 and 1971, over 500 programs, departments and institutes were organized around Black Studies.

23 Father Paul M. Washington, *The Autobiography of Father Paul M. Washington* [Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994], pp. 62–70

24 V. P. Franklin, “Black High School Student Activism in the 1960s: An Urban Phenomenon?” *Journal of Research in Education*, Fall 2000, Volume 10, No. 1, pp. 3–8

25 Nolieve M. Rooks, *White Money, Black Power*, [Boston: Beacon Press, 2006] p. 17

26 *Ibid.*, p. 17

27 *Op. Cit.* (Ahmad), p. 157

As Black Studies departments became institutionalized, the Ford Foundation made attempts to steer the departments away from the African American community and protest. They felt that these efforts, funding the Stokes campaign in Cleveland, Ohio in 1967, and the community control of Ocean Hill-Brownsville, created and developed community insurgency. So the Ford Foundation wanted Black Studies to be devoid of any kind of community development. Cecil Brown in *Dude, Where's My Black Studies Department?* states:

When the first wave of support for Black Studies began, it used the idea of community issues as its foundational tenet; the idea was to create academic departments that could transcend the ivory tower and engage with community in a real, regular and practical way.²⁸

As African American revolutionary organizations, i.e. SNCC, (Student Nonviolent Organizing Committee); RAM, (Revolutionary Action Movement); BPP, (Black Panther Party); and the LRBW, (League of Revolutionary Black Workers reached a crisis, from under-funding, increased repression, organizational contradictions, and dissolved; African American students were left without non-traditional organizational bases to relate to. African American elected officials began to rise as new spokespersons for African American communities. Between the late 1970s and 1980s, Black Studies departments concentrated on producing a body of scholarly research to stabilize the discipline. Simultaneously, the deindustrialization of America was occurring where blue-collar (industry) livable wage-paying jobs were leaving the cities for cheaper labor abroad. African Americans who didn't go to college/university were rendered into narcotics consumers or pushers. This resulted in a 20–30 year increase of an incarcerated, semi-slave African American proletariat of two million, as prisons were privatized. A class-divide increased in the African American community.

Starting in the 1990s, a shift away from solving the problems in the African American communities took a new institutional turn as American universities began to globalize.

....during the nineties a new black intelligentsia became an American expansion team, much on the order of those blacks who flooded professional sports, independent filmmaking, electoral politics, and popular

28 *Op. Cit.*, (Brown) p. 33

culture. The emergent black intelligentsia's members materialized as fresh faces in the big leagues of American public opinion.²⁹

Universities, in order to make more capital, began recruiting more and more international students. Often immigrant students of color began to replace indigenous African American students from local communities who usually raised community demands. The “great” diversification of universities was actually globalization of the university, which increased gentrification of local communities by the universities. The change in the content of Black Studies began to coincide with this development.

Enter the New Black Public Intellectuals

Since the late 1980s and the 1990s a trend has developed within Black Studies to deny class differences and internal class struggle within communities of persons of African descent wherever they may reside. As Afro-centrism became the new paradigm more emphasis was placed on a romanticization of the ancient past and less emphasis on solving the problems that African Americans face today. W. D. Wright, in *Crisis of the Black Intellectual* states:

The Afro-centric analysis reestablishes the centrality of the ancient Kemetic (Egyptian) civilization and the Nile Valley cultural complex as points of reference for an African perspective in much the same way as Greece and Rome serve as reference points for the European world. Thus, the Afro-centrist expands human history by creating a new path for interpretation.³⁰

W. D. Wright says the only problem is that the Afro-centric paradigm is static:

African-centrism (or as some say Afro-centrism) is an absolutist term, fostering essentialism, either-or thinking, singular thought, singular analyses, and errant views.³¹

It is hoped, that as we turn into the mid-2000s, African American public intellectuals, and Black Studies departments return to their original purpose of giving

29 Houston A. Baker, Jr., *Betrayal: How Black Intellectuals Have Abandoned the ideals of the Civil Rights Era*, [New York: Columbia University Press, 2008], p. 79

30 W. D. Wright, *Crisis of the Black Intellectual*, [Chicago: Third World Press, 2007], p. 104

31 *Ibid*, p. 107

prescriptive analysis and solutions for the African American community and produce a progressive Black Intelligentsia.

Intelligentsias should always avoid adventurism, and jumping ahead of the people. To prevent this from happening, it must organize cadres among the people keeping the core made up of the stable element of the working class. In order to insure continuous growth, the movement must have a strong youth movement. It must train the next generation in the movement. In this way, if the leader or leadership is destroyed, the movement will continue. To insure continuous leadership, the masses must be trained in developing a critical analysis, and pedagogy of self-reliance.

Revolutionary training of the masses through a series of class struggles (battles), is the major concern for the intelligentsia. The masses learn more about the system through active engagement in class struggle than through years of academic study. Though the intelligentsia may find themselves in the minority and their concepts unpopular in the present, they must weather the storm. The intelligentsia should be constantly organizing and mobilizing the masses around the small victories of the “issues” that affect them until the people understand the need to struggle for socialism.

The Black Intelligentsia must build a nation of political scientists. Political science is the central theme of social movements. As a neo-colonized intelligentsia, their first objective is the masses having a clear understanding of the underpinnings of contemporary society. A people’s movement cannot be totally successful without a revolutionary political theory. In order to seize power, the control of the state, and maintain control of the political state, the people must be thoroughly knowledgeable about defending the political theory (socialism) of the movement through class struggle.

If the masses do not have an understanding of the intelligentsia’s ideology, or the intelligentsia fails to meet the people’s material needs, they can be tricked out of power through diversionary tactics and re-colonized in a different form. Without knowing the political theory of socialism, the masses won’t know how to make correct decisions in the struggle for political power. If the masses embrace the theory of the movement because the intelligentsia is one with them, nothing will stop them for they will fight and give their lives for the movement.

This article was first written in December, 1967

Rewritten: September 3, 1991

Updated: October 27, 2008