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In technologically advanced American society, the black struggle for education is rooted in the historical struggle to overturn racial oppression, economic exploitation, and cultural/ideological domination. In this society, where the state functions to perpetuate existing structures of political, economic, and ideological dominance, education has traditionally operated as an instrument of social control rather than an avenue for social mobility and self-determination. In the face of threats to their survival, black higher education institutions must become active in the overall struggle for black liberation. To serve as a liberating force, black institutions must: (1) stress the study of the African experience and establish linkages with the Pan-African world; (2) emphasize cross disciplinary studies; (3) seek to understand European philosophy, politics, values, and society; (4) stress research and instruction in technology and science; (5) become future oriented; and (6) provide opportunities for intensive study of policy analysis, planning theory, and organizational principles. Finally, both black institutions and black communities must increasingly interact and, become partners in the struggle for black self-determination. (MJL)

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STRUCTURES OF DOMINANCE AND THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF BLACK HIGHER EDUCATION IN A TECHNOCRATIC ERA

A Theoretical Framework

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1981



This is a revision of a paper prepared for delivery at the 1981 Joint Meeting of the African Heritage Studies Association and the National Conference of Black Political Scientists, Baltimore, Maryland, April 16-18, 1981.

PANEL THREE. Blacks and Higher Education. Social Opportunity or Assimilation into Colonialism.

This paper does not necessarily represent the position of ISEP. For their criticism, advice and encouragement, I should like to thank the director and research staff of ISEP, Al Colon and Faustine Jones of Howard University, Sam Hay of Morgan State University, Fred Pincus of the University of Maryland Baltimore County, and Charlene Moore. I also thank Brenda Lane, of ISEP, and Virgie Smith for typing this paper.



FOREWORD.

As a research and policy center established at Howard University in 1974, the Institute for the Study of Educational Policy (ISEP) has three program objectives:

To prepare, a periodic critical assessment of the dynamic status and needs of Blacks in higher education;

To assess the impact of law, social science, and other research on the status and needs of Blacks in higher education, and

To use old models creatively and to develop new models and paradigms for the explication of the higher educational enterprise with implications for elementary and secondary education.

In pursuance of the above three objectives the Institute has published eleven volumes on various aspects of Blacks in higher education, a directory of sources of data on Blacks in higher education, three reports on Blacks in higher education, five volumes of the ISEP Monitor, one volume of ISEP Briefs on Bakke, The Bakke Case Primer (75,000 copies), The Black College Primer, and two occasional papers.

The first occasional paper was published in 1977 and written by Dr. James E. Cheek, President of Howard University, entitled, "Higher Education's Responsibility for Advancing Equality of Opportunity and Justice." In that paper he stated, "It seems clear that universities can play an important role in advancing equality of opportunity since they wield influence over the process of learning itself, over institutions and attitudes, and they play an important role in determining the status and life chances of individuals."

The second occasional paper of the Institute was published in 1979, written by Dr. Sylvia T. Johnson, a Visiting Senior Fellow to the restitute, and entitled, "The Measurement Mystique"—Issues in Selection for Professional Schools and Employment, in which she stated, "If decision-makers feel that it is useful and important to have fair numbers of Black and female physicians, then a utility function would be chosen for use in selection. This function would give weight to the minority or sex status of applicants. A different utility function would be constructed if other priorities were present."

Now comes Floyd Hayes, III, a Research Assistant at the Institute, stating, In view of the legacy of the mis-education of African-Americans..., African-American education must first become increasingly iconoclastic in orientation and global in content, historically and contemporaneously. After this unusual prescription for historically Black universities and African-American education, he writes six other prescriptions ranging from overcoming the fragmentation and compartmentalization of knowledge, through emphasizing research science and technology, to future oriented and policy analysis, and



with a close interface between Black institutions, Afro-Americans, and the masses of Blacks.

Structures of Dominance and the Political Economy of Black. Higher Education in a Technocratic Era. A Theoretical Framework is a think piece or theoretical exegesis written in pursuance of the third program objective of the Institute. Most of the publications of the Institute have been produced in pursuance of its first two program objectives. This has been brimarily because the Advisory Board wanted the Institute and its staff to master the state of the art of where Blacks are in higher education and what practical, obvious and immediate forces, revealed in the research and writing of the academic and intellectual communities, impact the status of Blacks in higher education. Sound theory must be grounded in solid/experience and reliable information. The Institute now is in a position to begin to, indeed, use old models creatively and develop new models and paradigms for the explication of the higher educational enterprise. The National Advisory Board does not endorse the views or analysis set forth in this think piece, but it does commend any serious intellectual thought which is committed to advancing and illuminating the understanding of data regarding the plight of Blacks and other minority or disadvantaged groups.

