

Racial Formation and Transformation:

Toward a Theory of Black Racial Oppression

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I see no changes, all I see is racist faces, misplaced hatred . . . /That's just the way it is/Some things will never change. 2Pac Shakur, "Changes"¹

Capitalist development in our research settings both preserves and remakes the racial order, extending and reinforcing racial barriers, but also creating new contradictions that paradoxically threaten to dismantle them.

Stanley B. Greenberg
*Race & State in Capitalist Development.*²

The racial history of blacks and whites in the United States can be usefully theorized as a succession of different racial formation. Harold Baron, "Racism Transformed: The Implications of the 1960s."³

Personal testimony, public surveys, and academic research reveal the continuation of rac(e)ism⁴ in the United States, especially anti-black rac(e)ism. The structures, ideologies, and relations of racial oppression have been pervasive and persistent in both U. S. and world histories. Rac(e)ism, or racial oppression, is a system of domination, discrimination, and degradation of people who differ in some physical traits from their oppressors.

Since the eighteenth century, racial oppression has structured both the position and the perceptions of black peoples.⁵ In the United States, rac(e)ism has been ubiquitous. It has pervaded every aspect of Blacks' and people of color's lives: economic, political, social, cultural, and personal. Moreover, the continuing significance of rac(e)ism has generated the illusion that the African-American experience has been static or cyclical. That

rac(e)ism has been constant and all encompassing is indisputable, but has it also been unchanging?

In a retrospective on the twentieth anniversary of the founding of Ethnic and Racial Studies, Martin Bulmer and John Solomos posit that "the salience of ethnicity and race . . . has become more evident during the last thirty years."⁶ Yet many observers contend that contemporary rac(e)ism is more covert than in previous historical periods. How can racial oppression be both more evident and less overt? Perhaps because both popular and scholarly interest in rac(e)ism has increased and the technologies to measure its effects have dramatically improved recently?⁷ What is more important, however, is Bulmer and Solomos's argument that the trend toward new racisms is a result of the "changing socio-economic environment of contemporary societies."⁸ The implication is that the appearance and properties of racial oppression responded to changes in a society's political economy. This suggests that rac(e)ism has been pervasive and persistent, but not unchanging. This makes sense, since to believe that fundamental change has not occurred in African Americans' and black people's relationship to the U.S. political economy, the state, and civil society, or between them and Euro-Americans and other U.S. nationalities, is to locate African people outside the historical process.⁹ If the system of racial oppression in the United States has changed over time, how do we account for Blacks' continuing location on the "bottom rail"? How do we recount the internal dimensions of the African-American experience, culture, and pleasure, without losing focus on the external and structural factors constraining Black people? What social forces have pushed the process forward or backward? What is the relationship between transitions and transformations in the system of racial oppression and African-American agency? The "chang-

ing same" is perhaps the metaphor that best captures the complexities of the African-American situation.¹⁰ But if we are to explicate the processes of Black racial oppression and explain how the role, position, and status of Blacks in the political economy, the state, and civil society have changed since 1619, we must move beyond description and metaphor. We must offer a general theory of rac(e)ism and a specific theory of Black racial oppression.

It is precisely "a sound theoretical apparatus" that the study of "racism" lacks, according to sociologist Eduardo Bonilla-Silva.¹¹ This project addresses this concern by offering a provisional theory of rac(e)ism. I have delimited my effort to the African-American experience; thus this article should be considered a contribution toward a more general theory of racial oppression. The sociohistorical experiences of other U.S. racialized groups compose a fundamental part of the presuppositions in which I conceive racial formations. Due to the spatial constraints of a journal article, however, their experiences will not form an essential part of this narrative. Nevertheless, much of my argument is applicable to the lived experiences of indigenous Amerindians, Chicano/as, Puerto Ricans, Filipino/as, and Chinese and Japanese Americans. But my primary purpose is to propose the Black Racial Formation and Transformation (BRFT) model as a theory and paradigm of Black racial oppression and African-American history. BRFT theory posits these hypotheses: (1) rac(e)ism is constitutive rather than contingent to U.S. social formations; (2) rac(e)ism includes institutional and individual practices and corresponding ideological representations;¹² (3) racial formations are dynamic rather than static; (4) racial formations represent specific systems of racial control that occur at particular historical moments; and (5) racial formations are formed and transformed according

to the dialectical interaction between changing political economies, evolving state systems, and the agency of the oppressed.

BRFT theory confronts fundamental historical questions, such as the relationship between continuity and discontinuity, the role of endogenous and exogenous forces, and the relationship between structure and agency in producing social change. This project is divided into five sections. First, I briefly summarize and critique the pioneering racial formation (and transformation) models of Michael Omi and Howard Winant and of Harold Baron. The contributions of Omi and Winant are more widely known, but my approach to racial formation and transformation is derived mainly from Baron. I am attracted to Baron's formulation because he emphasizes political economy and provides a periodization of African-American history. Periodization is the division of the history of a people, society, city, or person into discrete sections of time. In the second section, I discuss the centrality of periodization to the historical enterprise and critically examine several periodization schemas of African-American history. Third, using Alex Callinicos's theory of history, I construct a theory of African-American history by digging into the marrow of the Black experience and uncovering its patterns, trends, and structures. I delineate the structure and core components and chart the coordinates and linkages of the BRFT paradigm in the fourth section. In the fifth and final segment, I outline the central features of the "new nadir," the emerging African-American racial formation.

