Unfinished Migrations: Reflections on the African Diaspora and the Making of the Modern World

Tiffany Ruby Patterson and Robin D. G. Kelley

Abstract: This article engages the very definition/meaning of diaspora as a concept at a moment when scholars are rushing to embrace the field of diaspora studies. Much of the current discussion continues to suggest that diaspora is merely a logical manifestation of dispersion, no matter how the diaspora was created or how long it had been in existence. This essay argues that linkages that tie the diaspora together must be articulated and are not inevitable, and that the diaspora is both process and condition. As a process it is always in the making, and as condition it is situated within global race and gender hierarchies. However, just as the diaspora is made, it can be unmade, and thus scholars must explore the moments of its unmaking. Indeed, the efforts to unravel the constituent elements of the diaspora(s) raise significant questions concerning how Africa is conceptualized in relation to its diaspora. These efforts also underscore the need to examine overlapping diasporas from many historical locations.

Résumé: Cet article explore la définition et le sens même de diaspora en tant que concept à un moment où les chercheurs se pressent tous pour embrasser le domaine des études sur les diasporas. Une grande part des débats actuels continue à suggérer que la diaspora est tout simplement une manifestation logique de la dispersion, qu'importe la manière dont cette diaspora ait été créée ou depuis combien de temps elle existe. Cet article tente de démontrer que les relations qui lient la

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diaspora doivent s'articuler et ne sont pas inévitables, et que la diaspora est à la fois processus et condition. En tant que processus, elle est sans arrêt en cours de formation, et en tant que condition, elle se situe à l'intérieur des hiérarchies globales de race et de sexe (ou "gender"). Cependant, tout comme la diaspora est faite, elle peut être défaite et les chercheurs doivent ainsi examiner les moments de son démantèlement. En effet, les efforts faits pour discerner les éléments constitutifs de la ou des diasporas soulèvent des questions importantes sur la façon dont l'Afrique est conceptualisée relativement à sa diaspora. Ces efforts mettent également en évidence le besoin d'examiner les diasporas en situation d'intersection provenant de nombreux emplacements dans l'histoire.

> The story of modernity is one of several unfinished migrations....
> —Mary Chamberlain

Notions of globalization are everywhere. More and more we read or hear about efforts to think "transnationally," to move beyond the limits of the nation-state, to think in terms of borderlands and diasporas. Indeed, seizing on the concept of a "black Atlantic," coined by Robert Farris Thompson and employed most recently by Paul Gilroy in his landmark text of the same name, several scholars have contributed to a rebirth of African diaspora studies.[1] Along with Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic* (1993), we have witnessed the recent appearance of several other texts exploring the African diaspora, including John Thornton's *Africa and Africans in the Making of the*

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eties, and the making of social identities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. She has a background in African and Caribbean history in the colonial and postcolonial eras and teaches courses with a diasporic and international framework. She is currently writing a book entitled "Rootedness: Zora Neale Hurston and the History of Culture."

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Atlantic World (1992); Michael Coniff and Thomas J. Davis, *Africans in the Americas: A History of the Black Diaspora* (1994); Darlene Clark Hine and Jacqueline McLeod, eds., *Crossing Boundaries: Comparative History of Black People in Diaspora* (1999), and Colin Palmer, "Defining and Studying the Modern African Disapora" in *Perspectives*, to name but a few.[2] Besides an increased number of universities searching for specialists in the African diaspora, conferences on the subject have materialized with amazing frequency and Rutgers University's Center for Historical Analysis has established a fellowship program on the Black Atlantic.[3] The emphasis on the African diaspora is part of a more general interest in diasporas broadly conceived, as evidenced by the journal *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, which has tended to focus on issues of migration and globalization.

Of course, attempts to identify and make sense of the African diaspora are almost as old as the diaspora itself.[4] Dating back at least to Juan Latino in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Ottobah Cuagano and Olaudah Equiano in the eighteenth century, and Jose Manuel Valdes in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, black writers and activists have often defined themselves as part of a larger international black community (Carretta 1996; Piedra 1991; Spratlin 1938; Potkay & Burr 1995). Their political and cultural vision criss-crossed the Atlantic, from the U.S. to Africa, from the Caribbean to Europe, sometimes incorporating the struggles of indigenous people in the South Pacific as well.

Along with the African diaspora's long history is the equally broad-based impact of its conceptualization. Scholars' efforts to understand the black world beyond the boundaries of nation-states have profoundly affected the way we write the history of the modern world. The making of a "black Atlantic" culture and identity, in general, and pan-Africanism, in particular, was as much the product of "the West" as it was of internal developments in Africa. Racial capitalism, imperialism, and colonialism—the processes that created the current African diaspora—shaped African culture(s) while transforming Western culture itself. In saying this, we are not speaking of the "black Atlantic" as merely "countercultural," but as an integral part of the formation of the modern world as we know it. One reason that New World black cultures appear "counter" to European narratives of history is that Europe exorcized blackness in order to create its own invented traditions, empires, and fictions of superiority and racial purity.[5]

Our very preliminary paper is a contribution to a theoretical framework and a conception of world history that treats the African diaspora as a unit of analysis. Such a framework, we believe, must emphasize the historical construction of the African diaspora; the development of a diasporic identity and its social, cultural, and political manifestations; the contributions of black migrant/colonial intellectuals to rethinking the modern West; and the continual reinvention of Africa and the diaspora through cultural work, migrations, transformations in communications, as well as the globalization of capital. In particular, we argue that the African diaspo-

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ra as an approach to transnational/global histories should not only illuminate aspects of the European–New World encounter but also speak to Africa's encounters with Indian Ocean societies, Asia, and the Islamic world as well as the dramatic events of seventeenth- to twentieth-century U.S. history. At the same time, we will draw attention to the ways in which diaspora can also keep us from seeing the full range of black transnational political, cultural, and intellectual links. Though our examples are drawn primarily from the Americas, we have the entire diaspora in mind and the implications of our remarks are diasporic in scope. We close with a few speculative remarks for broadening our understanding of the international context for black identities and political movements by exploring other streams of transoceanic political and cultural engagement.

