Where Do We Go From Here?

MXGM Detroit Chapter - 2019 Kwanzaa Celebration

By Any Means Necessary
“We celebrate the work of MXGM in this unprecedented year of 2020 by showcasing flyers from our events throughout this issue”
# TABLE OF CONTENTS:

**Section 1: Editorial**

Trump is Defeated: Where do we go from here?  
Makungu M. Akinyela  
4 - 8

**Section 2: International**

Pan-African Federalist Movement and The Challenge of the Unified Afrikan State Reality:  
The Elephant in the Room  
kwame-osagyefo kalimara  
9 - 13

**Section 3: Political Prisoners & Prisoners of War**

Jalil Muntaqim: The Struggle Continues  
Nyeusi Jami  
13 - 14

#FreeJoshWilliams  
Nyeusi Jami  
14 - 16

**Section 4: Culture**

Locked In  
Athena Gainey  
16 - 19

2020 MXGM Highlights  
Dr. Ifetayo Flannery  
21-22

Vita Wa Watu  
The Black Internationalist  
23 - 24

**Section 5: Notes on Revolutionary Theory & Practice**

Return of the Living Dead: Oliver C. Cox, Internal Neo-Colonialism, and the Conceptual Fallacies of Isabel Wilkerson’s *Caste*  
Gus Wood  
26 - 31
Section 1: Editorial

Trump is Defeated: Where do we go from here?

Makungu M. Akinyela

Four years ago, as the US entered its election season for their presidential election, MXGM / NAPO took a stand on the presidential election and declared that the greatest immediate threat to our peoples struggle for self-determination at that time was the impending victory of Donald Trump to the presidency and the entrenchment of Trumpist fascism as the governing power over the US settler state. At that time, we took the unpopular position that defeating Trump was the important tactical question of the day even if it meant voting for the Democratic candidate at that time Hillary Clinton. Other revolutionary nationalists as well as social left movements also took that position although many movement groups wrongly took what we believe was a left wing and ultra nationalist error position that it did not matter which candidate won the presidential election, since both candidates ultimately represented the settler colonial state and neo-liberal capitalist interests.

After four years of Donald Trump and an increasingly fascist build up which sharpened the threat of white terrorist violence by both police, military and paramilitary forces against our people, supported by an openly white supremacist fascist government, rising unemployment of Black workers going into the double digits, increased poverty and hunger, decreased support for housing, health and education as well as a growing health crisis and pandemic which has killed over 300,000 people to date of which 25 percent are African people, it is clear that our warning of the dangers of a rising fascism in the US was correct and that Trumpist fascism must be defeated.

A broad multi-ethnic front including revolutionary nationalists, anti-racist leftists, liberals and neo-liberal conservatives united to defeat Donald Trump and end his attempt to impose a fascist dictatorship on the already oppressed nations and communities of the USA settler colony. And while as of this writing Trump has yet to admit defeat, it is clear that an overwhelming majority of the multi-ethnic people in the US have rejected him. At the same time, it is important to note that fifty-five percent of the white people in this country voted for him and continue to support him. This means that while Trump has been defeated, Trumpist fascism remains a present threat to the liberation of all the people of the US empire and to the self-determination of the Black Nation (New Afrikans) in particular. This leaves us with the question, With the defeat of Trump but the ongoing threat of fascism, “Where do we go from here?”
LOOKING AHEAD TO 2021

The fascist threat forced our people and other oppressed people into a tactical alliance with those who are not our friends. While we voted to defeat Trump, we have no illusions that the Democratic candidate Joe Biden, or any of the neo-liberal representatives of that party is a friend to the Black Nation. This includes the Black neo-liberals such as Congressman Jim Clyburn, Vice President Elect Kamala Harris, or former President Barack Obama. This may be difficult for some of our people to imagine we know, because representation is such an important ingredient of the illusion of the American dream, the folk axiom that “all skin folk ain’t kinfolk” holds true in this situation.

The interest of the Neo-liberals was not to defeat Trump because of the danger he represented to our survival, but because he had sidetracked their ambitions for global capitalist wealth building. Already, Biden, Harris, Obama and the other neo-liberal democrats are trying to convince the people that they have to welcome the Trump fascists back into the “American fold.” This is the same kind of mess the US government pulled after the American Civil War when they welcomed white supremacist Confederates back as their brothers while they sold our people out to Jim Crow!

The Trump fascist threat remains as armed white militias continue to grow and prepare for what they call “The Boogaloo” or second civil war which they tried so hard to instigate during the mass demonstrations against white police terror in cities where white supremacists infiltrated demonstrations and started fires, looted and shot police to place the blame on Black people. This threat remains with us and is real even once Trump leaves office.

Meanwhile the Democratic party is preparing to take its old place of control of the colonized Black nation. Already, they are using Black neo-liberals like Jim Clyburn (who was used to sell Joe Biden) to rewrite history and blame the rollbacks of the Black Power era and reversals of victories of that time on the mass chant of “burn baby burn” which was never a policy but a mass outcry in the 1960s as Black youth fought back against racist police in urban uprisings around the USA. Clyburn and Obama are being used as Negro-Splainers to connect this popular resistance outcry to the current demand to defund the police which unlike “burn baby burn” is attached to a program to redistribute funds used for police militarization so those funds can be used for humane non-violent programs to service the community.