The Board continues to expect the Institute through its monographs and annual reports, through its seminars and conferences, as well as through its occasional publications and public testimony, to fill a vacuum in the organized body of knowledge about higher educational opportunity for Blacks and other minorities. Thus, the Board hopes the Institute will be able to continue to make a significant contribution to the formulation and evaluation of contemporary educational policy. The Board is grateful to Mr. Hayes for his conscientious and serious effort in contributing to the fulfillment of the Institutes third program objective. Finally, the Board and Howard University continue to be grateful to the Ford Foundation which provides substantial support for the work of the Institute. Of course, the Foundation is not responsible for the content of this occasional paper or the other publications of the Institute.

Kenneth S. Tollett, Chairman National Advisory Board August, 1981



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Structures of Dominance and the Political Economy of Black Higher Education in a Technocratic Era:

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[T]he Negro's mind has been brought under the control of his oppressor. The problem of holding the Negro down, therefore, is easily solved. When you control a man's thinking you do not have to worry about his actions. You do not have to tell him to stand here or go yonder. He will find his "proper place" and will stay in it. You do not need to send him to the back door. He will go without being told. In fact, if there is no back door, he will cut one for his special benefit. His education makes it necessary.

. . Carter G. Woodsoh

Introduction -

To discuss seriously and properly issues relative to the education of African Americans, one must reflect consciously and critically on the dialectical relationship between education and its social environment, for education is "inevitably bound up with—indeed, dependent upon—other institutions of society, such as the economy and the polity "? Therefore, the major purpose of this paper is to examine the African American struggle for education in technologically advanced American society. The nature of the state in advanced technological society will be explored along with its relationship to economic and cultural/ideological reproduction. Finally, some suggestions will be offered regarding the future directions of African American higher education.

The guiding assumption here is that in advanced technological American society, there is the inclining significance of race and class.

Singular theoretical models are insufficient to analyze thoroughly and critically the complex and diverse character of the black experience in America. This paper, then, attempts a synthesis of race and class analyses with the practical concern for social change. The guiding assumption here is that in advanced technological American society, there is the inclining significance of race and class. In the contemporary world, racial oppression and economic exploitation are inextricably intertwined, they cannot be neatly severed in the interest of theoretical purity. The late Kwame Nkrumah described the dialectic between race and class clearly and precisely when he said:



Each historical situation develops its own dynamics. The close links between class and race developed in Africa alongside capitalist exploitation. Slavery, the master-servant relationship, and cheap labour were basic to it. The classic example is South Africa, where Africans experience a double exploitation—both on the grounds of colour and of class. Similar conditions exist in the U.S.A., the Caribbean in Latin America and in other parts of the world where the nature of the development of productive forces has resulted in a racist class structure.

In advanced technological societies that are racially divided, race and class are complex interacting variables which exist simultaneously and constitute interrelated and interdependent relations of domination; yet, neither is a subprocess of the other.

America, considered the leading advanced technological society in the world, is presently confronted with three interrelated and interdependent crises. *Culturally*, America's dilemma is manifested in various forms of social alienation as increasing numbers of Americans attempt to acquire some meaning in their lives by embracing "me-ism," "born again-ism," and other forms of cultism. Others despair over the loss of America's moral leadership and international greatness exhibited by Watergate, the defeat in Indochina, and the hostages once held in Iran.

Economically, the crisis of stagflation is signaled by chronic economic stagnation, persistent unemployment, growing underemployment, intractable inflation, and periodic recession. The market system has ceased to function as it once did. Rather than the traditional market relationship between demand and supply, price-fixing at astronomical levels by large businesses predominates. America has been described as a "post-market society" as American and other Western (including Japanese) trans-national corporations struggle to extend their domination over the world economic system 6 Right wing theorists who attempt to reverse the effects of this crisis write theological treatises on supply-side economics.

Politically, the ideal of liberal democracy, which advances the rights of the individual citizen and encourages popular political participation, is in conflict with the state. The state gains increasing control over scientific and technological knowledge and, at the same moment, is substantially influenced by this knowledge. The state in advanced technological society is an interventionist state. The economic intervention of the state is felt increasingly in the daily lives of U.S. citizens. Large corporations, such as the Chrysler corporation, receive government assistance while funds for social programs are continually decreased. Individual Americans feel powerless and believe less and less in the political system, they are, in fact, angry



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and disenchanted with government. The state in advanced technological America experiences the crisis of legitimacy.