Defining Diaspora

We must begin with the term *diaspora.* It originated in other historical and cultural contexts—namely Jewish and Greek history. *Diaspora* is essentially the Greek word for "dispersal," though its most common usage has been in reference to the scattering of Jews throughout the West. For African Americans, however, the concept of diaspora and its particular meaning in New World black cultures has clear biblical roots. Early activists, historians, and clergy frequently cited Psalms 68:31, which says, "Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God," as a way of describing the black (world) condition and the source of liberation. This understanding of Ethiopia as the metaphor for a black worldwide movement against injustice, racism, and colonialism lay at the heart of the early historical scholarship on the role of African peoples in the making of the modern (and ancient) worlds. The term "African diaspora" in its more modern usage emerged clearly in the 1950s and sixties. It served in the scholarly debates both as a political term, with which to emphasize unifying experiences of African peoples dispersed by the slave trade, and also as an analytical term that enabled scholars to talk about black communities across national boundaries. Much of this scholarship examined the dispersal of people of African descent, their role in the transformation and creation of new cultures, institutions, and ideas outside of Africa, and the problems of building pan-African movements across the globe (Shepperson 1982; R. B. Lewis 1844; W. W. Brown 1876; Blyden 1967, 1971; African Diaspora Research Project 1990; Bennett & Watson 1989; Drachler 1975; Drake 1987, 1990; Du Bois 1947; Henderson & Reed 1989; Kilson & Rotberg 1976; Knight 1974; Thompson 1987; Weisbord 1973).[6]

Thus, while acknowledging the pioneering diaspora studies of scholars whose work emphasized dispersal and African cultural survivals in the New World, we will pay special attention to the construction and reproduction of diasporic identities—to the creation of a diasporan consciousness. Like

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William Safran, for example, we agree that the constitutent elements of such a consciousness include disperal from a homeland, often by violent forces, the making of a memory and a vision of that homeland, marginalization in the new location, a commitment to the maintenance/restoration of the homeland, and desire for return and a continuing relationship and identity with the homeland that shapes the consciousness and solidarity of the group (Safran 1991:83–84).[7] At the same time, we do not want to propose a rigid definition. Obviously, specific historical contexts determine the relative importance of each of these elements. And as James Clifford points out, "the transnational connections linking diasporas need not be articulated primarily through a real or symbolic homeland.... Decentered, lateral connections may be as important as those formed around a teleology of origin/return. And a shared, ongoing history of displacement, suffering, adaptation, or resistance may be as important as the projection of a specific origin"(1997:249–50).

Finally, although the analogies to studying nationalism might seem obvious, we are cognizant of the distinct differences between nations and diasporas. First, the diaspora is not a sovereign territory with established boundaries, though it is seen as "inherently limited" to people of African descent. Second, while there is no official language, there seems to be a consistent effort to locate a single culture with singular historical roots, no matter how mythical. Third, many members of this diaspora see themselves as an oppressed "nation" without a homeland, or they imagine Africa as their (future?) home (Clifford 1997:251).

Survivals versus Transformations

Perhaps *the* fundamental and still unresolved question in histories of the African diaspora and the making of the modern world is to what degree are New World black people "African" and what does that mean? It is an old question posed as early as the publication of Sir Harry Johnston's amateur anthropological writings in his prodigious and enigmatic book, *The Negro in the New World* (1910), and explored more systematically in the pioneering work of scholars such as Melville Herskovits and Lorenzo Turner. Indeed, it could be argued that anthropologists were central to the first wave of diaspora studies during the interwar years. Scholars from all over the western hemisphere, including Fernando Ortíz, Raymundo Nina Rodrigues, Arthur Ramos, Mario de Andrade, Edison Carneiro, Roger Bastide, and Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán made the case that some aspects of African culture survived the middle passage and continued to exist in the New World. In 1936 the Cuban scholar Fernando Ortíz founded the *Sociedad de Estudios Afrocubanos* in Havana. As early as 1916 he published *Hampa Afro-Cubana: Los Negros Esclavos,* and in the 1950s he published a five-volume study entitled *Los instrumentos de la musica afrocubana* which doc-

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umented the profound impact of Africa on Cuban culture. Brazil, especially, became a focus for the scholarship on African survivals because of its large black population in Bahia and its history of limited repatriation of former slaves to Nigeria. The main point to bear in mind is that this group of anthropologists paved the way for a global approach to African and African American studies precisely because they were primarily interested in African retentions and transformation of culture. During the 1940s, they attempted to create an international association based in Mexico City to coordinate research and discussion on the topic; indeed, they even published a short-lived journal called *Afroamerica* which only yielded two issues before folding (Herskovits 1951:123–47; Ramos 1937, 1939; Fernandes & Bastide [1955, 1965] 1971a, 1971b; Nina Rodrigues 1932, 1935; Andrade [1958] 1993; Beltrán 1942:269–352; 1972; Turner 1942:55–67; Frazier 1942:465–78; Oliveira & Lima 1987).

Out of these initial explorations a new wave of scholarship emerged that set out to demonstrate that much of West and Central African culture survived in the Americas. Focusing on music, dance, religion, and even linguistic patterns, historians and anthropologists such as William Bascom, Roger Bastide, Leonard Barrett, Sterling Stuckey, Joseph Murphy, Winifred Vass, and Joseph Holloway, to name a few, emphasized continuity. On the other hand, their works were challenged by scholars such as Sidney Mintz and Richard Price (among others), who placed greater emphasis on discontinuity, arguing that what resulted was a process of cultural syncretism shaped by the context of "culture contact." Their response, which they describe as the "encounter model," was far more nuanced and sophisticated than that of, say, E. Franklin Frazier and Charles S. Johnson, who in an earlier generation of debates over these questions argued forcefully that nothing survived the middle passage. The Mintz and Price position does not rule out "survivals," but they rejected the notion of a singular African culture and placed greater emphasis on the emergence of new dynamic cultures (Herskovits 1941, 1966; Barnes 1989; Barrett 1974; Bascom 1980; Bastide 1972, 1978; Brandon 1993; Holloway & Vass 1993; Murphy [1988] 1993, 1994; Olwig 1985; Price 1983; Stuckey 1987; Vass 1979; Wafer 1991; Mintz & Price 1992).

These debates have hardly died. Recent work, in fact, has built on Mintz and Price's suggestion that we ought to be more specific about the multiplicity of African culture and pay closer attention to ethnicity, religion, and cultural identities within Africa itself. These works include Michael Mullin, *Africa in the Americas* (1992); João José Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil* (1993); Carolyn Fick, *The Making of Haiti* (1990); Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana* (1992); Monica Schuler, *Alas, Alas, Kongo: A Social History of Indentured African Immigration into Jamaica, 1841–1865* (1980); and the pioneering text in this arena, Robert Farris Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit* (1983). Michael Gomez's *Exchanging Our Marks* (1998) is distinctive in that it is an Africanist's interpretation of the

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making of the African diaspora. He carefully and painstakingly reconstructs African culture and social life in time and space in those regions directly affected by the slave trade. After following these groups across the Atlantic and showing the degree to which concentrations of specific African cultures remained intact, he then charts what he argues is a transformation from specific ethnic identities to an internal black conception of "race," or rather a collective identity that regards African-descended people as a common community. At no point does he suggest that this "community" became, in any way, monolithic or even "unified." On the contrary, he demonstrates how persistent differences by class, and to a lesser extent gender, have roots in social relations indigenous to West and Central Africa. Although he is limited by terms like *ethnicity* as a way to move beyond the inadequate use of *tribe,* what he ultimately describes on the continent is a series of units of organization, from village and clan relationships and linguistic groups, to entire "civilizations," that shared cultural practices and cosmologies and, in some cases, a lingua franca. The implications for a fresh understanding of New World African cultures are enormous. As Gomez points out, people as diverse as the Wolof and Soninke actually share much in common because of their proximity to one another in the Senegambian region, their shared participation in common trade routes, and the fact that they were brought together by various imperial wars or larger imperial structures that dominated the region. In other words, many of our assumptions about diversity within African cultures ought to be rethought, particularly since scholars of African American history sensitive to difference and diversity err in the other direction, treating each "ethnicity" as a discrete culture (Gomez 1998; Brooks 1993; Eltis & Richardson 1997).