Yet, Clyburn, Biden, Obama, Harris and the rest of the Democratic neo-liberal right wing is working overtime to charge that the popular demand to defund the police resulted in democratic congressional losses during the election. They fail to tell people that the only
congressional candidates who lost during this election cycle were those who distanced themselves from the demand to defund the police.

This quick turn to the right by the Negro-Splainers makes it clear that we can have little faith in the Democratic party to fulfill any of the demands that are really important to Black people on their own, despite Joe Bidens hypocritical pledge to pay his debt to black voters. He says this because he is confident that he will have the Negro-Splainers on hand to make sure that the demands of Black people are never allowed to become too radical. Health care for all? No
chance. Debt relief for college loans? Not likely. An end to militarized police forces focused on occupying the Black and Brown communities? Don’t hold your breath. And if these simple things cannot be relied on to be tackled by the neo-liberals there is no hope that the Negro-Splainers will freely allow real conversations of a Red-Black and Green New Deal to reorganize the economy. And certainly, there will be no conversation about Reparations and Self-Determination to be had even though these were highly popular issues during the presidential debates.

US Democracy is a Paper Tiger

The past four years of Trumpist fascism and then the onslaught of the CORONA Virus has uncovered the dirty secret that American Democracy is a paper tiger. We cannot depend on the system to save us if the system can be disrupted and changed anytime someone is elected over it who is willing to not play along as Donald Trump proved. American Democracy is an illusion, and it is clear that it cannot and will not protect the interest of Black, Brown and other oppressed people. We must protect and liberate ourselves with people’s democracy. A democracy that comes from the grassroots and speaks truth to power! This is the lesson of the past four years and it is the lesson that will take us into 2021 and forward to a liberated future. Forward the Revolution!

The coming year 2021 MXGM / NAPO calls on our people to move from the tactical alliance, which was necessary to defeat Trumpist fascism, to the strategic alliances with other revolutionary Black nationalist groups, Progressive, and Left Black organizations who share our value for self-determination as the right for Black people to map out our own political destiny and choice. This calls for a 21st century Black Power and Unification Movement bringing together the broadest segment of our people as possible to challenge the attempts by the neo-liberals to minimize our just demands for freedom, democracy and power.

Our strategic alliances must also reach out to our LatinX sisters and brothers and First Nations (Native) peoples, Asian and other oppressed peoples to work for our common interests for self-determination and democracy for our peoples. We have to work harder on creating the Rainbow Coalition envisioned by Chairman Fred Hampton of the Black Panther Party to defeat white supremacy, patriarchy and capitalist oppression of our peoples. And while we know that a majority of white people in this country voted for and support Donald Trump even if they don’t directly support fascism, we will also work to build a strategic alliance with those anti-racist whites who have a vision for a better more democratic world.

We believe this strategic alliance of liberation movements and their supporters will need to organize to challenge the US government and demand a dismantling of the structures of white supremacy which enable our oppression. These include the economic, police/military, social/cultural, and governmental structures which undergird systemic racism and settler
colonialism. We will need to organize continuously as we have done before for electoral political power with a focus on winning local electoral victories. We will also need to organize to defend our communities against attack whether from state sanctioned police or paramilitary forces. We will need to organize people’s self-defense. We will also need to unite with movements to challenge economic oppression through building people’s co-ops and economic alternatives to capitalist exploitation, as well as by organizing with workers for higher wages and more humane working conditions. We will have to engage in fights for housing and healthcare. We will have to fight to eradicate food deserts and build neighborhood gardens that can feed communities. These and other struggles will unite us and remold us into community.

Yes, Fam, 2020 has been a difficult year. The most difficult of the past four years, but we are still standing as a people! The coming period remains difficult even with the defeat of Trump, as thousands are still being impacted by the COVID-19 virus directly or by the economic, emotional or social impact of the disease on our communities. Even as we write this a vaccine which will be available for mass distribution may still be months away, perhaps as far as into the end of 2021. This means that we will need to be creative in our organizing as we build the resistance to the new neo-liberal government and the Negro-splainers representing it. We will need to discover ways to both resist and be noticed and keep our people healthy and well. We will need to stay fit and prepared to be in the street when necessary and to defend our communities when necessary. The Malcolm X Grassroots Movement and the New Afrikan People’s Organization are anxious to unite with our people and with all of the freedom focused people around the empire to build a movement to push the struggle for Self-Determination forward! In the words of our comrade and imprisoned freedom fighter Dr. Mutulu Shakur we say “STIFF RESISTANCE”!

By Any Means Necessary
Section 2: International

Pan-African Federalist Movement and The Challenge of the Unified Afrikan State Reality: The Elephant in the Room

_kwame-osagyefo kalimara_

“It is only when all Black groups, join hands and speak with one voice that we shall be a bargaining force which will decide its own destiny.”
_Winnie Madikizela-Mandela_

The Pan-African Federalist Movement’s (PAFM) heroes are the Honorable Marcus Mosiah Garvey and Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. These men both made valuable contributions in challenging the racial and colonial contradictions Afrikan peoples continue to experience. Garvey (the Universal Negro Improvement Association) built a mass movement in the 1920s with a global membership exceeding 4 million by conservative estimates. No other organization to date has come close to its enormity. Nkrumah led Ghana to its independence in 1957 and created theoretical analysis for our understanding of imperialism, neocolonialism to enable Afrikan people to deconstruct the systems of oppression and exploitation affecting Afrikan people.