The three elements of the American predicament coalesce and produce the rising tide of neo-conservatism, neo-klanism, neo-nazism, neo-totalitarianism, theological political economics, the new right—or what is increasingly being described as "meanness mania." This changing mood is predictable given the persistence of the triple crises facing America. The vicious murders of African Americans perpetrated by whites in Buffalo, New York, the murders of black children in Atlanta, the attacks on African Americans in other cities in this country—all of these create the belief that once again African Americans have become the scapegoats of economically threatened and fearful whites, too many of them working class and poor whites who have lost their own jobs.

The African American experience, however, is characterized by the struggle to overthrow oppression. The mean mood of America in the 1980's—and the emerging scapegoat political economics of once again blaming the victim—can only result in continued responses from the black community. The 1980 Miami uprising is only an example.

African Americans, The State and Education: Subordination and Insurgency

This paper discusses the proposition that in technologically advanced American society, the African American struggle for education is historically rooted in the overall battle to overturn racial oppression, economic exploitation and cultural/ideological domination. Of particular significance in this regard is the nature of the state in advanced technological society and its relationship to economic and cultural/ideological reproduction.

Important to the discussion of the state in advanced technological society is the significant increase in the power of the state, as well as the correlation between the state, the economy and the reproduction of society. The state has historically been an essential part of the reproduction of the economy." Invariably the state secures the reproduction of the relations of production by providing the latter with a stabilizing legal-political-ideological framework supported by torce.

The scope of state intervention in the economy varies considerably depending upon the nature and stage of development of the mode of production. In advanced technological society, as both the social character of the productive forces and the interdependence and scale of the economy have assumed increased proportions, the state has taken on a growing range of functions.¹³⁴

Another important element of social reproduction is the relation-



However, these arguments overlook that it is not schooling itself but the system of economic production that creates and maintains social inequalities.

ship between ideological reproduction and state power. Beside political and economic constraints, there are a number of reasons why people do not constantly revolt. At some level, many people may not understand or be interested in state domination. They may not know of alternative modes of social organization, and, even if they do, they may actually feel powerless. Political alienation, ignorance or lack of political efficacy do not simply exist as some inherent dimensions of individual and group consciousness. Definite social processes generate and enhance this condition. Yet, no state can exist solely through the use of violence. The state also has important ideological functions for it seeks popular legitimacy by means of cultural/ideological dominance, the subtle but persuasive manipulation that perpetuates the existing structures of dominance.

In advanced technological society, the major institution through which ideological dominance is maintained is the educational system, or what Althusser terms the "educational ideological apparatus." Education and schooling are traditionally understood to contribute to social mobility. Many liberal social scientists and educational policy-makers zealously point out the need for the elimination or reduction of tracking, the introduction of "culturally unbiased" selection procedures, and the implementation of mainstreaming. However, these arguments overlook that it is not schooling itself but the system of economic production that creates and maintains social inequalities. 17

African Americans have always been hopeful that education would be particularly instrumental in their struggle to achieve independence and self-determination. Yet, education in America has traditionally functioned as an agency of social control. Joel Spring points out that:

In the case of segregated schools in the South during the first half of the [fwentieth] century the socialization process was directed toward both the acceptance of the dominant controlling power of the white race and also the acceptance of a caste-oriented social structure.

This contradiction is even more apparent when observing the reasons for the establishment of historically black colleges and, universities.

The training of black leaders to mediate conflicts between Afro-Americans and the dominant society was a major mission of black higher education from the Reconstruction era juntil



well into the twentieth century. The Black leader's task, as perceived by the various elites who financed and presided over the development of black colleges was to reason with the masses, to persuade, to convince them of one or another philosophy of the Negro's place in American society.¹⁹

Following the termination of slavery, a conflict between missionary philanthropists and industrial philanthropists developed over the correct education of the African American leadership and its function of adjusting the African American to the political economy of the South. Missionary philanthropists sought to establish black institutions of higher learning to develop a college-educated African American vanguard that would lead the struggle for racial equality. The New England classical curriculum was instituted to assimilate African Americans into the culture of white Protestant society. This struggle to end racism, of course, frightened Southern industrialists, thus, with the support of Northeastern businessmen, they sought to prepare a conservative African American leadership.²⁰

The contradiction in the legacy of the historically black institutions of higher learning is apparent. Education, whether supported by missionary or industrial philanthropists, meant that African Americans were encouraged to either assimilate the views and values of white society or submit willingly to the dominance of white racism. This contradiction has basically been a major dilemma in the African American struggle for education. The education of African Americans has historically perpetuated the political oppression, economic exploitation and cultural invasion by white America.²¹

In this regard, African Americans can be viewed analytically as an internal colony of the American state and civil society. Defining this phenomenon, Robert Allen observes that:

Broadly speaking, colonialism can be defined as the direct and overall subordination of one people, nation, or country to another with state power in the hands of the dominating power. 22

Colonial education perpetuates colonial domination. The colonizer achieves political and economic development at the expense of the colonized. The colonizer seeks to institutionalize its advantages, as well as the subordination of the colonized.