The question of cultural survivals or retentions has also been critical for the study of gender in New World African communities. For example, African historians have begun to ask questions such as: how much of the idea embedded in Western thought of women as culture bearers conflicts or resonates with ideas coming out of West and Central African societies? In much of Africa spiritual access or power was not specifically gendered as male, so women priests and diviners were fairly common. In the Caribbean one sees women practitioners of vodun, myalism, and obeah; yet, in the institutional black churches there is a clear male gendered hierarchy. We might also consider the transfer of technology, especially in agriculture. In much of West and Central Africa women were cultivators; yet Europeans assumed that men were both responsible and knowledgeable about cultivation—so how did Americans learn rice cultivation from Africans? Which Africans? Did the passage of this knowledge to men change power relationships? And when we look more deeply at the gender division of labor under slavery, did women's participation in fieldwork, hauling, lifting, and other strenuous activities free them from constraining notions of femininity, or was it consistent with their gendered work and lives in Africa? Finally, did

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West and Central African ideas about marriage and property relations survive the middle passage? And what impact did these models of property, family, femininity and masculinity have on "white" slaveholding communities? (Robertson 1996; Robertson & Klein 1983; S. Martin 1988; Greene 1996; Amadiume 1987; Thornton 1983; Beckles 1989; B. Bush 1990).

Ironically, the question of African ethnicities shaping New World black culture has been met with hostility, given the intense "anti-essentialism" that pervades the new generation of scholars concerned with locating hybridity and difference within black cultures. To some degree, the caution against emphasizing cultural survivals, continuities, and commonalities is salutary. The political struggle to achieve unity and international black solidarity has, for example, often led to serious shortcomings in scholarship. Thinking of cultural change as a process of "destruction" or loss does more to obscure complexity than to illuminate the processes of cultural formation. Furthermore, emphasis on similarities and cultural continuities not only tends to elide differences in black cultures (even within the same region or nation-state), but it also does not take into account the similar historical conditions in which African people labored and created/re-created culture. Forced labor, racial oppression, colonial conditions, and capitalist exploitation were global processes that incorporated black people through empire building. They were never uniform or fixed, but did create systems that were at times tightly coordinated across oceans and national boundaries. This raises a number of questions. Were the so-called cultural survivals simply the most effective cultural baggage Africans throughout the world used in their struggle to survive? Or were they created by the very conditions under which they were forced to toil and reproduce? Are the anthropological studies from which many of these scholars draw their comparisons and parallels valid in view of the fact that they were made while Africa was under colonial domination? Is pan-Africanism simply the recognition that black people share the same timeless cultural values, as some nationalists would have us believe, or is it a manifestation of life under racism and imperialism?

On the other hand, we believe the cultural survivals framework has much to offer new scholarship on the making of New World European and even Native American cultures/identities/communities. The idea of a "European" culture or even "English" culture is often taken for granted and hardly ever problematized in the way that "African" is constantly understood as a social construction. For example, we might think of early New World Euro-Americans as possessing Du Bois's notion of "double-consciousness": say, English and American, with whiteness as a means of negotiating this double-consciousness (Chandler 1996). Or we might consider the "New World" as a source of pan-Europeanism in the way that it became the source of pan-Africanism. A cultural survival framework applied beyond the African historical experience may offer new ways of understanding New World identity formations as sites of both exclusivity and

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inclusivity and therefore deepen our understanding of race, nationality, and culture (Saxton 1990; Roediger 1991, 1998; C. Harris 1993; Hale 1998; Jacobson 1998; Lipsitz 1998).

National or Diasporan Identity and the Creation of Community

The presumption that black people worldwide share a common culture was not, as we have already suggested, the result of poor scholarship. It responded to a political imperative—one that led to the formation of political and cultural movements premised on international solidarity. Thus, while acknowledging the African cultural survivals in the New World, we must always keep in mind that diasporic identities are socially and historically constituted, reconstituted, and reproduced; and that any sense of a collective identity among black peoples in the New World, Europe, and Africa is contingent and constantly shifting. Neither the fact of blackness nor shared experiences under racism nor the historical process of their dispersal makes for community or even a common identity. Yet it was precisely out of the historical struggle to resist domination that a concept of "authentic" identity emerged alongside a discourse of difference and discontinuity. Stuart Hall identifies these two opposing but dialectically linked conceptions of identity in his essay "Cultural Identity and Diaspora." He writes: "The first position defines cultural identity in terms of one, shared culture, a sort of collective 'one true self,' hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed 'selves,' which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common. Within the terms of this definition, our cultural identities reflect their common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as 'one people,' with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history" (1990:223). Hall goes on to argue that this essentializing project was central to anticolonial and pan-Africanist movements and counterhegemonic in a fundamental way, "imposing an imaginary coherence on the experience of dispersal and fragmentation, which is the history of all enforced diasporas" (1990:224; 1996:596–634).

Hall's concept of "articulation" offers one way to think through these tensions and bring differences and discontinuities to the fore.

> An articulation is thus the form of the connection that can make a unity of two different elements, under certain conditions. It is a linkage which is not necessary, determined, absolute and essential for all time. You have to ask, under what circumstances can a connection be forged or made? So the so-called 'unit' of a discourse is really the articulation of different, distinct elements which can be re-articulated in different ways because they

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> have no necessary 'belongingness.' The 'unit' which matters is a linkage between that articulated discourse and the social forces with which it can, under certain historical conditions, but need not necessarily, be connected. (Grossberg 1995:141)

The linkages, therefore, that tie the diaspora together must be articulated and are not inevitable. These linkages are always historically constituted.

Furthermore, diaspora is both a process and a condition. As a process it is constantly being remade through movement, migration, and travel, as well as imagined through thought, cultural production, and political struggle. Yet, as a condition, it is directly tied to the process by which it is being made and remade. In other words, the African diaspora itself exists within the context of global race and gender hierarchies which are formulated and reconstituted across national boundaries and along several lines: (1) along legal lines that curtail citizenship in polities that claim to be democratic; (2) along cultural lines that ascribe negative cultural value to indigenous forms while simultaneously appropriating these expressive cultures for political and commercial purposes; (3) along economic lines through the planned persistence of plantation/colonial economies and a world market that makes those economies untenable; (4) along imperial lines through the international development of "Jim Crowed" modes of industrial production; and (5) along social lines through systems that define and limit access based on race and gender in both open and segregated societies.[8] While global racial and gendered hierarchies are distinct because racial definitions in gendered forms remain intact across national boundaries, Ramon Grosfogel reminds us that we must also pay attention to the ways in which differences in empire—the French, English, Spanish, and U.S. for that matter—defined colonial/subordinate subjects and structured definitions of race/gender, citizenship, and national identity (Grosfoguel & Georas 1996:190–201; Burgos forthcoming; Mirabal 1995, 1998, 1999; W. James 1998:195–257; Santiago-Valles 1994; Radhakrishnan 1996; Laó-Montes & Davila forthcoming). In other words, the arrangements that this hierarchy assumes may vary from place to place but it remains a *gendered racial hierarchy.*