Foundations of the Black Racial Formation and Transformation Paradigm

The concept of racial formation was introduced in scholarly literature in the mid-1980s. In this section, I explicate two differ-

ent conceptions of racial formation theory, one by Michael Omi and Howard Winant and another by Harold Baron. Omi and Winant made the term famous in their 1986 monograph *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s*. But my conceptualization of Black Racial Formation and Transformation is an extension of Harold Baron's 1985 article, "Racism Transformed: The Implications of the 1960s."¹³ Although these theoretical models use similar names, the minute differences in nomenclature conceal profound distinctions in theorization.

Omi and Winant's main goal is to develop a conceptual framework for analyzing race and racism in the United States. *Racial Formation in the United States* focuses predominately on the African-American experience and how the Black Freedom movement (Civil Rights and Black Power) of the 1960s (1955-1975)¹⁴ changed the meaning(s) assigned to race, particularly "blackness." They contend that the concepts historically used by social scientists to explain racial oppression, ethnicity, class, and nation are reductionist or substitutionist. Moreover, Omi and Winant construct a definition of race that is neither essentialist nor ephemeral. According to them, race is "a concept which signifies and symbolizes social conflicts and interests by referring to different types of human bodies."¹⁵ They consider race "an unstable and decentered" composite of social interpretations. The meanings of race are in constant flux because they are determined by political struggle, or what Omi and Winant call "racial projects." According to them, dominant or subordinate political actors, reactionary groups, or groups with an emancipatory agenda can use race to mobilize their constituencies. Racial formation, their central concept, is the result of racial projects. They define racial formation as "the sociohistorical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed, and destroyed."¹⁶ Thus, for Omi and Winant, chang-

ing conceptions, categorizations, and interpretations of "race" are the key to comprehending and eradicating racism.

Omi and Winant's approach has several attributes. First, by focusing on the fluidity of race they historicize racial meanings, that is, they demonstrate that particular racial meanings are contingent rather than given a priori. Their first point is a precondition for their second. Because their meanings are not predetermined, race relations must be situated in real sociohistorical contexts. Third, because Omi and Winant are mainly concerned with the interpretation of racial meanings, they emphasize the legal construction and legitimation of those meanings. Thus they highlight the role of the state in racial formation. Fourth, unlike many postmodernists they distinguish race from racism.¹⁷ Fifth, the centrality of racial projects or political struggle to their project reveals their privileging of agency in the transformation of racial meanings.

Omi and Winant's approach has several deficiencies, some of which are the obverse of their strengths. For instance, although they advocate historicizing race, "racial projects," the process by which they posit racial formation occurs is quite broad and lacks specificity. Although they articulate the need to locate racial formation in real sociohistorical situations, they provide only brief sketches of historical periods other than the 1960s. Moreover, they overemphasize the state's role in constructing legal racial categories and policies because they minimize the political economy's role in structuring the social relations from which racial meanings are deduced and codified. The state, as Marx and Engels claimed, "mediates the formation of all common institutions."¹⁸ In a racial state, all institutions are racialized; thus every institution is politicized. Consequently, the state itself becomes the focus of emancipatory struggles as Omi and Winant claim.¹⁹ Yet, for Marx and Engels, the state

was the "form of organization" created by the capitalist class to secure its collective interests.²⁰ In contrast, for Omi and Winant, the racial state's "orientation" toward race develops from its interaction with race-based social movements. Stanley B. Greenberg's work supports their general conclusion, but unlike Omi and Winant, Greenberg traces racial actors' relationship to the political economy and the ruling race's capitalist class. Omi and Winant minimize the racial state's relationship to the dominant sector of the capitalist class.²¹ After all, even when nullifying forms of racial oppression, the state most often operates in the best interest of the capitalist class or only takes actions amenable to the dominant racial class stratum. That is, although the state becomes the site of struggle, it is not a neutral institution, nor are interest groups equally positioned to influence it, as pluralist theory maintains. Its political architecture is organized such that it cannot consistently oppose the interests of the capitalist class's leading sector. That is, the organization, regulations, and power arrangements at all three levels of the U.S. state are structured to privilege the wealthy, whites, and men. Making a similar point, E. San Juan asks, "But what is the differentia specifica of this new articulation of the exigencies of capital, of the social totality?"²² Although Omi and Winant assert that "an ineluctable link" exists between "the structural and cultural dimensions of race," their focus on the shifting rationalizations of racial ideology undermines their exploration of actual dialectical links between the ideological and structural elements of racial oppression.²³ Thus, for them, racial formation is preeminently an ideological process.²⁴

Baron covers much of the same territory as Omi and Winant, but his project differs significantly from theirs. He is especially interested in illuminating the relationship between race and class in the United States. Baron argues

that over the course of African-American history "the most decisive relationship is that between processes of capitalistic development and change in the forms of racial control."²⁵ He contends that changes in the racial order wrought by the Black freedom movement of the 1960s not only shattered the "existing racial formation" but were "comparable" to Emancipation. Baron approaches the race/racism problematic from a materialist position; thus he stresses the role of political economy. Although he recognizes the importance of the ideological and cultural changes brought about by the Civil Rights and Black Power movements, he does not elaborate on them because he is mainly concerned with structural transformations. His central analytical concepts, "racial formation and racial transformation," stress change—creation, development, and negation.²⁶ In contradistinction to Omi and Winant's idealist approach, Baron conceives of the Black racial formation as "the distinctive position—at times almost an enclave—of the black community within the United States social formation."²⁷ Baron's racial formations consist of four elements: (1) a dominant group classified as white, (2) a subordinate group defined as black, (3) a racial control system, and (4) the social formation's dominant national mode of production.²⁸ A racial formation, then, is a racialized social formation, that is, a racially stratified society with identifiable political spatial boundaries bound within a particular historical period. Baron identifies three racial formations or periods of African-American history: Slavery, Agrarian Ascendancy, and Advanced Racism. The theoretical relationship between African-American racial formations and their encompassing U.S. historical periods (social formations), Commercial, Industrial, and Advanced Capitalism, are central to his conception. Black racial formations are subordinate political economies that are subsumed within dominant U.S. national modes of production.²⁹