The superordinate group, now ensconced as the core, seeks to stabilize and monopolize its advantages through policies aiming at the institutionalization and perpetuation of the existing stratification system. Ultimately, it seeks to regulate the allocation of social roles such that those roles commonly defined as having high status are generally reserved for its members. Conversely, individuals from the less advanced group tend to be denied access to these roles.²⁴



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If the core-subordination of the periphery is to be maintained, a collaborator group within the latter must perpetuate the existing social relations of race, class and cultural/ideological oppression

The traditional education of African Americans served this purpose well. The Hampton-Tuskegee experiment consciously trained an accommodationist leadership which counseled African Americans to submit willingly to racist capitalist America. Those historically black institutions of higher education which incorporated the liberal arts curriculum taught Western culture. In either form of education, African Americans acquired a body of knowledge which encouraged them to feel inferior to the European. The African American has experienced the colonization of the mind. As Woodson observes.

The chief difficulty with the education of the Negro is that it has been largely imitation resulting in the enslavement of his mind. Somebody outside of the race has desired to try out on Negroes some experiment which interested him and his coworkers, and Negroes, being objects of charity, have received them cordially and have done what they required. In fact, the keynote in the education of the Negro has been to do what he is told to do. Any Negro who has learned to do this is well prepared to function in the American social order as others would have him.²⁶

In the final analysis, the traditional education of African Americans was an indoctrination of ideas which perpetuated and reinforced the historic structures of dominance and the social relations of inequality Through miseducation, the African American came to revere Greek and European civilization and to despise that of Africa. The African American was made to despise himself.²⁷

History moves, and a thing can turn into its opposite. With the emergence of the modern Civil Rights Movement in the 1950's, southern activists challenged the legitimacy of white supermacy and segregation by attacking Jim Crow public schools. Their goal was to achieve social integration. Many African Americans saw this effort as a means of making broader political demands against racism Civil rights activists and, later, Black Power advocates, utilized the American ideals of freedom, justice and equality to criticize the legitimacy of institutional racism, economic exploitation and cultural/ideological domination. Legal segregation was struck down providing an "opportunity" for African Americans to enter formerly all-white educational institutions.

By the 1960's, the African American struggle for freedom, justice and equality was intensifying. As an alternative to traditional civil rights organizations, such as the NAACP, black college students began to challenge the racist practices of southern merchants February 1, 1960, marks the historic beginning of what was to become



the black student revolt. Four students from North Carolina A & T College began a sit in at Woolworth's. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) emerged out of this and similar efforts throughout the South. In the early years, SNCC was influenced by the religious ideas and nonviolent direct action of Martin Luther King and Mahatma Gandhi. SNCC members also accepted the American ideal of "democracy" and the Civil Rights Movement's goals of social integration. SNCC's major activities were community organizing and voter registration in the South.

By the mid-1960's, SNCC made drastic ideological changes which emerged as the predominant ideas of the struggle for black liberation in late 1960's and early 1970's. Influenced by the rise of African nationalism, anti-colonalism, the Nation of Islam, Malcolm X and the writing of Frantz Fanon, SNCC embraced black nationalism—which gave rise to the Black Power Movement—in the late 1960's.

Some of SNCC's members attended historically white colleges and, universities in Northern and Western cities. By the mid-to-late 1960's. the numbers of African American students at historically white institutions had increased substantially over previous years. This combination gave rise to Black Students' Unions at many historically white colleges and universities, particularly outside of the South. Black students were conscious of the urban revolts, angered by the assassination of Martin Luther King and influenced by the ideological formulations of Maulana Ron Karenga, the Black Panther Party and the writings of Frantz Fanon, "Che" Guevara, Marcus Garvey, Kwame Nkrumah, W E.B. Dubois, and Harold Cruse. Black Students' Unions struggled to increase the numbers of African American students, faculty and administrators and to establish African American Studies at traditionally white universities.29 Hence, the black student revolt arose to challenge the traditional structure and function of higher education in America. Many African American students saw themselves as part of the vanguard in the revolutionary struggle for black liberation in America.