Diaspora has always been employed (invoked) in such a way as to hide the differences and discontinuities. The very concept of diaspora has been extracted from peoples' lived experiences and then molded into metaphors for alienation, outsiderness, home, and various binary relationships such as alien/native. The metaphor has come to represent those experiences and, in so doing, erases the complexities and contradictions as it seeks to fit all within the metaphor. Indeed, the experiences of those located in the United States, for example, have often come to stand for those not in the U.S. or used as the standard of comparison. Rinaldo Walcott (1996) demonstrates the limitations of a black American conception of diaspora for understanding black Canada and, in turn, how ignoring

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Canada has deeply impoverished histories of African-descended people in the U.S. Winston James, Juan Flores, and others point to the invisibility of the Spanish-speaking Caribbean in our conceptualizations of the "black world" or the African diaspora (W. James 1996:96–127; Flores 1993; Laó-Montes forthcoming). These absences are particularly disturbing. Why are black people in the scholarship on the Spanish-speaking Caribbean—let alone the Francophone and Portuguese-speaking black world—rarely connected to African people in other parts of the black world?[9] To answer this question we must resist easy explanations, such as the claims that the Spanish-speaking world was more thoroughly Europeanized, or that a more tolerant racial order explains the allegedly "limited racial consciousness" of black Latinos. Rather, we must pay closer attention to the specific experiences of people outside the English-speaking Caribbean, consider the unique process of creolization and the Africanization of Spanish culture embedded in the folkways (food, dance, habits, religion) and of the language itself (Martinez-Alier 1974; Moore 1977; Whitten & Friedemann 1974:75–115; Friedemann & Arocha 1986; Wright 1990; Carroll 1991; Kutzinski 1993; Seed 1982; Stepan 1991; Wade 1997; Whitten & Torres 1998; Stubbs & Perez-Sarduy 1995; Zenón Cruz 1974).

The real question at hand, however, is how does this structure sustain itself without outright race and class warfare? Again, why is there no mass social movement among blacks in Brazil for example? The answer, Michael Hanchard persuasively argues in *Orpheus and Power: The Moviemento Negro of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, Brazil, 1945–1988* (1994), can be found in the ability of Brazil's ruling classes and the state's exercise of ideological and cultural hegemony. He shows how various complicated cultural and ideological systems produced a discourse of racial harmony in which the "African" population was the cultural and emotional heart of the country. Hanchard ultimately extends Gramsci's analysis, rejecting the notion of "false consciousness" and mystification as a way to understand how hegemony works. He further rejects the very idea of a "dominant ideology," instead seeing various competing dominant ideologies that are actually made in struggle, products of alliances, historical circumstances, allegiances by race, gender, class, and so on. This is a critical part of his argument, for the very ruling ideologies that placed the "African" on a cultural pedestal, if you will, ultimately reproducing the black communities' marginalization from sources of political power, also laid the foundations for opposition to the ruling ideologies. In other words, the Movimento Negro's culturalism—the ideological basis of its challenge to the Brazilian state—was drawn from the very ideological assumptions that reinforced racial inequality. Black activists turned to the cultural sphere—religion, dance, recreation—as an avenue to redress inequality. The culturalist thrust of the Movimento rendered it difficult to see and analyze many modes of racial discrimination as well as the ways their culturalist opposition reproduced other forms of class and gender hierarchy.

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One of the implications of *Orpheus and Power* is that the culturalist thrust in contemporary black social movements is reproduced in the scholarship. As Hanchard points out in his incisive introduction to *Racial Politics in Contemporary Brazil* (1999) (a masterful edited collection that will surely make a huge impact on critical race studies), studies of black Brazil are overwhelmingly studies of African survivals, cultural practices, and religion. There are few people (especially writing in English) who write about structural racism and political movements around racial inequality. Both books actually map a new direction for Brazilian "black studies," if we can call it that.

Hanchard is equally adept in his writing on the African American condition in North America. Always aware of the international dimension of black politics, whether he is writing about immigration policy or black notions of temporality, Hanchard emphasizes the plurality of cultures and political experiences. In other words, he pays attention not only to the movement of Africans to the New World but also to the movements of black peoples within the hemisphere, thus breaking out of the more traditional focus on cultural "survivals." Instead, he is bringing to African American studies a theoretical framework to understand black people in the West as transnational/translocal subjects.[10] Again, drawing on Gramsci's insights (see especially his *Social Text* essay and his piece in *Socialism and Democracy*), Hanchard does not just question what it means to be "black" or exhibit/share a black identity in a world where black peoples do not share a common language, culture, or even a similar experience with racial structures. Here he is moving far beyond the cultural survivalist/cultural nationalists who want to locate the common seed of Afro-diasporic culture and identity, and the anti-essentialists (Kobena Mercer, Paul Gilroy, etc.) who insist on the hybridization of black culture. Hanchard instead reveals the hegemony of a U.S. race relations model in our conceptual thinking about the African diaspora as well as the power of black identities rooted in regional or national understandings—or more precisely, empire. The conflicts and collisions of "race" relations, whether we are talking about a multiracial context or intrablack relations, are constantly being remade through movement and migration as well as its imagined construction through thought and cultural production (Hanchard 1990:31–42; 1991:83–106; 1994; 1998).

Enlarging upon the work of Hanchard, the historian Kim Butler has written a nuanced and insightful examination of the transformations of identities in postemancipation Brazil in her study *Freedoms Given, Freedoms Won: Afro-Brazilians in Post-Abolition São Paulo and Salvador* (1998). Her work focuses on the efforts of African people to secure their citizenship rights and to define themselves as part of a nation and, in so doing, challenges the notions of "limited racial consciousness" among non-English speaking Africans. Butler traces the formation of ethnic identities after slavery, teas-

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ing out the complex relationship between race and ethnic identity. Employing an Afro-Atlantic perspective, she demonstrates that "the ethnicity of 'blackness'... is neither fixed nor constant in the African diaspora," but "ethnicity appears as a fluid phenomenon both in response to, and as an outcome of, sociopolitical conditions." Notions of race in Brazil were complicated and shaped by changing demographic and regional variation. Social convention established a distinction between mulattos and blacks, a distinction found in certain official records like the census. In Brazil, however, argues Butler, "urbanity, free ancestry, genetic differences, education, income, profession, religious belief, degree of acculturation, birthplace" were important ingredients determining identity and the creation of multiple ethnic groups. Wrapped in an ideology of "whitening" (*embranquecimento*), many Afro-Brazilians "maintained a sharp distinction between mulattos and blacks," while all Brazilians adhered to a "dichotomy distinguishing whites from nonwhites...." (1998:50,51). In the minds of all Brazilians blackness was incompatible with social and economic advancement. Success, therefore, was itself a source of whitening.