As an activist intellectual, Baron has as his primary objective the devising of a framework by which radical activists can "comprehend and guide historical change."³⁰ He considers the national mode of production the decisive element in racial transformations because changes in it precede and condition changes in the racial formation. Baron identifies the main features of racial domination as "economic exploitation and social-political power."³¹ Accordingly, he contends that the white capitalist class appropriates the benefits of racial oppression, but that all whites receive at least preferential treatment and symbolic benefits. In comparison to Omi and Winant, Baron de-emphasizes the state and the law. Prior to World War II, he argues, the state's main function was to establish the legal framework in which racial interactions occurred. Moreover, according to Baron, even though the law orders and rationalizes racial oppression it is the last aspect of the racial formation to change. He argues that the state's role changed dramatically after World War II. Although he privileges the political economy, he views racial transformation complexly. He sees racial transformation as the consequence of dialectical interactions between changes in the mode of production, state actions, and African-American agency.

Baron's model has several strengths. First, he clearly delineates his theory's central concepts, core elements, and major processes and their articulations. Second, he focuses on the dialectical interactions between capitalist development and rac(e)ism. His framework emphasizes the relationship between racial oppression and the broader social formation. Third, Baron's focus on the interaction between race and class necessitates that he analyze class stratification between and within each racialized group. This allows him to present a nuanced portrait of the racialclass interests and capacities of different political actors.

Fourth, he explicates the processes of change. Baron sees change as a multifaceted process involving the mode of production, the state, and Black self-activity. Another strength of Baron's model flows from the fourth. His core concepts, racial formation and racial transformation, lead him to conceive of racial formations as specific historical periods. Fifth, he manages to articulate the changing role of the state and law and explain their role in the creation and abolition of particular racial formations without overemphasizing them. Sixth, Baron begins to sketch the outlines of the current racial formation. In sum, Baron has constructed a materialist model that illuminates the themes, trends, and patterns undergirding the African-American experience and their formation and interaction with the U.S. national mode of production and state.

Baron's framework also has a few deficiencies. His methodology suggests dialectical connections between the structural systems of racial domination and racist ideologies and cultural manifestations. Yet he does not articulate how racial ideology and culture relate to the system of domination or how they manifested in specific racial formations. Thus, by default, he overly minimizes their roles in the processes of racial oppression. In addition, his periodization framework does not account for transitions or stages within a racial formation. Lacking these types of distinctions, his model is incapable of representing changes that occur in an historical period. Transitional stages are important because they highlight changes in each historical period that do not entail the transformation to another racial formation. Transitions evidence evolutionary changes and transitions in one or only a few areas. They are essential for tracing the development of the social processes and political mobilizations that pave the way for racial transformations.

Despite wide areas of difference, the formulations of Omi and Winant and of Baron

do share some similarities. First, both theories originated as responses to the inability of the ethnicity, class, and nation paradigms to explain the African-American experience satisfactorily. The African-American experience is paradigmatic for both sets of theorists. By thus situating the Black experience, they make powerful statements about the centrality of that experience to the understanding of race and racial oppression in the United States.³² Both paradigms view racial oppression as constitutive of rather than contingent to U.S. society. Both models conjecture that race/racism, although related, is fundamentally different from other forms of oppression and resistance such as class, ethnicity/nationality, and gender. Omi and Winant and Baron conceive racial formations as fluid. Finally, both paradigms view the 1960s as a watershed in race relations, especially Black/white relations.

I propose a Black Racial Formation and Transformation model that modifies and elaborates Omi and Winant's and Baron's pioneering theories by presenting a structural theory that is attentive to ideology and culture, that articulates the dialectical links between conditioning structures and human agency, and that explicates the processes, agents, and direction of change. BRFT is a conceptual model for investigating the past and present material conditions and ideological beliefs of African-descended people: demographic patterns, socioeconomic structures, historical processes, institutional arrangements, social movements, material and expressive culture, and psychological attitudes.

Periodizing the African-American Experience

Historians conceive history as a method for studying continuity and change over time and across space using particular concepts and

methodologies. A major part of making sense of history's protean nature requires historians to create periodization frameworks, that is, to categorize the past into coherent chunks of time. Periodization allows scholars to discern dominant patterns, themes, and trends. In this sense, periodizing frameworks highlight continuities and discontinuities. They also aid scholars in differentiating extensive transformations from episodic events and substantive changes from ethereal ones.

The family historian Daniel Scott Smith identified three types of periodization schemes in his study of family history: "dichotomous, secular trend, and episodic."³³ Dichotomous frameworks, as the name suggests, distinguish between two very distinct epochs. The title of John Hope Franklin's classic African-American history textbook, *From Slavery to Freedom*, is illustrative. According to Smith, secular trends cover intermediate time frames ranging from a decade to a century. Whereas a dichotomous schema is manichean (black and white), secular trend approaches are gray, more complex and nuanced. Baron's Agrarian Ascendancy is a secular trend period. Episodic periodization models categorize changes of short-term duration in one or a few areas such as economy, politics, or culture. These transitions last only a few decades and according to Smith are reversible. Rayford Logan's "nadir," 1877-1917, or Robert Smith's "post civil rights era" are two examples of episodic periods.³⁴