Iconization has its advantages but also has challenges. What PAFM must do, as all formations must, is to be critical in their analysis of its icons and their programs of action. Overlooking either the theoretical and/or practical applications does not position the PAFM in the best posture strategically and tactically. How do we organize? Are our goals and objectives realistic as outlined? Will we create power which replicates the systems of oppression and exploitation to which we have been opposed to for centuries, or will we create something demonstratively better, an Afrikan egalitarian society? (Many traditional Afrikan societies were founded on principles of egalitarianism.) Will women continue to be relegated to the margins and not central to every aspect of human agency or have equal access? What are the successes and failures of Pan-Afrikan movements guiding us? As PAFM organizes is consensus decision making a consideration and realistic? These few questions are not exclusive to the building of the PAFM.

Garvey's influence was phenomenal. We know that his ideas impacted the National of Islam, Moorish Americans, Rastafari and the Black Power Movement. Both the Honorable
Elijah Muhammad and Noble Drew Ali were members of the UNIA. His call for Race First/pride resonated with the masses of New Afrikans (Blacks). Garvey was both a black nationalist (a Pan-African) and a capitalist. We know of Garvey’s controversial meeting/collaboration with the white supremacist Klu Klux Klan. Few knew of his contradiction with Cyril Briggs and the African Blood Brotherhood, black socialists.

We know of Garvey’s relationship with the Liberian government trusting to obtain land for settlement. The American Colonial Society in 1822 established a colony which became the independent nation of Liberia. What is less known is that the African emigration group reduced the indigenous Afrikan population to the lowest status of the nation. There is more to study, but the point is studying the contradictions so we will not replicate them in modern form. Garvey was elected President of the Provisional Government of Africa. The continent of Africa, the nations of Africa were not part of the decision process.

Nkrumah has provided additional important theoretical contributions. Did his declaring himself President of Ghana for life and a one-party state in 1964 contribute to the assassination attempts on his life and his exile? The Nkrumah government sought to reduce foreign dependence manufacturing among other things. Medical and educational services improved. Ultimately nearly all sectors of Ghanaian life successfully grew.

For the Ghanaian population Marxist ideology and its application is foreign. When its economy became challenged the demands Nkrumah made were problematic. It usurped elected and traditional authority. The traditional Chiefs (Kings) were either reduced or eliminated. Akan royalty, for example, existed for a thousand of years, embedded in its people.

An examination of Garvey and Nkrumah is complex. The purpose of this writing is to create critical conversations as PAFM builds for a united African state. We know of the use of the Bureau of Investigation (later the FBI) and CIA with respect to Garvey, and CIA with respect to Nkrumah, in their defeat, however the internal contradictions created ripe conditions. Additionally, patriarchy and male domination were present in the formations of Garvey and Nkrumah. The mere existence of women’s formations is insufficient to support the position that women must have equal status in all sectors of community and governance. Garvey had the Black Cross Nurses. Amy Ashwood was the General Secretary of the UNIA. Insufficient. Nkrumah passed laws creating special positions in parliament for women. A few were in the Convention People's Party (CPP) Central Committee and attended universities. A start, but it was still secondary to the elevation of women. Ghana’s leading woman nationalist in the struggle for independence from British colonial rule was Hannah Kudjoe. Where is the record of her service? She generally disappears from Ghanaian history after Nkrumah’s overthrow.
PAFM argues that the organizing is “bottom up.” SNCC’s Ella Baker’s approach to leadership must be evidenced. She was very critical of professional and charismatic leadership. Baker promoted grassroots leadership (local), organizing and radical democracy in the civil rights movement. Baker said “my theory is, strong people don't need strong leaders.” She also criticized the sexism within the Civil Rights movement.

The work in which PAFM has sought for itself is daunting, African Political Unification and Sovereignty within one generation or less. The continent of Afrika has 54 Afrikan nations. There are over 3,000 different ethnic groups/communities who speak more than 2,100 different languages. With respect to religious and spiritual systems Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Hinduism is present. Afrikan traditional religions are specific to their ethnic identity. The diversity of Afrika must be included in the PAFM analysis and strategy.

The unification of Afrika is vital to the survival, growth, and development of Afrikan people globally. PAFM acknowledges this! However, PAFM must build continental Afrikan work supporting itself as We collectively raise and struggle through decolonializing of our relationships with colonial and imperialist nations, recognizing that although the effects of colonialism and enslavement is the same, their colonizing strategies differed and We must take that into account.

PAFM, last but not least, must also examine the forms of governance in which it envisions is best suited for Afrikan people, even its own structure. Many are comfortable with European models. PAFM must be revolutionary, not be romantic. Silence or ignoring these issues does not give direction.