The complicated process of identity formation coupled with demographic changes led to regional variations in the struggle for social and political equality. Butler argues, "the process of creating diasporan culture was the same in both cities, but whereas Bahians could assert an 'African' ethnicity, the Paulistas viewed themselves as Brazilians who differed only in that they were black." Butler found that the emergence of cultural and racial ethnicities in Salvador and São Paulo respectively, a response in part to demographic concentrations, limited the opportunities for the formation of a powerful Afro-Brazilian interest group that could set a common sociopolitical agenda. An inclusive collective identity would have been necessary to accomplish this unified approach (1998:58–59).

In Salvador social protest was couched in the fight for cultural autonomy for African-based cultural expressions such as *candomblé* and *capoeira.* In São Paulo a strong black press flourished in conjunction with political organizations such as the Frente Negra Brasileira (Freyre 1978; Pierson 1967; Hasenbalg 1979; Ianni 1988, 1987; Moura 1959, 1977, 1983; Nascimento 1989; Andrews 1991; Q. Taylor 1978; Hanchard 1994; Gonzalez 1985). In each instance Afro-Brazilians responded to the material and political reality that confronted them and found ways to struggle for equality in those locales. The work of Butler and Hanchard is the best to date to unravel the intricate threads of race, identity, and the struggle for political equality in Brazil and to deepen our understanding of the experiences of people of African descent.

Similarly, Africans in Cuba were not homogeneous, and like Brazilians, divided by free ancestry, cultural, educational, class, sexual, and regional differences. Yet African cultural traditions were widespread and nurtured in the *cabildos de nación,* religious and mutual aid societies in urban areas.

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In urban centers like Havana and Matanzas, secret societies like the all-male Abakuá flourished (Helg 1995:29; Howard 1998; Benítez-Rojo 1998; Ortíz 1960).

Though not all black Cubans remained close to their African heritage, it was nevertheless significant. But these identities were refined and redefined in the wars for national liberation in 1868 and 1898. Afro-Cuban participation was widespread in both wars, and the military leaders became leaders for political equality after the wars ended. Further, the military experience created networks that proved useful in organizing the black population for political struggle (Ferrer 1998, 1999). Afro-Cubans fought for the right to be both Cuban and black and this struggle led to the first black political organization in the Americas, the Partido de Independiente de Color. The determination to maintain their cultural and racial identity, coupled with their equal determination to be fully participating citizens in the nation, led to the so-called race war of 1912 in which thousands of the Partido members were massacred by the Cuban army. According to Aline Helg, the outcome of this struggle ended the ability of Afro-Cubans to organize along racial national lines and curtailed their efforts to define their citizenship on these terms. But this struggle did not destroy the formation of an Afro-Cuban identity. Scholars working on Afro-Cubans—Helg, Lisa Brock, Ada Ferrer, Jean Stubbs and Pedro Perez-Sarduy, to name a few—are beginning to expose the complicated relationship between race, identity, and nation and the Afro-Cuban struggle for equality.

These examples suggest that racial consciousness in non-English speaking societies was complicated and fluid and far from limited. Racial arrangements varied throughout the region and can only be understood within specific historical spaces. Racial consciousness and the formation of identity is an historical process and comparative studies demonstrate the myriad ways these consciousnesses and identities have become framed historically.[11] This new scholarship forces us to rethink the relationship between race and identity and demonstrates the importance not only of local histories but also of how these histories are connected to global developments.

Beyond Diaspora, toward Black Globality

Once we begin to talk about the constitutive nature of diasporan identities, we are confronted with the limitations of the term *diaspora* as a way of comprehending the international contexts for "black" identities and political movements. Consider, for example, the fact that black labor migrations (in slavery and freedom) were generally produced by many of the same needs of capital, the same empires, the same colonial labor policies, the same ideologies that forced so-called coolie labor from China and the Asian subcontinent to work on the plantations, mines, railroads of European

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empires and of the Americas. How do we situate Chinese and Indian migrations to the Caribbean, Africa, or to the U.S. South for that matter, in relation to the "African" diaspora?

On the one hand, the use of Asian labor to replace newly emancipated slaves in the Caribbean, North America, and South Africa shaped the racial stratification of labor, especially in places like Trinidad and Guyana where the planter class employed Indian labor essentially to do the work of former slaves while allowing them to obtain land and establish a peasant existence. Tensions between Indians and Afro-Caribbean and African people were exacerbated by the divide-and-rule policies of the colonial state as well as by postcolonial nationalism that privileged "black" people as authentic citizens (Rodney 1983; Nagar 1996:62–80; Aminzade 1997; Chege 1996:20–34; Gregory 1993). On the other hand, despite deliberate efforts on the part of the colonial and nationalist states to foster anti-Asian sentiment among blacks in the Caribbean and Africa, there were dramatic moments of solidarity. Vijay Prashad's brilliant forthcoming book, *The Karma of Brown Folk*, powerfully and relentlessly documents the long history of black and desis (East Indian) solidarity, joint struggles here and in the Caribbean, South Africa, and elsewhere. Radical black intellectuals like W.E.B. Du Bois recognized the racism suffered by Indians and promoted their struggle against British colonialism and South African racism. On the other hand, Indians in India have occasionally found inspiration in radical movements in the African diaspora. For example, the black "untouchables" of India, known as the Dalits, developed an awareness of their African ancestry and have linked their struggle against racism to the struggle of all black people. African Americans are of particular importance to the Dalits. They compare their experiences with that of U.S. blacks and are particularly attracted to the Black Panther Party. Indeed, in 1972 a radical group of Dalits in Bombay formed the Dalit Panther Party, modeled on the Black Panther Party in the United States. It subsequently spread to other parts of India (Rajshekar 1995; Joshi 1986; Omvedt 1991)

One source of black–Asian solidarity within these overlapping diasporas was the peculiar brand of black "Orientalist" romance with the "East."[12] As Ernest Allen Jr. and more recently Claude Clegg point out, vague notions of "eastern" religion and philosophy and a variety of "Orientalist" assumptions were far more important to the Lost Found Nation of Islam than anything coming out of Africa. And as Michael West points out in an important essay outlining ways to think about Afro-Asian connections, Rastafarians drew many of their ideas from South Asians—from vegetarianism to the use of marijuana, which was introduced into Jamaica by East Indians. One of the most obvious examples is black pro-Japanese sentiment during World War II, which manifested itself in both formal organizations (e.g., the Pacific Movement of the Eastern World) or in everyday cultural identifications. Ernest Allen Jr., George Lipsitz, and Gerald Gill have written eloquently and persuasively on the power and meaning of pro-Japanese

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sentiment among blacks in the U.S. (Allen 1994, 1995, 1996; Clegg 1997; Lipsitz 1998:184–210; Gill 1988; West 1997).