Most scholars of the African-American experience acknowledge three dichotomous experiences: Slavery, Sharecropping, and Industrialization. Thomas Holt claims these periods form the "essential contexts" for the African-American experience and are "key to any comprehensive study" of the United States.³⁵ Moreover, most African Americanists discuss the great migration, the Harlem Renaissance, and the Civil Rights movements

as distinct experiences. Yet few historians conceptualize these particular experiences as historical periods, specifically as episodic periods. According to the historian Ian Tyrrell, the history profession is the least theoretical of the social sciences and humanities. The historian Keith Jenkins concurred, adding "mainstream 'history culture' in this country" is characterized by a "chronic, antitheoretical nature."³⁶ History's atheoreticism in large part explains why African-American sociologists like E. Franklin Frazier and Oliver Cromwell Cox applied sociological theory to the African-American experience and grappled theoretically with the meaning of racial oppression whereas historians ignored these issues.³⁷ Consequently, constructions of explicit periodization schemas have become the province of social scientists, especially sociologists and political economists, rather than historians.³⁸

Besides Baron, several social scientists have developed periodization schemas of African-American history, including the sociologists Abdul Alkalimat, Joe Feagin, and Sidney Willhelm; the political economists Thomas D. Boston and Lloyd Hogan; and the historian Robert L. Harris.³⁹ Although a consensus does not exist, most of these scholars favor a three-period framework, similar to the one described by Holt. Willhelm, for instance, conceptualizes "three technological eras . . . preindustrial, industrialization, and the computer age."⁴⁰ Feagin termed his three historical eras "Slavery, 1640-1865; Semi-Slavery, 1865-1960; and Semi-Slavery, 1960-1986."⁴¹ Wilson divides his three stages of black-white race relations into the preindustrial stage, "plantation economy and racial caste oppression, 1619-1890s"; the industrial era, "the split labor market and racial oppression"; and the modern industrial period, "progressive transition from racial inequalities to class inequalities, 1940s-1970s."⁴² Building on



Riding the Train. Photo by Rima Vesely

Baron, Hogan defines his three eras as "Slavery, 1619-1865"; the "black sharecropping system, 1865-1965"; and "industrial wage labor, 1965-1984."⁴³

Alkalimat, Boston, and Harris reject the three-period framework. Offering perhaps the most comprehensive schema, Alkalimat and his associates' (hereafter referred to as Alkalimat) "Paradigm of Unity" (PoU) specifies general core elements (biology, political economy, society, and consciousness), identifies particular correlated concepts (color, class, culture, and consciousness), conceptualizes historical periods, and explains the processes of historical change. His particular concepts constitute the "units of analysis" for the African-American experience. Alkalimat's periodization emphasizes the transition between four periods of social cohesion (Traditional Africa, Slavery, Rural Life, and Urban Life) and four periods of social disruption (Slave Trade, Emancipation, Migration, and Crisis). Except Slavery, the periods of social cohesion connote spatial concepts or places, whereas the periods of disruption suggest processes. The periods of disruption are transitional social trend or episodic stages that shatter the rules, roles, relations, and racial meanings of the previous period of social cohesion and serve as transitions to a new period of social cohesion.⁴⁴ The presentation of race and gender as simply genetic categories is problematic. Without elaboration, their inclusion there suggests that Alkalimat views them as biological rather than biosocial categories in which the social relations of racial oppression are dominant. The lack of clarification evidences ambivalence because his actual discussions of the African-American experience and the history of Black women emphasize social processes. For example, in the case of Black women Alkalimat stresses the "triple oppression of Black women," the intersection of gender, race, and class. Similarly, he approaches the Black ex-

perience from the perspective that race and class are intertwined.⁴⁵

Whereas Alkalimat conceives of eight periods, Boston's "Stages of Afro-American Development" consists of two: "Slavery and the Period of Free Labor Relations," which correspond to the slave and capitalist modes of production.⁴⁶ They are dichotomous and thus they correspond to Franklin's two epochs: Slavery and Freedom. Boston's "Stages of Afro-American Development" is the most historically conceptualized model. First, he incorporates transitional stages in his framework. Unfortunately, he leaves the slavery era undifferentiated, but he does divide his second period, the "Period of Free Labor Relations" into three historical stages: "Black Land Tenancy," "Urbanized Labor," and "Marginalized Black Labor."⁴⁷ Because he only provides a sketch, it is unclear which phases are social trend or episodic eras. Boston's major contribution is his specification of interperiod and interstage transitions. According to him, some transitions are major whereas others are minor: Major transformations, such as the Civil War and Reconstruction, alter the basic relationship between dominant and subordinate classes and the internal structure of all social classes; minor transitions such as the Great Migration are less apocalyptic and affect internal class structures more than the position of the dominant racial class. The concepts of interstage and interperiod transitions facilitate Boston's analysis of the change processes between and within periods.⁴⁸

Harris's "A Conceptual Design for Afro-American History" focuses on transitions, processes, turning points, watersheds, and transformations. He identifies four periods of African-American history:

- (1) Transition: from Africa to America;
Process: Enslavement; Transformation:
Afro-Americans;

- (2) Transition: from Slavery to Freedom; Process: Emancipation; Transformation: Agricultural Workers;
- (3) Transition: from Country to City; Process: Urbanization; Transformation: Industrial Laborers; and
- (4) Transition: from Segregation to Civil Rights; Process: Enfranchisement; Transformation: First Class Citizenship.⁴⁹

Harris's main contribution is his historical-theoretical categories: transition, process, and transformation. Nevertheless, his application of them is confusing. For instance, the category "Transition" includes both places and processes and "Transformation" encompasses everything: the making of a people, labor classifications, and political and social incorporation. Moreover, his category, "First Class Citizenship" is idealist. It focuses on *de jure* rather than *de facto* issues, and thus it privileges legalities rather than realities. Because he does not explain the interaction between the transitions, processes, and transformations, his model is more a sketch than a fully articulated paradigm.⁵⁰

Similarities abound in the work of these theorists, as do significant differences. First, all are conflict theorists: dual labor theorists, economic determinists, Marxist, or neo-Marxists. They locate the source of conflict in either rac(e)ism or the dialectical interaction between class exploitation and racial oppression. Second, they agree on the modal experiences: slavery, sharecropping, and industrial wage labor. Furthermore, most (Alkalimat, Baron, Boston, Harris, and Hogan) conceive of African-American history as alternating between long dichotomous periods of relative stability and short intense stages of heightening racial conflict.