One of the truest tests of integrity is its blunt refusal to be compromised.
Chinua Achebe

The seeds of success in every nation on Earth are best planted in women and children.
Joyce Banda

Ancestral blessings. Free the Land!!!
Pan-African Federalist Movement and The Challenge of the Unified Afrika

_kwame-osagyefo kalimara_

The above position paper was written as a result of unanswered questions after a review of website materials, PAFM chat and conversations with North American PAFM membership. I moderated a few of the PAFM workshops and on the last day of its convention I conducted libation. The featured speakers of the North American convention (October 15 – 19, 20204) were Malaak Shabazz (daughter of Dr. Betty Shabazz & Malcolm X), Joseph Beasley (Operation Push with Rev. Jessie Jackson), Prof. Runoko Rashidi (historian), A. Peter Bailey (journalist & member of OAAU and youth friend of Malcolm X), Attorney Nkechi Taifa (activist in the New Afrikan Independence Movement), and Dr. Leonard Jeffries, Jr. (historian). Workshop focuses and themes were the 100th Anniversary of the 1st of African People of the World, the 50th Anniversary of the Congress of African People, 25th Anniversary of the Million Man March, Reflection on The Million Women's March, Restoring Our Relationship with Our Motherland, Reciprocating the Return - Bridging the Gulf, and Reconciliation and Full Reintegration. On December 8 – 13, 2020 the PAFM held its Annual International Convention. Representatives from Afrika, the Americas and Europe were present. Convention outcomes will be reported in a subsequent BAMN issue.

References:
John Henrik Clarke, _Africans at the Crossroads : Notes for an African World Revolution_

Colin Grant. 2010. _Negro with a Hat: The Rise and Fall of Marcus Garvey_

Tony Martin. 1983. _Marcus Garvey, Hero: A First Biography - Volume 1_

Tony Martin. 1986. _Race First: The Ideological and Organizational Struggles of Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association_

June Milne. 1999. _Kwame Nkrumah: A Biography_

Section 3: Political Prisoners & Prisoners of War

Jalil Muntaqim: The Struggle Continues

_Nyeusi Jami_

On October 7th, people around the world celebrated Jalil Muntaqim’s release from prison on parole after nearly fifty years of captivity. This came after his 14th hearing before the New York State Parole Board. Jalil entered prison as a 19-year-old and walked out as a 69-year-old great grandfather. He contracted Covid-19 in May and is still recovering from the effects of that illness.

On October 30th, Monroe County District Attorney Sandra Doorley issued an arrest warrant for Jalil Muntaqim on charges of voter fraud. Jalil’s parole officer gave him a stack of paperwork to fill out which included a voter registration form. The chairman of the local republican party in Monroe County, Bill Napier, circulated a petition to have Jalil prosecuted for voter fraud because it is illegal for felons to register to vote in New York. Jalil was arrested, and has since been released, but is charged with two felonies. This is clearly an example of entrapment. Why would the parole officer encourage a parolee to do something that was illegal?
Jalil Muntaqim had an exemplary prison record. He earned multiple college degrees and did organizing work within the prison to keep the peace and avert prison riots. It took fourteen trips to the parole board to finally win his release because of the same kind of right-wing pressure on elected officials that Bill Napier is exhibiting right now.

The community is being asked to voice support for these charges to be dropped and for the harassment against our beloved elders to stop.

Jalil Muntaqim is a co-founder of the National Jericho Movement to Free All Political Prisoners. While in prison Jalil called for the establishment of the “In The Spirit of Mandela” Coalition. That coalition is organizing to have an International Tribunal in October 2021 addressing the United States’ violation of the human rights of those who are held in this country as political prisoners.

Here is where you can sign the petition to support Jalil: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdW2zfSqUm28Xk7BbUi2gicD-YwAcbwfvI3vG3ToOdyiYeXDw/viewform

#FREEJOSHWILLIAMS

Nyeusi Jami

Photo credit: www.freejoshwilliams.com
On August 9, 2014, Michael Brown was killed by Darren Wilson in Ferguson, a municipality in north St. Louis County. As his body lay on the ground in the Canfield Green Apartments, a crowd of people began to form, demanding justice for his murder. That began an uprising that lasted for more than a year with people being on the streets everyday. The day after Mike was killed, one of the people who showed up to protest was Josh Williams. Josh was 18 years old at the time, the same age as Mike.

Josh became a familiar face among the Ferguson protesters. He was well-known and well-liked among those who were part of the ongoing uprising. On Christmas Eve 2014, 18-year-old Antonio Martin was killed by a cop in Berkeley, another municipality in St. Louis County. Josh Williams was hurt and angered all over again by Antonio’s death. Soon after, he was arrested for stealing a bag of chips and lighting a QuikTrip trash can on fire during a protest. Josh was easily identifiable on camera footage by the red hoodie he frequently wore to protests, a gift from a teen whose mother had been killed by police.

Josh pled guilty to counts of arson and burglary, and was sentenced to 8 years in prison. He was 18 years old, with no criminal history. In an interview with GQ earlier this year, Josh said:

“It’s a decision I made, to make for my own people, that got me here. When I first hit Ferguson, that’s when my decision started. I told myself: ‘I’m not going to leave until something changes. And if it’s not going to change, then I’m going to still be out there, you know?’”

Josh is still committed to the struggle even after six years in prison. He publishes statements in support of the movement on the website dedicated to providing information about his quest for freedom. Fellow Ferguson protesters, including Missouri State Rep. Bruce Franks, have been working to get his sentence commuted or pardoned for years. Those efforts have not borne fruit as of yet.

Josh was scheduled to go before the parole board in September 2020. At this time, we have been unable to obtain an update on whether that hearing happened and if a decision has been given. When he gets out, Josh plans to work with youth programs around St. Louis, helping teens to navigate the streets and avoid going to prison. He wants the lessons of his still young life to serve as examples of what to do and also what not to do.