What were the political implications of the overlapping migrations all over the world that came about especially as industrialization and revolutions uprooted millions of people from Europe to Asia? This question is particularly important, for it illuminates the degree to which the "black" world can only be understood in the context of the larger world and vice versa. Consider, for example, what the world looked like at the beginning of the twentieth century, especially during and after World War I. It was a world marked by massive migrations on a global scale, rapid industrialization, the building of the Panama Canal, labor migration from Europe and Asia to North America, the Caribbean, and South Africa—these were developments that produced and were shaped by international wars, revolutions, famines, and violence. In this brief period we witnessed a wave of anticolonial uprisings in Africa, from millenarian movements to general strikes; the Easter Rebellion in Ireland; the 1919 strike in Trinidad; the Russian Revolution; the Boxer Rebellion in China (1911); the failed German revolution and collapse of the Weimar Republic; the Mexican Revolution. These revolutions all produced immigrants, some of whom ended up in the U.S. in the middle of social upheaval there as well: Seattle's general strike of 1919; the Great Steel Strike; race riots in Chicago, Washington, D.C., East St. Louis, Longview, Texas, Elaine, Arkansas, to name a few. Indeed, this was precisely the context for international black movements such as Garveyism (1916) and the African Blood Brotherhood (1918) (Friedheim 1964; D. Frank 1994; R. Lewis 1987; Harrison [1920] 1997; R. Bush 1998:83–112; W. James 1998; Naison 1983:3,5–8,17–18; Vincent 1971:74–85; T. Martin 1976; Robinson 1983:296–301; Samuels 1981; Doyle 1996:57–74; T. Taylor 1981).[13] Yet a careful examination reveals that these movements were products of a dialogue with Irish nationalists, Russian Jewish émigrés from the 1905 revolutions, Asian radicals like India's M. N. Roy and Japan's Sen Katayama, and radicals who were products of labor upheavals that swept across the Caribbean and Africa. We need to explore these international connections with greater depth, to discover how activists coming out of colonial labor struggles in Trinidad or Jamaica or Cuba might have participated in North American struggles. After all, most of the leadership of the African Blood Brotherhood had Caribbean roots, and Garvey himself learned much of his nationalist radicalism from the Irish in England and from Panamanian labor leaders. Marxist revolutionaries C. L. R. James and George Padmore traversed the Atlantic several times, working in Europe, North America, and the Caribbean.[14]

In other words, shifting the discussion from an African-centered approach to questions of black consciousness to the globality of the diaspora-in-the-making allows for a rethinking of how we view Africa and the world, and opens up new avenues for writing a world history from below. As Lisa Brock has powerfully argued, "If we shape our thinking about

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Africa Diaspora as but one international circle with a history and map of consciousness (the conductance of Africanisms is the circle's most resilient cultural manifestation and Pan Africanism the map's most notable political one) that overlap and coexist with other circles and world-views—such as Pan-Americanism, the international left, international feminism, anticolonialism, the movement for native rights and environmental justice, for example—we begin to better understand today's world and the concomitant consciousness evolved among peoples commonly drawn into it"(1996:10) Our point here is that black internationalism does not always come out of Africa, nor is it necessarily engaged with pan-Africanism or other kinds of black-isms. Indeed, sometimes it lives through or is integrally tied to other kinds of international movements—socialism, communism, feminism, surrealism, religions such as Islam, and so on. Communist and socialist movements, for example, have long been a harbinger of black internationalism and a source of radical pan-Africanism that explicitly reaches out to all oppressed colonial subjects as well as to white workers. Although the relationships have not always been comfortable, the communist movement enabled many different people to identify with other oppressed peoples, to reject patriotism/national identity. Black people across the globe could find each other, in some cases become African again, and they could also identify with the Spanish or Chinese or Cuban or even Russian revolutions. The ability to do this shaped political movements and identities in significant ways (Kelley 1990, 1994). The range and complexity of black internationalisms become strikingly apparent when we look at black communities of workers, artists, and intellectuals in the metropoles of the West: London, Paris, Amsterdam, Moscow, New York—cities that ultimately became the center of twentieth-century pan-Africanism, Negritude, and various other cultural and political movements on behalf of African or Caribbean national liberation movements (Dewitte 1985; Fabre 1991; Andrews 1980; Barou 1978; Braidwood 1994; Cobley 1992; Fryer 1984; W. James & Harris 1993; Miller 1975; Nascimento 1992; Redkey 1969; Walvin 1973). These political, cultural, and intellectual developments in the metropoles have been too frequently looked at in isolation, bounded by colonial empires or national borders—a problem Cedric Robinson and more recently Tyler Stovall, Brent Edwards, Nikhil Singh, Penny Von Eschen, Brenda Gayle Plummer, and Winston James among others have begun to address. As all of these scholars demonstrate, anticolonialism shaped protest politics throughout North America, deeply affected the rising Civil Rights movement, and facilitated many trans-Atlantic alliances between African nationalists and activists in the U.S. and the Caribbean. Their work provides an even richer context for understanding figures such as George Padmore, W.E.B. Du Bois, Paul Robeson, Claudia Jones, and Zora Neale Hurston as well as perhaps more moderate leaders such as Walter White, Kelly Miller, and James Weldon Johnson. Although each has varying degrees of success, their work as a whole gives

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us entrée into the world of the pre–Civil Rights black intelligentsia, the pan-African movement, and the global context for black politics and intellectual exchange, the complexities (to some extent, the schizophrenia) of the black elite, and the relationship between black academics and the emerging black freedom movement. They succeed in doing precisely the kind of transnational histories scholars have been calling for in this age of globalization (Robinson 1983; Stovall 1996; Edwards 1997; Von Eschen 1996; W. James 1998; Plummer 1996; Singh 1993).

Tyler Stovall's *Paris Noir* (1996), for example, is not limited to Paris; rather, it provides a succinct but brilliant running narrative of the changing conditions in the United States and the French colonial world more generally and how they shaped the experiences and decisions of black expatriates. On the U.S. side, we learn about waves of race riots (during and after both world wars), declining employment opportunities, political developments, and the changing cultural landscape. In France, on the other hand, we learn of the difficulty black musicians had during the Depression; the increase in racial discrimination with the rise of fascism and the outbreak of World War II; the impact of the Algerian and other anticolonial movements. While Stovall takes a much broader view of the black community, he moves the more traditional story to another level altogether. He explores the impact black artists and intellectuals had on the cultural life of Paris—not just as performers but also as contributors to, and subjects of, major intellectual trends of the period. The examples are striking, from André Breton and the surrealists to Sartre, Camus, and the existentialists. The point here is that the black cultural and intellectual community was not isolated from the rest of Paris, and exile was not devoted exclusively to reflecting on American racism. Similarly, as Brent Edwards demonstrates in his stunning thesis, "Black Globality: The International Shape of Black Intellectual Culture" (1997), the black Paris intellectuals who gave birth to Negritude and the Harlem Renaissance were not only in dialogue with each other but also with the rest of the world. Yet when these cultural developments are looked at from a U.S.-centric perspective, not only is the cross-Atlantic, translinguistic dialogue elided but these movements are either treated as parallel developments or collapsed into a kind of "changing same." In other words, one kind of black modernity erases another; one conception of diaspora renders the other invisible. Black Paris becomes a place of exile for African Americans, the heart and soul of Paris *noir*, while the black Francophone community and its ties to the French or French colonies are hardly visible. One unfortunate result is that Harlem is still uncritically referred to as the black cultural capital of the world during the 1920s.