General agreement exists on the modal experiences, as Holt states; but there is wide disagreement on other issues. First, they differ widely concerning the causal factors de-

termining racial oppression and periodization, that is, the relationship between structure and agency. Willhelm, for instance, is a technological determinist. He contends, "A system of race relations can be associated with each technological period."⁵¹ His model privileges technological transformation and the actions of elites and neglects African-American agency, the role of white workers, and most other political and cultural factors. In contrast, Feagin emphasizes state actions. Nevertheless, his model also locates the initiative for reform and repression with elite whites. Writing about his second period, he states, "In the next century (1865-1965) the white ruling class introduced certain changes."⁵² Feagin relegates Black self-activity to the background; it appears as a silent specter casting its shadow over the process of change. His brief mention of antiblack rac(e)ism in the construction of white American identity serves to marginalize it. Wilson locates agency with different political actors during different periods: with plantation masters during slavery, workers during the industrial era, and the state and Black civil rights activists during the modern industrial era.⁵³ In contradistinction, Alkalimat, Baron, Boston, Harris, and Hogan characterize each period by a complex of elements, including political economy, technological change, politics, culture, and African-American agency. Methodologically, they locate the initiative for social transformation in the actions of African-American people. But as Marxists or neo-Marxists, Alkalimat, Baron, Boston, and Hogan stress the exploitation of labor. Politics, specifically the struggle for citizenship, is Harris's dominant theme. Although Alkalimat, Baron, Boston, Harris, and Hogan emphasize different factors, all identify or imply that African-American historical periods are part of specific structures of accumulation that are partially determined by African-American agency.⁵⁴

Second, because the theorists select different watersheds and turning points, they differ on the precise beginnings and endings of the periods. For example, all the theorists except Wilson view slavery as a separate historical period. Although Alkalimat ends "the rural agricultural period" in the 1930s, Feagin continues his comparable period, the first "Semi-Slavery" era, until 1960, and Hogan's "black sharecropping system" lasts until 1965. Harris's beginning and ending points are implicit rather than explicit; they are inferred by his turning points. And Willhelm does not offer specific beginning and ending points for any period.⁵⁵

In addition to disagreeing on the starting and terminal points, they also disagree on how to characterize the periods, especially sharecropping. For example, Boston and Harris conceive the "post-slavery period" as predominately characterized by "free labor relations." Yet Alkalimat, Baron, Feagin, and Hogan view their comparable eras as semicapitalist. Hogan refers to sharecropping as "a special type of exploitative labor system, based on feudal property relations."⁵⁶ Because Blacks were subject to extramarket forces of coercion and racial discrimination, Alkalimat, Baron, Feagin, and Hogan view this era as transitional between slave and capitalist production relations. I find the multiperiod frameworks superior to Boston's two-period model. Because he does not distinguish the dominant production relations operative between 1865 and 1940 from those operative after 1940, his two-period framework cannot be sustained analytically. That is, although some Black workers worked for wages during this stage, most African Americans were employed in production relations that were semicapitalist, at best. In the main, Blacks were not incorporated into wage labor until after 1940.⁵⁷

Periodization schemas are essential conceptual tools for analyzing the past because history is mainly about examining continuity

and change over time. Integral to historical materialist methodology and BRFT theory is a specific application of a reconstructed historical materialism to the African-American experience. Thus periodization is critical to the BRFT model because each racial formation represents a distinct period of African-American history. By identifying pivotal events and historical turning points, periodization provides the conceptual tools by which transitions within a racial formation and transformations from one racial formation to another can be mapped. Moreover, periodization schemas are generated by theory, but they also generate theoretical innovations.

Historical Theory and the Black Racial Formation and Transformation Paradigm

In accordance with the Marxist philosopher Alex Callinicos's ideas, I conceive of BRFT as a theory of history in the sense that it uses universal concepts to provide causal explanations for the content, contours, and patterns of African-American historical development. Here I will discuss the makeup, conversion processes, and course of the African-American racial formation and transformation model. BRFT theory is a particular application of historical materialism to Black history. Callinicos contends that classical historical materialism is a theory of history because it offers an account of social transformation. According to Callinicos, historical materialism posits "a weak tendency for the productive forces to develop, the consequent likelihood of organic crises and the primacy of structural capacities and class interests in explaining social action."⁵⁸ Moreover, Callinicos has argued, quite successfully, that theories of history embody theories of structure, transformation, and directionality.⁵⁹ These aspects specify the uniqueness of the social formation being observed and identify and ex-

plain the processes by which it was and will be transformed and the paths that change is likely to take.