Josh can receive letters of support at: Joshua Williams #1292002
Potosi Correctional Center
11593 State Highway O
Mineral Point, MO 63660
Section 4: Culture

Locked In

Athena Gainey

Where do we go from the revolution? We go forward, as we always have. We are resilient strong black beings. We stride through snow, sand, rejection letters, bloody glass, and bullet shells. We go forward in peace. We bring ourselves to the gravity center, we take care of our own, we grow, adapt, reconnect, transform and persevere. We burnout and revitalize through God, Allah, Moon crystals, and faith in the promised freedom. We rest, we move, we fight, we repeat.

“The first outfit makes you look like a hoochie, but the second one- I don’t know it gives me butler vibes as she searches her closet for the right kind of business casual.” Her brother Zion’s comments helped, but whose mama gave him permission to call her a hoochie? He rolled his eyes and chuckled. “We both know what those corporate men are,” unspoken but well-known fact. “The slits in the skirt are too much. Too much chest to change! Better to be a butler.” She saw it in the mirror, the look. He side-eyed her naked feet and half painted blue toes, praying that she would wear boots. “Are you going to wear heals?” He asked instead. “I’m 5’ 10” do I really need the height and the high bun?” He smiled approval and walked downstairs to get a breakfast smoothie and pancakes. She walked after him but only went for a breakfast bar.

Jack greeted them at the steps, greetings full of good mornings and excitement of the family gathering making its way to the kitchen, where his treats were. He meowed his demands whenever we walked past the counter littered with Temptations salmon flavors packets.
Her headphones are loud, not to tone out the cat, but because she enjoyed the bass in her soul. She imagined it was like a human purr. Grey eyes closed, she began to drum on her chest, down the hallways, on the breakfast table, then the cabinets. “Ba-Da -Ba-Da Pat. Somebody said it saves lives. Who Holds my hand tonight, I think my glass is half full? Who brings me back to Englewood? I Shouldn’t Bleed this good-” He was glaring now. She reached for the bar in the cabinet and turned heel.

“My bad, I love that bar. There’s stew in that pot, don’t skip lunch again! we're getting our weight up remember! Noname speaketh the truth dear brother, give her a chance! Anyway, butler it is.” She stammered upstairs without daring to look at the confused response that stared at her back anyway. Okay, 7:32, just light makeup and a triple check of necessities. She kept on the black slacks, white button up in black silk trim, and the texas tie. She tied her hair in a side bun in the mirror Grabbed her keys from the door’s basket, and double checked her list.

1. Resume
2. Copy of Resume
3. Laptop with uploaded portfolio
4. Keys
5. Wallet
6. Mask

Her second interview of the weeks, a good sign her dad encouraged. She wasn’t so sure about this one, she only hoped it wouldn’t show in her face in the interview.

The car engine turned at the same time her phone rang. “Ha! Put some red berets in your locs and you’d be Canary!” The anime references always made her smile, but it didn’t curb the anxiety as much as Mallard intended. “They’re called ballies!” Jalen rolled his eyes. “Look, you passed that bar, you’ve been volunteering an ungodly amount of time at that non-profit place. As long as you did your research on the firm and you don’t reek like a Rastafarian beach you should be fine!” Only Semi laughed. Mikey never knew the right time to mention what and just vomited advice sometimes. She would have looked at him and rolled her eyes if they weren’t on the road. “Are you really going to commute an hour? During rush hour?” Mallard turned motherly best friend tone, so her friend’s attitude softened. “Well the move is happening at some point, might as well get the job close by right?” She was only a megaphone for her father’s words half the time. Her heart raced at the thought. She eased her mind, but not her own. Where did the truth lie, because Eaglesville was definitely not an affordable area of Pennsylvania.
“America the great… Apple pie on Sunday morning, Hallelujah, Amen! ...Darkness ‘wakens in the wake of Slavery. Lots of Prison, A New Religion. Amen Amen!”

Her research always comes to mind at that bar. Her cases came to mind too. She hated when the cell came to mind. Disassociation. The road would tunnel into a side video in the view of her memories. Some tucked away mistakes, some red stains of ripped jeans, a roll of crumble twenties and her grandmother’s medical bills. “Ta-da Tatata-da” She drummed back into focus.

“Well, What’s the worst that could happen,” She hung up.

She listened to the album three times by the time she reached the office. “your resume to industry, sympathy held you down- don’t doubt we love you-“ She cut off the car. She breathed. 118 bpm, she counts. She breathed again. 9:55, she walked out of the car.

Waiting sucked, that’s why she hated being on time. “Don’t give them the opportunity to stereotype,” her Mom-Mom said. “Minimum five minutes early.” She greeted the woman behind the counter and waited next to what she would find to be the only other woman she would see in the office. She waited for her to speak. She watched her and waited for a sign. The receptionist glanced at her iPhone, her underlined notes, to the interviewee, to the door, and back to her phone. The interviewing lawyer watched the receptionist's visual cycle from her peripheral, curious for clues about how she was fairing in her position, in her Blackness, in her office, her woman-ness. The applying lawyer saw no such signs. The receptionist seemed uninterested or impartial to give a clue at the least. She would ask. “So how do you enjoy it here?” She popped her gum and muttered something about being fine, but in surprise that they were in the office with everything going on. She questioned their concern over employee safety. She was not wearing a mask. He arrived ten minutes late. The lawyer applicant thought how grateful she was to have come early, but remembering the dread of leaving the warm blankets, jumbo bonnet and morning sunlight shining through curtains. “Ms. Williams? It’s so nice to meet you”

Waiting was always the worst part. The debt was climbing, the economy suffering, the earth in chaos and ruin. Waiting for things to get worse. Purgatory in repetition of escalating calamities, casualties and geographic Quirrell. Homefront gorilla warfare, policeman the militia desecrating its own citizens. Equity of protection, equity persecution.