Similarly, the ways in which diaspora is used metaphorically has also elided gender. The work of Carol Boyce Davies (1994), Cheryl Wall (1989), Hazel Carby (1987, 1998), Wahneema Lubiano (1997:232–52), E. Francis White (1990:73–97), Brent Edwards (1996), Robert Reid-Pharr (1994), and

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James Clifford (1997:258–59) to name a few, has demonstrated how the masculinist metaphors of diaspora and nationalism lend themselves to genealogical and historical reconstructions that leave women out. Taken as a whole, their work is not just an act of restoration or reclamation but also a resituating of the history and trajectory of black diasporan and internationalist movements. For example, one cannot look at Garveyism or the Black Panther party through women's experiences without substantially altering the dominant narrative. We see this clearly in Barbara Bair's forthcoming book, *Freedom Is Never a Final Act: Women Emerge from the Garvey Movement*, as well as in the works-in-progress by scholars such as Ula Taylor, Michelle Mitchell, Tracye Matthews, and Angela Brown. To varying degrees, they examine the impact of black nationalism on black women activists and the limits and possibilities of their efforts to refashion nationalist/pan-Africanist discourses on such matters as gender roles, motherhood, and feminism. Bair's work, in particular, is truly trans-Atlantic, as she examines the ideas and experiences of women as diverse as former Communist Queen Mother Audley Moore and West African-born Adelaide Casely Hayford. Like many of the others, Bair not only argues that black women constructed a notion of citizenship and duty to the race that did not forego issues usually identified as feminist but also shows the degree to which their ideas reflected the Victorian/bourgeois values of the modern West.[15]

The African Diaspora and the Making of the Modern World

Finally, let us close with some reflections on the usefulness of this scholarship for constructing "global" narratives of the past. Whether or not something called "world history" can ever be written successfully, we do think that nation-states as units of analysis obscure as much as they reveal. While we do not want to discount national histories altogether, we must all realize that since national boundaries are also built on national fictions, historical processes are never contained within them. The concept of the African diaspora, for all of its limitations, makes an important contribution to the development of the "Atlantic" as a unit of analysis (which, we recognize, is also a product of imperial history). Indeed, as Cedric Robinson suggested and Brent Edwards reminds us, we might just as easily talk about a "black Mediterranean," which is far more important in the Francophone and Italian worlds than in Britain. Likewise, Edward Alpers and Joseph Harris have made significant contributions toward identifying, for want of a better term, a "black Indian Ocean." Their work suggests, once again, that large bodies of water are not barriers but avenues for transnational, transoceanic trade, cultural exchange, and transformation. Indian Ocean crossings brought together many diverse peoples from East Africa, India, and the Arab world (J. Harris 1971, 1982; Alpers 1997; Abu-Lughod 1989;

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Chaudhuri 1990; Lapidus 1988; Austen 1979; Niane 1984; Lovejoy 1983; Curtin 1984; Popovic 1999).

We can see the promise of such a framework in studies by Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker. In their forthcoming book, *The Many Headed Hydra: A History of the Atlantic Working Class*, they explore how merchant and industrial capital, with its attendant maritime revolution, and the rise of the trans-Atlantic slave trade created a brand new international working class, brought about misery and immiseration, and simultaneously gave birth to significant political movements such as Republicanism, pan-Africanism, and new, often suppressed, expressions of internationalism (Linebaugh 1982; Linebaugh & Rediker 1990; Rediker 1987; J. Scott 1986). An equally brilliant example of this approach can be found in Julius Scott's forthcoming book, *The Common Wind*. A study of New World black people in the age of the Haitian Revolution, Scott invokes the "sailing image" both literally and metaphorically to illustrate how networks of oral transmission and shared memory were the crucial dimensions of Afro-diasporic politics and identity. The main figures in *The Common Wind* are black republicans not long out of Africa, and they developed their own politically driven, relatively autonomous vision of an antislavery republicanism that in many ways was far more radical than anything being pursued in France or Philadelphia. He also demonstrates the level of ideological debate and international organization that existed among African Americans in the New World—a crucial element in the unfolding of the revolution. At the very least, Scott demonstrates how an Afro-diasporic approach can force us to rethink the creation of New World republicanism, systems of communication in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the political and cultural autonomy of African people in the West, and the crucial role that black sailors played in the age of democratic revolutions.

One way to illustrate the impact of the African diaspora on the modern West is by looking comparatively at postemancipation societies. As W.E.B. Du Bois (1935), C. L. R. James (1963), Eugene Genovese (1974), and more recently Eric Foner (1983), Robin Blackburn (1988), Julius Scott (1986), Rebecca Scott (1990), David Eltis (1993), Thomas Holt (1997), and Frederick Cooper (1980, 2000) have demonstrated, the transition from chattel slavery to freedom was a global process in which the struggle over the reconstruction of the labor force had enormous implications for capitalism, democracy, liberal thought, and racial ideology.

Consider, for example, the important work of C. L. R. James, whose 1938 book, *The Black Jacobins*, not only argues that the French bourgeoisie's strength was dependent on huge profits created on slave plantations of St. Domingue, but also that the slaves themselves shaped debates in the National Assembly on the meaning of freedom and liberty as a natural right. More than any doctrine or speech, the revolt of African slaves themselves put the question of freedom before Parisian radicals. And as Michel Rolph Trouillot demonstrates in his book, *Silencing the Past* (1995), the

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Haitian Revolution represented the only truly universalist claim to freedom and liberty for all of humanity, and it proclaimed the right of slaves (and colonial subjects) to win that freedom by armed struggle—an idea that no Western "free" nation ever accepted, not even during much of the twentieth century.

Similarly, in Du Bois's magisterial *Black Reconstruction* ([1935] 1969), the question of emancipation within the context of industrial capitalism was a global matter. Du Bois was the first to establish slavery as a global system; one that was crucial to the development of capitalism in Europe and America. (This is why he renamed slaves "black workers.") This broke with the more common idea that slavery was an archaic system out of step with the modern world, more akin to feudalism; or that slavery was merely a civilizing mission, a means to train Africans for modern society. He concluded that the South, led by freed people and a handful of progressive whites in a short-lived alliance with northern capital, overthrew the slave regime and implemented a kind of dictatorship of the common folk. The implications for Du Bois were crucial; had the white working class supported such an interracial class alliance rather than an interclass racial alliance, they could have overthrown the planter class permanently. More important, they would have dealt a huge blow to racism and set an example for interracial working-class solidarity that could have resisted colonialism and imperialism. Instead of seeing Africans and Asians as savages or members of different species, they would have been part of the international working class. The outcome was a tradition of white working-class violence against workers of color, and a black working class reluctant to join trade unions.