I propose a conceptualization of the structure of Black racial formations that (1) identifies and explains their composition; and (2) identifies and explains their (r)evolutionary processes, tendencies, and course. The theory of Black racial formations and transformations builds on foundations laid by Baron (inclusive of contributions by Alkalimat, Boston, Harris, and Hogan) and the sociologist Albert Szymanski. I diverge from Baron in three essential ways. First, I subsume his first three aspects in what I call the racialization process. That is, I view race (the white and black racial groups) and racism as permutations of racialization. Second, following Szymanski I conceive of racism as inclusive of the processes of superexploitation, discrimination, and degradation.⁶⁰ Third, although I view the broader social formation's "dominant national mode of production" as enveloping and subordinating the racial formation's political economy, my conceptualization emphasizes the production relations of the specific political economy in which Blacks actually labored. The composition of a racial formation then includes processes of racialization; the intertwining of class, racial, and gender stratification; the relationship of its structures and ideologies to actions, events, and consciousness; and the relationship between dominant and subordinate political economies.

Racial formations are social formations that were initially created during periods of European plunder and conquest. Racial formations have developed in four overlapping but different historical moments: (1) 1492–1808, the era of merchant capitalism and primitive accumulation—European conquest of the Americas and the Atlantic slave(ry) trade;⁶¹ (2) 1787–1898, development of industrial capitalism and the bour-

geois nation-state—European settler colonies in the Americas declare their independence; (3) 1885–1989, the age of monopoly capitalism and imperialism—European and Euro-American colonization of Africa, Asia, the Pacific Islands, and Australia and national liberation movements; and (4) 1980 to the present, globalization—the postcolonial era. During the first moment of European domination, around 1680 English conquerors defined themselves as "white" and the Amerindian, African, Asian, Pacific Island, and Aboriginal peoples as "nonwhite," or specifically as "red," "black," "yellow," and "brown."⁶² Thus racial formations should be understood as white supremacist social formations.⁶³ In Charles W. Mills's terms, racial formations are founded on a racial contract the "most salient" feature of which is economic exploitation.⁶⁴

Racial formations are class societies in which peoples and nationalities have been converted into races. Each racial formation has a unique composition that distinguishes it from other instances of racial formations and, more important, from other social formations. To account for each racial formation's particularity requires, as Callinicos contends, a theory of structure. Since the underlying social relationships rarely correspond to surface appearances, it also necessitates that such a theory provide the explanatory concepts necessary for social analysis.⁶⁵ According to BRFT theory, racial formations include two interrelated and multifaceted aspects: racialization and a mode of production. Racialization contains two elements: (1) the idea of race, and (2) racism. Racialization literally means the social processes by which a dominant people makes itself and the peoples it oppresses into superior and inferior "races." The ruling race then rationalizes its dominance by claiming that the phenotypic features of the oppressed express their innate inferiority.⁶⁶ The state and law are essential for

codifying the material relationship of domination that is created through incorporation of the subordinate "racial" group in the ruling race's political economy. The intelligentsia of an elite that controls the state's repressive and ideological apparatuses initially imagines race. Thomas Jefferson's writings are a case in point.⁶⁷ This is not to negate the often-leading role white subordinate classes have played in consolidating a white supremacist social system. The exploited "white" racial-classes have often pressured the dominant white "racialclass" to organize, preserve, or extend white supremacy. More important, we should not ignore race's emancipatory use by oppressed peoples to organize their resistance movements.⁶⁸ Yet I must emphasize that the leading sector of a society's dominant racial-class must sanction racist practices and ideologies before they can be woven into a social formation's basic institutional fabric.

Yet what is race? Today, it is fashionable among humanities scholars and social scientists to conceive of race as a social construct created by rulers to rationalize and secure power and privilege. Natural scientists, however, refer to race as a "breeding population." Similarly, the philosopher Albert Mosley views race as "a set of characteristics that occurs with greater frequency among its members than among the members of another race." In contrast, the anthropologist Audrey Smedley considers race "a set of beliefs and attitudes about human differences, not the differences themselves."⁶⁹ Embodied in these statements is the essential difference between those who view race as a legitimate social category that specifies real biological differences and those who view it as merely a social construct. These statements are not mutually exclusive. Obviously, race is not natural, that is, totally determined by biology, but neither is it purely a social construct, that is, determined wholly by ideology.⁷⁰ The race concept has both biological and social

dimensions. The sociohistorical relations between two different peoples predominantly determine racial categories; nonetheless they are predicated on some real differences in physical appearance.⁷¹ These morphological characteristics give race an "underlying genetic basis," according to Mosley. This "apparent" correspondence with reality is what gives race, and by extension racism, the appearance of "common sense." Nonetheless biologists and social scientists have shown that these variations in appearance are not the physical expression of different underlying essences. In and of themselves, distinctions in phenotype and morphology are socially meaningless. "Races" are, in Benedict Anderson's language, "imagined communities," but unlike nations races are other-determined, at least initially.⁷² English colonialists could only declare themselves "white" by first designating enslaved Africans "black" and the indigenous peoples "red." The meaning(s) of "blackness" and "whiteness" were not predetermined but were constructed during the enslavement of African peoples, the specific sociohistorical context in which black-white racialization occurred. Therefore, although differences in phenotype and morphology between social groups are natural, that is, biologically based, the essential elements constituting the race concept are predominately sociohistorical.