“I hope you make it home, I hope to god that my telly gon’ ring.”

She came to her wine five days later while preparing to write her follow up letter. She reads some emails first with her brother’s distractive conversation in the background and distracted by dreams of future endeavors. She sees, for a moment, beyond the virus and the unemployment trifles. “We regret to inform you that you do not meet the qualification for the Associate Attorney Position…” She doesn’t read on, but she noticed her brother looking over her
shoulder, or at her shoulder. He moved swiftly to make his sister a chai with cream and he lit the sage after, “Do you think it was the locs?”

“No” the unemployed replied,

She rolled her sleeves to her elbows, though they were not in the way. Her marble notebook lay open with Chartwell Law Office crossed from the list. She reached for a business card from the plastic organizer. She pulled the one from the Equal Justice Initiative. “Good Morning Kathy, Thank you for taking my call. I wanted to speak with you about junior internships at EJI?
2020 MXGM Highlights

Dr. Ifetayo Flannery
By Any Means Necessary
Vita Wa Watu

The Black Internationalist

Yea let us sing the song of our ancestors,
Let us make history our greatest weapon
Our hymn-- The struggles of Turner and Tubman
Our sword-- The legacy of the Black Panthers

Let us recall Nat Turner’s Rebellion
How he flinched not at battle or martyrdom
And Tubman’s journeys to lead slaves to freedom
Our very own Moses, was a black woman

Remember the Panthers and how they did serve
The people through both their arms and their actions
They defended their kin and fed the children
And fought for the justice they knew We deserve

Vita Wa Watu was Turner’s fight
Vita Wa Watu- The Panther’s roar
Vita Wa Watu was Tubman’s light
Vita Wa Watu means People’s War

Yea let us weep for the state of our nation
Of Africa’s orphans, trapped in Babylon
As police and disease murder our children
And our youth become filled with indignation

Our parents struggle to raise their progeny
Falling in love with our dark hair and skin
Whilst fearing our lives will be brought to an end
By racist violence, sickness, or poverty

Our youth tire of being stalked by police,
Of being hungry, being hated, or jailed.
It is clear to them that the system has failed.
Their only option is to take to the street.

Vita Wa Watu is for our sick
Vita Wa Watu is for our poor
Vita Wa Watu is for our kids
Vita Wa Watu means People’s War

Yea let us ignite a war of the people
Let us fight for the whole of the black nation
Today We set fire to police stations
Tomorrow We stand in the world as equals

Minneapolis- the pigs’ precinct burned
Proof that united, We can beat the police
Only with justice will there ever be peace
A fact which We knew but our struggle confirmed

Many are saying revolution is near
If that’s the case we’ll rely on our people,
Serve them and shield them from Babylon’s evil
The path to liberation has become clear

Vita Wa Watu- the people’s will
Vita Wa Watu is freedom’s shore
Vita Wa Watu is how We’ll heal
Vita Wa Watu means People’s War
Educate to Liberate
KILOMBO
KilomboSchool.com

Host
PORTIA BRUNER
ANCHOR/REPORTER
FOX 5 ATLANTA
@PORTIAFOX5

FREE TO STREAM FROM 7:30 - 9:30PM EST
VIRTUAL FUNDRAISER

DEC 5th
Section 5: Notes on Revolutionary Theory & Practice

Return of the Living Dead: Oliver C. Cox, Internal Neo-Colonialism, and the Conceptual Fallacies of Isabel Wilkerson’s *Caste*

*Gus Wood*

“In the course of defining “Negro caste” we have defined “Negro race” and the final achievement is a substitution of words only…This is merely old wine in new bottles, and not infrequently the old ideas have suffered from rehandling.”- *Oliver C. Cox, Caste Class and Race* (1948)

“It seems that no matter how brutal and vicious the oppressor is, he has always had certain members of the oppressed to help carry out his policies of oppression, brutality, and racism.”