We need to move beyond unitary narratives of displacement, domination, and nation building that center on European expansion and the rise of "racial" capitalism. In some ways, destabilizing unitary narratives is what Paul Gilroy does in *The Black Atlantic* (1993) and what Cedric Robinson had already begun to do in his magnum opus, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (1983). Their work not only demonstrates how the rise of the trans-Atlantic system helped forge the concept of Africa and create an "African" identity, but also how the same process was central to the formation of a European/"white" identity in the New World. These scholars and those who came before them see the fundamental importance of black people to the making of the modern world: that slave labor helped usher in the transition to capitalism; that black struggles for freedom indisputably shaped discourses on democracy and the rise of republicanism; and that the cultures, ideas, and epistemologies taken from Africa or created in the "New World" have deeply influenced, art, religion, politics, philosophy, and social relations in the West. Hence, just as Europe invented Africa and the New World, we cannot understand the invention of Europe and the New World without Africa and African people.[16]

But as expansive and overwhelming as diaspora and the Atlantic are as frameworks for understanding the modern world and/or black interna-

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tionalism, they are still not enough. As we have suggested, Africa—real or imagined—is not the only source of "black" internationalism, even for those movements that embrace a nationalist or pan-Africanist rhetoric. And these movements, whether they hold the banner of international socialism, women's peace and freedom, anticolonialism and Third World solidarity, or Islam, have never been contained within the holy trinity of Europe, Africa, and the Americas.[17]

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Notes

1. See Thompson 1983 and Gilroy 1993. See also the important essay by Peter Linebaugh (1982), which in our opinion offers the most important and perhaps earliest references to the concept of a black Atlantic.
2. See also Palmer 1998 in *Perspectives: The American Historical Association Newsletter,* which supports this increased interest in diaspora.
3. Job advertisements for such a position were issued recently by the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; Carnegie Mellon University; Georgia State University; the University of Iowa; and Xavier University. The various conferences include the "Blacks in the Industrial Age Conference," University of Michigan, 1994; "The African Diaspora," Michigan State University, 1995; "African Diasporic Culture," Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1996; "Dance of Africa and the Diaspora: The Present State and Potential in the U.S.," University of Michigan, April 1997; "The Meanings and Constructions of Race in South Africa, Brazil and the United States," April 1997, Carter Center, Atlanta, Ga., and Columbia University; "Mapping African America," Liverpool, England, April 1997; "African Diaspora Connections," London, June 1997; "Francophone African and Antillan Women: Gender, Race, Geography," Stanford University, April 1997; "Transforming and Developing Global African Communities in the Twenty-First Century," Pretoria, South Africa, July 1997, to name a few. We should also add that a number of doctoral programs have been established focusing on the African diaspora, either in traditional departments or separate ethnic studies programs. These include Michigan State University, New York University, the University of California at Berkeley, the University of Massachusetts, the University of Pittsburgh, and Carnegie Mellon University.
4. Besides, the very existence of an African diaspora in the Western world reminds us that the process of "globalization"—namely the global expansion of capital—was not a post–World War II "event" but a long process, beginning at least in the fourteenth century with the expansion of Italian merchant capital, on through the trans-Atlantic slave trade, the imperialist joint stock companies, and the rise of huge conglomerates like the United Fruit Company.
5. Obviously, this is a nod to certain work being done under the rubric of Afrocentrism. As problematic and essentialist as much of this work is, it indirectly points to the interdependency of so-called civilizations and the work of Eurocentrists—in the name of universalism—who create an hermetically sealed Europe without acknowledging Asia and Africa. Whenever Afrocentrists, for whatever reasons, claim the Greco-Roman civilization as *their own* (keep in mind that no writer, not even George E. M. James, has ever claimed that all of

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Greek culture was of African origin), these same "universalists" are quick to reduce Afrocentric claims to identity politics and do not see their rejection of these claims—their protection of European ownership of the intellectual and cultural forms emerging—as itself a form of identity politics. For a provocative critique of the debates surrounding Afrocentric views, see Moses 1998.

6. See also the following for recent work that examines these linkages and grapples with the question of definition: Lemelle & Kelley 1994; Hine & McLeod 1999; and Okepwe & Davies 1999.
7. We are also indebted to an important article by Earl Lewis (1997).
8. The list here of five characteristics makes no pretense to being exhaustive but merely suggestive of ways of studying diasporic formations. Some of the concepts used here are hotly debated. For example, the notion of plantation societies, particularly in the Caribbean, is contested by scholars who argue that these societies were dependant on colonial slave modes of production. For a discussion of the plantation economy model see Beckford 1972; Best 1968; Greaves 1959; International Labour Organization 1966; Mintz 1966; E. T. Thompson 1966; Wagley 1957. For arguments opposing the plantation economy model see Thomas 1984, 1988; Banaji 1972:2498–502; 1977:1–44; Laclau 1971:19-38; Genovese 1970; Mandle 1972:49-62; 1973; A. G. Frank 1967, 1969, 1978; Fraginals 1976; Tomich 1990.
9. Recent work by several scholars has begun to remove these absences. See Butler 1998; Brock 1998; and Burton & Reno 1995.
10. The distinction between "translocal" and "transnational" is that translocal goes beyond nations and nationalities by articulating the geographical units of space (place, nation, region, world) with the locational elements of identity (class, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, nationality, etc). See Appadurai 1996; Rafael 1995.
11. The scholarly literature on race and identity in Spanish-speaking societies has been growing for several decades. Coupled with an existing literature on Africans in Spanish-speaking societies, it allows us to pursue comparative work. In addition to citations above, see for example Arredondo 1939; Ortiz 1921: 5–39; 1995; Aguirre 1951: 476–81; Chapeaux 1963, 1971; Robaina 1990; Ferrer 1998: 662–85; 1999; Martinez-Echazabal 1997: 117–29; San Miguel 1997; Wade 1993, 1997; Zenòn-Cruz 1974; Brock 1998; Santiago-Valles 1994.
12. We are aware that the term *Orientalist* is loaded with connotations of race and empire. We use it here not only for want of a better term, but also to appropriate the positive meanings of the term as it was used by African people.
13. See also Jeffrey Perry's forthcoming biography on Hubert Harrison from Louisiana State University Press.
14. For examples of scholarship that makes these links, see Bair forthcoming; Hill 1987; W. James 1998; Robinson 1983; Hooker 1967; Kelley 1996.
15. The work of African American women historians and scholars has been very helpful as models of research on many of these concerns. See Hine 1989; Higginbotham 1993; E. B. Brown 1994; Shaw 1996; Gilmore 1995; Terborg-Penn 1998; D. White 1999. For studies that examine the lives of working-class women and the ways in which middle-class gender conventions were contested, see Hunter 1997; Clark-Lewis 1994.
16. For a discussion of the Americas in the development of modernity see Quijano & Wallerstein 1992; Quijano 1992, 1999; Dussel 1995.
17. We are aware that most of the examples we draw upon in fact come from that holy trinity of Africa, Europe, and the Americas. This is a reflection of our training and does not contradict our central argument.

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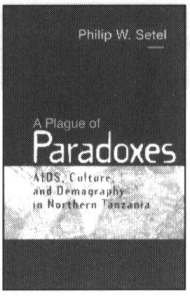

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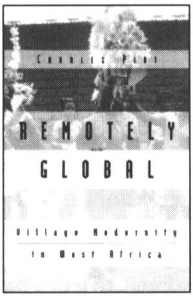

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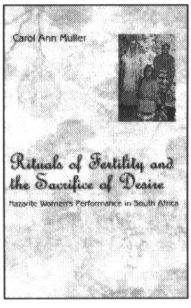

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