If, as we have seen, the essence of race is social, then what really is important is not race per se, but racism. Historically, racism has been conceptualized as a system of convictions and conventions through which a person's phenotype is seen as a window to his or her intelligence and morality. This definition is partially correct, but it reduces racism to just an ideology because it ignores the material basis of racial oppression. A more thorough definition must account for both the material and ideological elements embedded in racial oppression. Racism is a relationship

of domination, discrimination, and degradation that includes both material and ideological elements. That is, racism is the organization of a society's institutional infrastructure so that the social relations, rules, and regulations give preference to the privileged "race" and discriminate against the oppressed "race," together with corresponding beliefs that the privileged group is superior and the subordinate group inferior. Racism's social character means that its material and ideological elements work through both collectivities and individuals.⁷³

Systems of racial oppression consist of both structural and ideological components. The French Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser divided capitalist social institutions into two types: repressive institutions (the police and military) and ideological institutions (media, popular culture industries, education, legal system, religion, social organizations, etc.). Althusser's insights are especially useful for analyzing racism or racial states. The repressive institutions are deployed to police the racial contract, whereas the ideological institutions are arrayed to construct and teach rationalizations justifying the racial order. To a greater or lesser extent, all institutions perform functions of coercion and consent building, but in a racial state institutions more frequently resort to force against members of the ruled race.⁷⁴

The material aspects of antiblack racism specifically involve superexploitation; market-based nonexploitative economic oppression; de jure or de facto discriminatory state policies; state terrorism and private racial violence; exclusion from the polity or systematic underrepresentation; and a combination of cultural imposition, appropriation, and commodification. The dominant production relations in which most Blacks have worked throughout most of African-American history can be characterized as superexploitation.⁷⁵ Black-white social relations, including

disproportionate unemployment, but particularly nonexploitative economic relations, such as consumption and governmental social reproductive spending, have been characterized by racial discrimination.⁷⁶ The ideological aspect of racism involves imputing imagined differences in intelligence, morality, and beauty to real physiognomic differences to rationalize a preexisting relationship of domination, discrimination, and degradation. Both during and since slavery, Euro-America's cultural and belief systems have been organized to produce and promote degrading images of African people and to appropriate and mass-market African-American creativity.⁷⁷

Both the repressive and the ideological institutions of racism have social and personal effects. Consequently, racism infects and warps all social relationships, especially those that are already predicated on domination such as class, ethnicity/nationality, and gender. Depending on their racial designation, individuals are either beneficiaries or victims of the institutional mechanisms and ideological representations of racial domination. Racism privileges those with skin designated white by giving them additional material benefits and what W.E.B. Du Bois termed a "psychological wage."⁷⁸ In contrast, those who are deemed black, brown, red, or yellow are penalized and suffer immense monetary losses due to superexploitation and economic discrimination. Additionally, people of color are debased and racial oppression induces deleterious effects on their mental and physical health, often producing internalized racism and exacerbating illnesses such as hypertension.⁷⁹

Racial formations have a complex dialectical relationship to the broader social formations in which they are found. The production process and the corresponding social relations of production prevalent in racial formations differ from and are subordinate to the



Looking for Work. Photo by Máximo Colón

dominant national mode of production, although racial formations are subsumed within the larger social formations.⁸⁰ For instance, the mode of appropriation of the surplus in both slavery and sharecropping differed significantly from the appropriation process in the dominant capitalist mode of production. Also, the level of productive forces and the technologies employed in the political economies and industries in which Blacks predominated lagged behind those prevalent in the dominant political economy. Moreover, higher levels of coercion and repression than exist in the core political economy characterize racial formations. Slavery is illustrative. The slave South was part, but a subordinate part, of the evolving U.S. com-

mercial capitalist system. Before the late antebellum period (1840–1860) both the South and the Midwest were noncapitalist. The South was characterized by slavery, the Midwest by small-scale commercial agricultural production, and the Northeast by manufactory capitalism. Before the 1840s, midwestern family farmers operated a mode of production that Charles Post has described as “petty-commodity production.”⁸¹ It was noncapitalist because these farmers employed few workers, utilized little machinery, produced primarily for subsistence, and sold their meager surplus in regional markets. The South was characterized by a political economy that blended noncapitalist features of slavery, particularly coerced labor, with the

bourgeois features of commercial speculation. Slavery's relationship to the other production systems in the U.S. social formation determined the nature and role of the slave system.⁸² Although a free wage labor system existed in the American South, Black slave, not free white labor, produced the cash crops that were the economy's foundation. Slavery was noncapitalist in both its production and its social relations, and in the U.S. social formation it was subordinate to northeastern manufactory capitalism and thus it produced commodities for the world capitalist market.⁸³

Since history is properly conceptualized as the study of change and continuity over time and across space using particular concepts and paradigms, historical theories must explain the mechanism(s) by which transitions both within a society and transformations from one society to another are produced. Racial formations are constantly changing, being transformed either into another stage or into a new racial formation. According to Callinicos, to account for social change, theories of history must have embedded in them a theory of transformation.⁸⁴

Historical change is generally explained by two broad theories: one that identifies a single leading cause and another that focuses on the combination of several factors. Black racial formation and transformation subscribes to a view that transformations and transitions are overdetermined. In general, I mean that all social phenomena shape all other social phenomena by establishing the sociohistorical context in which they exist. Specifically, I mean that racial formations and racial restructuring, whether transitions or transformations, are the result of the interaction of multiple social forces.⁸⁵ Among the most important social factors, in terms of racism, are the dialectical interaction among technological innovations; economic reorganization; and political conflict, especially Black resistance and the state's responses.

The consequence of these interactions with the dominant national mode of production is the development of a new social structure of accumulation. For instance, at the end of the eighteenth century the invention of the cotton gin, the establishment of the federal Constitution enshrining private property and state's rights as its central concepts, the westward expansion, and the closing of the Atlantic slave(ry) trade combined to transform U.S. slavery. These processes and events changed slavery from a decaying patriarchal system of small commercial farms on the Atlantic seaboard to a system of huge, prosperous plantations in the deep South that produced cotton primarily for the international market. The transition to King Cotton drastically changed the slave relations of production. Before the cotton gin's invention, it took a slave a whole day to clean a pound of cotton; afterward that same slave could clean 150 pounds of cotton a day. In this new phase, slave owners solidified slavery, intensified exploitation, and increased oppression. A more stringent Fugitive Slave Act was enacted under President George Washington in 1793 and an even harsher one in 1850 under President Millard Fillmore. Enslaved Africans responded by altering their strategies of resistance. Conspiracies and rebellions by slaves became more extensive and elaborate. The most significant revolts, the Prosser Rebellion, the Louisiana Uprising, the Vesey Conspiracy, the Turner Revolt, and the New Orleans and Charleston arsons, all occurred after 1800. According to C.L.R. James, revolts before 1800 sought to escape slavery; afterward slave rebels sought to destroy the "peculiar institution."⁸⁶