In his 1948 classic, *Caste, Class, and Race: A Study of Social Dynamics*, Marxist sociologist Oliver C. Cox successfully disputed the Modern Caste School of Race Relations’ argument that Blacks in the American South formed a subordinate “caste” to a superordinate Southern white caste where “marriage between two or more groups is not sanctioned” and that there was “no opportunity for members of the lower groups to rise into the upper groups” and vice versa. Using a metaphysical framework and generalizations of Hindu society, caste scholars like W. Lloyd Warner and Gunnar Myrdal stated that there exists “emotional instability of many [Blacks] in the subordinate caste” because “in his own personality, he [Blacks] feels the conflict of the two opposing structures and in the thinking and feeling of the members in both groups there is to be found this same conflict about his position…Although he is at the top of the Negro class hierarchy, he is constantly butting his head against the caste line.”[1] Cox shattered these notions with three points: 1) discrimination based on nationality, ethnicity, or religion from societies across the world differs greatly from a racially oppressive structure created during the Transatlantic Slave Trade, 2) interracial sexual relations and mixed-race children, who sometimes passed as white, demonstrated that racial positions are not as static as a caste system, and 3) interracial and intraracial class warfare and the temporal and spatial fluidity of the political economy meant that the African American sociohistorical experience was not static and caste is not an applicable framework for race.[2]
Despite Cox’s widely accepted arguments, African American journalist Isabel Wilkerson, with unbridled support from Black capitalists like Oprah Winfrey, attempted to resurrect the dubious caste debate over sixty years later. In her text, *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontent* (2020), Wilkerson seeks to substitute the term “race” with “caste” in the mainstream through discursive pseudo-intellectualism: “in the American caste system, the signal of rank, what we call race, the division of humans on the basis of their appearance…race is the primary tool and the visible decoy, the front man, for caste…America is a caste system that is as central to its operation as are the studs and joists that we cannot see in the physical buildings we call home.”[3]

This points to the most perplexing misfire in *Caste*: the reliance on an abstract metaphysical paradigm in the absence of any analysis of the sociohistorical realities of African Americans. Instead of grounding her caste argument in the deepening racial class divisions plaguing the majority of the Black population, including the neoliberalization/gentrification of Black metropolitan spaces, deindustrialization and the decline of livable wage, unionized, productive blue collar jobs, the skyrocketing cost of living and inflation juxtaposed against declining real wages, the increase in state sponsored and vigilante surveillance and violence against the African American working classes, and mass incarceration of African American men in the last quarter of the twentieth century, Wilkerson believes that by repeatedly stating how caste is the “wordless usher in a darkened theater” or “embeds in our bones an unconscious ranking of human characteristics” or “the invisible guide to how we process information,” she can avoid any scrutiny of her “evidence” or lack thereof. In fact, Wilkerson dedicates more pages to the presidential election of Donald Trump than to the social problems that caused Trump’s ascendency or to his policies that further exacerbated racial class crises for the Black poor. Her narrative treats Donald Trump’s *victory* as a new problem instead of treating his rise *and* victory as a worsening symptom of a structural problem for Black people. But are the Black masses really who Wilkerson seeks to centralize and defend here? It is not clear since she ends the Trump section in liberal fashion by defending the U.S. state, concluding that Trump “destroyed the world’s oldest and most powerful democracy.”

As with most discursive analyses, the abstract cannot be disproven since it has no grounding in the material reality. Therefore, pseudo-intellectual works like *Caste* attempt to float freely and gain popularity through the public sphere without any quantitative or qualitative data to support her analysis. Following in the buried footsteps of the Modern Caste School scholars, Wilkerson’s baseless caste framework attempts to erase the role of political economy, class warfare, and the Black bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie from racial oppression. For instance, Wilkerson’s introduction claims that caste is about power and resources, yet she spends no time investigating either. So how does caste depower Black people if it has no relationship to our material conditions? How does Wilkerson’s concept of internal feelings of inequality in people manifest externally as forms of domination in a caste structure? Simply put, her weak
methodology demonstrates that there is simply nothing of intellectual value here to understand what Wilkerson hopes to accomplish in *Caste*.

If Wilkerson had explored racial oppression more as a power dialectic of domination and resistance, it is clear that Black people in the United States are not oppressed through a metaphysically-based, fixed, invincible caste structure; rather, our lived material realities suggest an internal neo colonial relationship to the American capitalist structure. More clearly, as Black Studies scholar Robert Allen conceptualized and Black Studies scholar Sundiata Cha-Jua expanded, the proto-nationalist and radical elements of the Black Freedom Movement of the late 1960s and 1970s (among other global working class movements) forced capital to reconstruct a new racial formation: one which both weakened collective working-class organized protest and reconstituted capital accumulation through a global information and finance network. Capital accomplished this by creating a new Black middle class. These indirect rulers, the junior partners of capital, function as supervisory broker chiefs—they defuse racial conflict, offer token reform programs between white capital and the Black working classes, and transform policy and law in favor of the white ruling oligarchy.

As Allen articulated in his classic *Black Awakening in Capitalist America*, this new Black petty bourgeois class championed the conservative nationalist strata of the Black Power Movement. Black elected officials shifted the dominant mode of Black working class struggle away from collective movement action and community autonomy via two main tactics: they advocated for the self-contained pursuit of individual goals and manipulated Black nationalist sentiment to advance their political, economic, social, and cultural incorporation into the U.S. state. Black capitalists propagandized their individual wealth as evidence of American “progress” and advocated electoral politics as the sole strategy to “uplift the race” into full American incorporation with Black “race leaders” controlling local and state polity. With their newfound political power, Black mayors and city councilpersons in particular controlled over seventy percent of urban space in the United States by the late 1970s and simultaneously served the will of white capital and extended the wealth of the Black bourgeoisie. Pro-growth city governments led by Maynard Jackson and Andrew Young in Atlanta, Carl Stokes in Cleveland, and Coleman Young in Detroit crushed local radical political movements, championed private investment, and downplayed structural racism as a determinant in the social conditions of Black communities.[4]