Working closely with local police, the FBI infiltrated, harassed and disrupted many organizations. These organizations included Black Students Unions, the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Deacons for Defense/Revolutionary Movement, the Junta of Militant Organizations, the Republic of New Africa, the Poor People's Campaign, United Slaves (US), the Black Economic Development Corporation, the Black Panther Party and the Nation of Islam. 10 M. Ron Karenga points out that:

According to the evidence from FBI files, the campaign against Black groups began in earnest as early as August 25, 1967. It was part of a national domestic counter-intelligence program



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called COINTELPRO which started in 1965 and directed itself against all social forces struggling for liberation and openly opposed to the social idiocy, insanity and perennial violence inherent in a racist and inhumanly capitalist society. According to documents released by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Hoover instructed his agents in a November, 1968 memo to submit "imaginative and hard-hitting counter-intelligence, measures" against black groups and to report biweekly on their accomplishments. From these "imaginative and hard-hitting counter-intelligence measures" came the shootings and beatings mentioned above, the shootout of UCLA and the fatal confrontations in San Diego, cartoons attacking the leadership of both the Black Panther Party and US, raising questions of our credibility, scurrilously linking both four groups with police activities and portraying internecine violence against each other. Moreover, there were shots at US which were blamed on the Panthers and shots at the Panthers which were blamed on US. Persons, offices and houses were fired on regularly, poison-pen letters were sent, threatening telephone calls were made and efforts at negotiation were sabotaged by agent provocateurs among the two groups and by threats to the neutral parties who tried to mediate.31

The ferocity and cruelty of the FBI can only be explained by institutionalized racism. The FBI was criminally involved in the violence between US and the Panthers as well as the disruption and harrassment of other groups and individuals. The FBI conspired to deprive African Americans of their constitutionally guaranteed rights and to life itself. Here, as in other situations, the law enforcer becomes law violator. 32

The Issue of Development: African American Education and The Culture of Struggle

The state appears once again to be substantially reducing the opportunity for African Americans to obtain a university education. The numbers of African American students attending historically white colleges and universities have never been substantial. However, the forced integration of historically black colleges and universities is moving swiftly. Educational policymakers speak of "desegregating" racially identifiable institutions but overlook the blatant racial exclusivity of traditionally white colleges and universities.

There are increasing numbers of "reverse discrimination" cases filed by white faculty and staff at historically black institutions. 34 Black institutions are now labelled discriminatory.

Many historically black colleges face an uncertain future as their federal funds are gradually being reduced and in some areas eliminated. The character of the political economy of black higher education in technologically advanced America is precarious.



If historically black institutions of higher learning are to persist, their survival and development again must become a part of, and not remain apart from, the overall struggle for black liberation and self-determination. A people who have been historically excluded from the conventional means of political participation, persuasion and change cannot utilize conventional measures exclusively to overturn their oppression. Alternatives must be employed. Whatever alternatives are found, it is certain that an organized struggle must be rooted in the masses of African Americans. As Luther Brown argues.

The effort to build strong, viable and accountable organizations within the Black higher education community must be intensified. The present group of organizations representing the Black higher education community must ground themselves thoroughly in the values of those whom they represent. If the masses of Blacks and the poor in general are the primary constituency of those organizations, then the effort to mobilize, involve and project their interests should be highly visible. 35

The survival of historically black colleges and universities, as well as the education of African Americans, depends on struggle. But for what kind of education should we struggle? What is the content of that education and what purpose should it serve? In a 1933 speech at Fisk University, W.E.B. DuBois argued that the historically black colleges must be grounded in the African experience. He said.

with Negroes. It uses that variety of the English idiom which they understand, and above all, it is founded, or it should be founded on a knowledge of the history of their people in Africa and in the United States, and their present condition. Without white-washing or translating wish into facts, it begins with that, and then it asks how shall these young men and women be trained to earn a living and live a life under the circumstances in which they find themselves or with such changing of those circumstances as time and work and determination will permit.³⁶

Further, arguing that African Americans could build universities and offer the kind of knowledge which could emancipate both African Americans and whites, DuBois declared:

Only a universal system of learning, rooted in the will and condition of the masses and blossoming from that manure up toward the stars, is worth the name... The chief obstacles in this rich land endowed with every national resource and with the abilities of a hundred different people—the chief and only obstacles to the coming of that kingdom of economic equality which is the only logical end only work, is the determination of



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the white world to keep the black world poor and make themselves rich.³⁷

The historically black institutions of higher learning and African American education must be rooted in the African experience and directed toward the survival and development of African people African American education must serve as a liberating force in America and in the world.

Black institutions must also establish linkages with other universities in the Pan-African world.

The historically black university and African American education must concentrate on several critical areas in preparing students to understand the world, to make a living in the world and to change the world. In view of the legacy of the mis-education of African Americans discussed above, African American education must first become increasingly iconoclastic in orientation and global in content, historically and contemporaneously. African American education must be grounded in the study of the Pan-African world. The impact of the Africian experience throughout the world must continue to be investigated, studied and disseminated. The myth that civilization and high culture originated in Greece, spread to Europe, and then filtered, down to Africa must continue to be challenged. The notion that Africans first touched the shores of the Americas as slaves must be overturned completely. Black institutions must also establish linkages with other universities in the Pan-African world. Black institutions must also establish linkages with other universities in the Pan-African world.

Secondly, African American education must overcome the fragmentation and compartmentalization of knowledge by increasingly exploring the possibilities of cross-disciplinary studies. This educational thrust seeks to achieve a more holistic appreciation of the human experience. Hence, research and instruction might include such combinations of conventional disciplines and approaches as the following, history, drama, and community organizing, music, architecture and urban geography, biology, political science and philosophy, engineering, urban economics, and management, or transportation policy, sociology and political economy. Traditional barriers to learning must be eliminated.

Thirdly, African American education will have to engage in the serious and systematic examination of Europeans—their philosophical orientation, politics, economics, culture, values, and social relations. As Allen Ballard advises:

Black scholars, then, must exert themselves even further to put forth their ideas and works to preempt white incursions into the affairs of Black people.... If the Black community is to create viable institutions of its own, then Black scholarship



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will have to begin in-depth studies of white society and the relationships between its political, economic, and social mechanisms and the Black condition.⁴⁰

The conventional approach to the study of the African experience (in Africa and in the Diaspora), as well as the frame of reference in most traditional disciplines, has been from the perspective of the European or the Euro American as they developed them. Western education developed along with European civilization in order to serve the interests of the West, consequently, Western education has been onesided in approach, incomplete in content and culture bound in orientation. Yet, Western education-and the concomitant Western world view-has been presented as value-neutral and objective. Neither knowledge nor its transmission is value-neutral and objective. As Bernstein points out. "How a society selects, classifies, distributes, transmits and evaluates educational knowledge it considers to be public, reflects both the distribution of power and the principles of social control."4 Hence, one speaks of the political, economic and cultural contexts of knowledge and its transmission. While both are treated as objective or as common sense, the opposite is the case. The ideas and world view presented reflect and reinforce the political, economic and cultural ideas of dominance and inequality in advanced technological society. Kevin Harris' critical analysis is instructive:

Knowing the world, or coming to know the world, is not a matter of learning or coming into possession of a set of facts or truths about the world, which are there in the world, and which the world yields up to those who are able to see them, it is rather, a matter of coming to perceive the world in particular ways, from particular perspectives, and from particular viewpoints, which are largely determined by and arise out of one's interactions in and with a particular historical and social context. Education, on the other hand, is a distinctly non-neutral political mechanism or institutionalized process that largely provides and legitimises the ways and perspectives by which and from which we shall come to know the world, it, is also a process that, in certain political circumstances, transmits as knowledge structured distorted misrepresentations of the world.⁴²

Hence, European theoretical assumptions and models are insufficient for the examination of Europeans and the whole of humankind. African American education will have to reverse, indeed supersede, this perspective and seek an understanding of the prime mover of the European mind and behavior and of the consequences for the people of the world. This project will require a conscious attempt to develop the multifaceted aspects of an African-centered social theory. This effort will also allow the exploration of an African-



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An Afrocentric world view means that the African experience becomes the norm or the standard of measurement and evaluation.

centered theory of knowledge which begins, "I sense and think, therefore, I-know." For the European, to know is always in the form, I think, therefore, I know." This body/mind bifurcation has no place in the African epistemology. Sense perception and reason are merely two sides of the same coin and both have their significance. Thus, the African epistemology is at once practical and holistic. Of particular importance in the area of research methodology, an Afrocentric world view means that the African experience becomes the norm or the standard of measurement and evaluation. Additionally, an Afrocentric perspective allows the systematic examination of the European from the African perspective—the origins and persistence of slavery, racism and capitalism, imperialism and colonialism, and the relationship between achievement in the fields of science and technology and the survival of humankind, for example. In this regard John Hodge points out that:

The Western emphasis on technological conquest relates directly to Western racist theories of the past two centuries Western man identified progress with technological development, with increased control over nature. When he observed other societies which had not developed his quality and quantity of technology, he assumed that they must be not as developed as himself. (This is still assumed today in the notion of the "underdevelopment world.") Rather than make the generous and humane assumption that these people had simply made a different value-choice, he assumed instead that they were either culturally or biologically inferior. He assumed, based on his observation of himself, that all men (by nature?) want to control nature, but only he, the Western white man, was superior enough to accomplish the feat. He then relegated these non-Western peoples to the "nature" which he sought to control, and used his advanced weaponry to accomplish that control.44

Fourthly, historically black institutions and African American education should strongly emphasize research and instruction in science and technology, as well as the social functions of science and technology, in order to produce scientists and technicians who will be capable of making ethical decisions about present and future technoscientific developments.