Most crucially, these broker chiefs contributed to the demise of the Black Power Movement. They pushed symbolic racial representation in the State, abrogated class and gender struggle, and simultaneously exonerated and promoted capitalism. This strategy worked to disconnect the black working-class socioeconomic struggles of the Black Freedom Movement from a broader understanding of racial oppression. The Black leadership class also emphasized their individual incorporation into the American system as a positive result of the Civil Rights Movement. This prompted some active community residents to question (and in some cases,
denounce) militant tactics and radical ideology in protest movements. As they gained more influence in the twenty-first century through their pro-growth economic policies, Black leadership figures like Barack Obama promoted both racial colorblindness and pathological arguments against working class Blacks to exonerate the American structure from blame for anti-Black poor oppression. By championing poverty and inequality as personal weakness and failure, the bourgeois and petty bourgeois power structures in urban spaces like Atlanta normalized the irrationality of collective movements and the rationality of supervisory, bureaucratic, individualized, regressive solutions to racialized poverty such as non-profit corporations and symbolic diversity. In the midst of the George Floyd protest wave of Summer 2020, corporations like Amazon, Wal-Mart, the NFL, the NBA, and every major television network issued symbolic diversity statements or donations in support of non-profit initiatives for “raising awareness” or “ending racism” without any genuine platform to do so. Corporate liberal support for abstract diversity consciously condemns grassroots organized collective protest, especially with Black faces at the helm of these companies securing millions of dollars for neocolonial projects like gentrification instead of delivering them directly to the Black working classes who need them.

This neo-colonial relationship compares to what African Marxists dubbed Colonialism of a Special Type. According to the South African Community Party, Colonialism of a Special Type refers to a “variant of capitalist rule in which essential features of colonial domination” against the overwhelming black majority, including poverty, super-exploitation, complete denial of basic human rights, and political domination, function through class struggles in both the white ruling class and the Black majority. Similar to bourgeois and petty bourgeois infiltration of the Bantustan administrations, community councils, management committees, and tricameral parliament in late 1980s and 1990s South Africa, the Black bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie in the United States seized control of subordinate bureaucratic apparatuses to both align themselves with the ruling class against the interests of the Black working classes and accumulate surplus profits. Wilkerson’s narrative treats these complex relationships as non-existent and attempts the liberal exercise of homogenizing Black people in the U.S. as one monolithic victim of white racism—an inaccurate diagnosis of racial oppression in the United States.

When Wilkerson does engage some form of scholarly inquiry, she either regurgitates a brief summary of the failed comparative analysis between American racism and Hindu society from the Modern Caste School of Thought or proposes a grossly inaccurate juxtaposition between African Americans and the German Jewish population under Nazi rule. Because of Wilkerson’s scholarly laziness, readers are left with a five-page chapter asserting how racism in America is similar to Nazi fascism and Hindu society simply because of “the human impulse to create hierarchies” without any legitimate evidence. As Oliver C. Cox proved, the Indian caste system was fluid because it was linked directly to occupations and the political economy.
Therefore, Wilkerson’s lack of any attention to the political economy of Black America demonstrates that her supposed contribution was to simply replace the term “race” with “caste.”

Considering that Nazis and the British imperialists colonized multiple spaces (the latter brutalizing the very Indian masses that Wilkerson neglects from their own history), it is very disturbing that colonialism and subjugation do not appear anywhere in Caste. I argue that it’s a deliberate omission because it shields Wilkerson’s lack of inquiry into the Indian caste structure and upholds her petty bourgeois class position as a defender of bourgeois liberalism. Such nonsensical comparisons are not only ahistorical, but deeply dangerous. Like Ta-Nehisi Coates’ Between the World and Me, Caste expunges collective resistance from the narrative and espouses on Wilkerson’s petty instances of her own individual struggles with racial microaggressions on airplanes and bourgeois restaurants. This situates Caste among the many Afro-pessimism works today that promote oppression and inequality against African Americans as an undying and undefeatable foundation of human life. This ahistorical misconception neglects the fact that the dialectical relationship between African American working-class resistance and racial oppression is the primary determinant in the New Afrikan experience. Thus, collective resistance must be at the center of any analysis of Black people.

It is not a coincidence that Caste is being promoted as a “masterpiece” by ruling class liberal media like The New York Times during one of the most heightened periods of anti-Black racial terrorism in U.S. history. Wilkerson’s ill-equipped resurrection of the dead caste argument is an insult to both the legacy of Oliver C. Cox and the ongoing racial struggles that the Black working classes face daily against fascist terrorism, capitalist exploitation, political subjugation, and social humiliation. Scholarship and Black social movement organizations must conceptualize the African American experience through an internal neocolonial framework that centralizes the Black political economy to accurately depict our conditions for our struggle for liberation. It is our responsibility as revolutionary organizers and scholars to not only cement the grave of the zombie Caste School of Thought for good, but to also cement intraracial class warfare and the internal neocolonial thesis as our guiding framework moving forward. Oliver C. Cox would be proud.


MXGM
BAMN NEWS

Call for Submissions to our CULTURE SECTION of the BAMN Newsletter December 2020!
We are accepting revolutionary poetry, art, short stories, etc.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE
November 1, 2020

Please email your submission as a word document to:
BAMN NEWS Chief Editor makungu@protonmail.com

Check out former issues at: freethelandmxgm.org