African Americans must become conscious of the powerful force of scientific and technological knowledge in advanced industrial American society. As Habermas observes:



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The progressive "rationalization" of society is linked to the institutionalization of scientific and technical development. To the extent that technology and science permeate social institutions and thus transform them, old legitimations are destroyed. The secularization and "disenchantment" of action-orienting worldviews, of cultural tradition as a whole, is the obverse of the growing "rationality" of social action. 45

Science and technology thus become critical forces in technologically advanced society, for they shape every aspect of societypolitical, economic, cultural and educational. All students are persuaded fo embrace the "scientific method" and perceive the world solely in "objective" terms, while eschewing the subjective. Radical empiricism reigns as scholars, possessing very little theoretical substance, scurry wildly to collect data, often acting as if the "facts" speak for themselves, Students are taught to ignore those political, economic and cultural phenomena which cannot be readily quantified or objectified for that which cannot be objectified is relegated to the metaphysical and is, therefore, considered unscientific. Yet, there are aspects of the scientific endeavor which are metaphysical. Certainly, the assumptions upon which any science is based are not tested,. they are merely accepted.46 Hence, there is the ever-present interaction between the subjective and the objective. As Albert Einstein observes:

Science as something existing and complete is the most objective thing known to man. But science in the making, science as an end to be pursued, is as subjective and psychologically conditioned as any other branch of human endeavor—so much so, that the question what is the purpose and meaning of science? receives quite different answers at different times and from different sorts of people. 47

Science, then, is obviously both objective and subjective because it develops as a part of, and not apart from, human development and all other social activities of a particular epoch. Science is integrally rooted in political, economic and cultural growth and development. The historian of science, J. D. Bernal points out:

Indeed, science has so changed its nature over the whole range of human history that no definition could be made to fit. Although I have aimed at including everything called science, the centre of interest.. lies in natural science and technology because... the sciences of society were first embodied in tradition and ritual and only took shape under the influence and on the model of the natural sciences. The theme which constantly recurs is the complex interaction between techniques, science, and philosophy. Science stands as a middle term between the established and transmitted practice of men



who work for their living, and the pattern of ideas and traditions which assure the continuity of society and the rights and privileges of the classes that make it up.48

The increasing incorporation by the state of techno-science increases the bureaucratization of the state in terms of organization, and furthers the rationalization of society in terms of decision-making and social activity. More importantly, in technologically advanced society, techno-science takes on the form of ideology—technocratic consciousness. As Habermas points out:

Technocratic consciousness reflects not the sundering of an ethical situation but the repression of "ethics" as such as a category of life. The common, positivist way of thinking renders mert the frame of reference of interaction in ordinary lanquage, in which domination and ideology both arise under conditions of distorted communication and can be reflectively detected and broken down. The depoliticization of the mass of the population, which is legitimated through technocratic consciousness, is at the same time men's self-objectification in categories equally of both purposive-rational action and adaptive behavior. The reified models of the sciences migrate into the sociocultural life-world and gain objective power over the latter's self-understanding. The ideological nucleus of this consciousness is the elimination of the distinction, between the practical and the technical. It reflects, but does not objectively account for, the new constellation of a disempowered institutional framework and systems of purposive-rational action that have taken on a life of their own.49

The curriculum itself reflects the technocratic consciousness of advanced technological society. Students learn that all problems can be solved by technical means, that is by the manipulation of numerous "objective" variables. Education, in this regard, attempts to depolition a social problems so that conflict can be perceived as a matter of management. Education, then, in technologically advanced society is grounded in scientism (i.e., scientific and technological knowledge as ideology).

In the final analysis, Africian Americans cannot ignore these areas of knowledge in an era in which scientific and technological knowledge critically interact with social development. We must not be overwhelmed by science and technology. While historically black institutions must not be in the business of producing "neutral" scientists, black scientists and non-scientists should form study groups to better understand the social impact of science and technology with respect to African Americans. Indeed, science and technology must be demystified.⁵⁰



Fifthly, black institutions of higher learning and African American education must become increasingly future-oriented. Certainly, one can have a greater knowledge of the past than of the future, yet, one can control neither. But if black institutions and African American education are to contribute to the survival and development of African people then futures studies is unavoidable. Increasing numbers of African Americans must embrace a futuristic orientation that will result in the preparation for political, economic and cultural change. African Americans must be educated in such a fashion so that neither they nor their education becomes obsolete.

Finally, the black university and African American education must intersect with the masses of African American people.

Sixthly, black universities must become centers where students engage in the study of serious and progressive policy analysis, planning theory and organizing principles. African Americans need to understand and appreciate the art and science of decision-making as well as the political, economic and cultural contexts relevant to the implementation of social policies. Not only must existing policies be analyzed, but also an attempt must be made to influence the development of both domestic and international policies, particularly in the areas of African and Caribbean affairs, as African Americans continue the struggle for liberation. In this regard, Marquerite R. Barnett and Ndoro V. Vera observe:

The black community, because of its historic position as a collectivity relegated to an inferior place in American society, has a particularly important stake in the outcome of the transformations likely in the 1980s. Afro-American leaders may, therefore, have to reorient their thinking away from dated civil rights agendas and be prepared to seize the domestic initiative and to reconstruct options in a policy arena heavily influenced by exogenous international factors.⁵²

Finally, the black university and African American education must intersect with the masses of African American people. There must be increased interaction between black institutions and the black communities in which they are located. Some of the interests and ideas of non-student and non-faculty community members must be tapped, and, through university-community seminars, symposia, study groups and the like, the university and community must become partners in the struggle for African American self-determination.⁵³

In the final analysis, African Americans must develop and begin to live a culture of struggle. Historically, when white America faced a



military crisis and thus needed African American labor, racial exclusion gave way to economic necessity and black Americans were given jobs. At these same times black Americans eased their struggle against racism and capitalism and were susceptible to integration. When adverse economic conditions subsided, whites again excluded African Americans from the labor force and blacks took up the struggle for self-help and self-determination. 4 Following political and economic gains of the late 1960's and early 1970's, African Americans again withdrew from the kind of public activism which had achieved the gains in the first place, as blind faith was placed in black elected officials and electoral politics.55 Therefore, the need for a culture of struggle is paramount. African Americans must consciously and constantly struggle against racial oppression, economic exploitation and cultural/ideological domination. Middle income status and Ph.D.'s for a few do no better the domestic conditions experienced by all African Americans. Conscious, constant and committed struggle by the organized masses of African American people must be regenerated and perpetuated. The African American struggle must become part of a Pan-African world project which seeks to reverse these same conditions. No one else will liberate African Americans if they do not endeavor to liberate themselves, and the African American struggle for knowledge in technologically advanced racist capitalist America will remain elusive. As M. Ron Karenga points out: -

To know is to acquire a responsibility to act. If we know the laws of society and yet don't move to apply this knowledge, to actively and audaciously change society, we shirk our responsibility and deserve the fate that befalls us. There is no need knowing the world if we don't move to change it. If we don't practice, preaching is of little use. Ten thousand theories cannot save us if we, ourselves, don't dare to struggle, to go against the tide and do as Cabral urged,—"act audaciously and with great initiative." 56



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NOTES

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- This paper emerges from a consideration of the third broad objective of the institute for the Study of Educational Policy, which is to use old paradigms creatively and to develop new paradigms " Perhaps, in using old paradigms creatively, one may, in fact, be engaged in the development of novel ways of perceiving reality. With this in mind, the theoretical approach attempted here is informed by and yet seeks to transcend, the contemporary ideological struggle, which has persisted since 1969, among African American thinkers and scholars about the applicability of either race or class analysis to the examination of the black experience in America. For an excellent discussion of this debate, see Faustine Jones, The Changing Mood in America Washington, D.C Howard University Press, 1977, Chapter 3 See also Manning Marable, "Black Nationalism in the 1970s, Through the Prism of Race and Class," Socialist Review, Vol. 10, No 2/3 (March-June 1980) pp 57-108, and William A Darity, Jr, "The Theory of Racial Discrimination Revisited Beyond the Ideology of Equality," Adherent, Vol. 7, No. 3 (December 1980) pp 91-119
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11 Thefborn, p 165

12 Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," in Althusser, Lenin and Philosophy, New York, 1971, p. 148.

13 Therbern, 167

14 Teday, we only hear of the "terrorism," of the national liberation organizations, such as SWAPO in Namibia. However, we must be conscious and critical of state terrorism wherever it exists. In the 1960s, the U.S. government instituted covert efforts to annihilate African American leaders and destroy their organizations iranians suffered under the American supported regime of the Shah, Azanians are brutalized by the South African junta. These, and similar cases are examples of state terrorism. The oppressor always overlooks its violence against the oppressed but looks upon their response with horror. As Paulo Freire points out:

Violence is initiated by those who oppress, who exploit, who fail to recognize others as persons—not by those who are oppressed, exploited, and unrecognized. It is not the helpless, subject to terror, who initiate terror, but the violent, who with their power create the concrete situation which begets the rejects of life. It is not the tyrannized who initiate despotism, but the tyrants. It is not the despised who initiate hatred, but those who despise it is not those whose humanity is denied them who negate man, but those who denied that humanity (thus negating their own as well). Force is used not by those who have become weak under the preponderance of the strong, but by the strong who have emasculated them.

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