Industrial capitalism was expanding and transforming both the Northeast and the Midwest simultaneous with the southern transition to the Cotton Kingdom. According to Post, during the 1840s and 1850s northeastern manufacturers in "leading branches of

capitalist industry" such as textiles, railroads, meatpacking, and production of farm equipment broke their dependence on merchant capital and revolutionized both the labor process and the social division of labor. By 1840, 37 percent of U.S. workers were working for wages.⁸⁷ The invention of the steam engine and the social forces unleashed by the industrial revolution combined with increasing slave resistance and the growth of abolitionism to destroy chattel slavery.

The production and social relations operating in the new racial formation are different from those of the old racial formation and the dominant mode of production. For instance, after slavery was abolished, racial oppression was recast and slowly a new rationalization was created to buttress the new system of racial domination.⁸⁸ Most freedmen were incorporated in the ambiguous and highly oppressive economic system of tenancy, particularly sharecropping, its lowest rung. The production and social relations of sharecropping were both different from and similar to those of slavery. And they deviated sharply from those operative in northern industrial capitalism. Sharecropping shared "characteristics with both capitalist and noncapitalist farms," according to Susan A. Mann. It was semiproletarian in its work relations—tenants received payment in part of the crop rather than in money wages—and the labor contract characterized by the "black codes" was constructed on coercive rather than free labor relations.⁸⁹ Meanwhile, Black women were proletarianized as low-paid domestic servants.⁹⁰ And although African-American men were initially incorporated in the polity, by 1900 they had been driven out of electoral politics by legal chicanery and extralegal violence.

The basic premise of the BRFT paradigm is that the mode of capital accumulation and disaccumulation conditions the historical form in which racial oppression manifests. Racial formations or different periods of

African-American history are created by the dominant conditions (material and ideological) of African-American life. BRFT theory acknowledges the conditioning capacity that structures have on agency in the historical process. I theorize that transformations between periods of racial formation and transitions between stages within a racial formation are based on complex interactions between U.S. capitalist political economies (dominant and subordinate), institutions and ideologies of racial domination, and the self-liberatory praxis of African Americans.

Theories of history, according to Callinicos, must also include a theory of directionality. He contends that theories of structure and transformation necessitate an attempt to chart the course and pattern of sociohistorical development. Finally, Callinicos posits that a theory of directionality need do two things. First, it must identify the property by which it calculates progression or regression. Second, it must specify whether history's tendency is toward progress, regression, or repetition.⁹¹

The key variable determining the character of Black racial formations is Black labor, or more precisely the degree of incorporation and the nature of the production relations in which African Americans work. Where are Blacks in the political economy? What is the relationship of Black people to the nation's major mode of production? How are Blacks distributed throughout the class structure? In what class fractions within each class are Blacks mainly found? This is not to negate the importance of questions of political rights and cultural representation, autonomy, and influence, but to establish the context in which they operate. As Baron has argued, changes in the dominant mode of production precede transformations in racial formations and establish the framework in which new racial formations are consolidated.⁹²

As a specific application of historical materialism, racial formation and transformation

theory is built on a progressive view of historical development. To paraphrase Erik Olin Wright, believing in an emancipatory theory for (Black) history is quite different from articulating a precise path and fixed sequence for (African-American) historical development. BRFT theory is an analytical framework that analyzes the past and suggests a theory of historical possibilities, rather than a teleological statement of African-American historical trajectories.⁹³

African-American racial formations correspond to accumulation structures of U.S. capitalist development. Scholars have identified four structures of U.S. capital accumulation: Commercial Capitalism, Industrial Capitalism, Corporate Capitalism, and Globalization. Similarly to Baron, I identify three prior periods of Black U.S. racial formation: Slavery, 1619–1865; Plantation Economy, 1865–1940; and Proletarianization, 1940–1980.⁹⁴ Since Baron last addressed this issue, however, I believe a fourth historical period, the New Nadir, has taken shape. The New Nadir emerged after the recession of 1989.⁹⁵ Thus I conceive of African-American history as a succession of four qualitatively distinct periods characterized by dominant features that include continuities and discontinuities with the previous racial formation. The first three periods include several stages, but the fourth period is relatively new and has yet to differentiate into clear stages (see Table 3.1). It does appear, however, that from 1980 until about 1995 deproletarianization and declining economic opportunities were the dominant trends, and since then subproletarianization and rapid class differentiation have characterized the period.

Black racial formations do not fit neatly into the periodization of the U.S. political economy or social structures of accumulation. Capitalism developed unevenly across U.S. regions and alternately experiences periods of prosperity and crisis. Blacks have gen-

erally existed in a subordinate political economy. This location is a result of racial oppression. There exists a lag between the emergence of a new structure of accumulation and the transformation of African Americans' role in the political economy, relationship to state and civil society, and participation and depiction in popular culture.

Baron claimed that the transformation from one racial formation to another was the result of a catastrophic event: a revolution, depression, or war. This is true, but revolution is the culmination of a series of evolutionary events; so also is the transformation to newer racial formations. Each racial formation consists of several historical stages and pivotal events. Baron does not envision transitional stages within his historical periods. Without the conceptualization of transitional stages, a racial formation appears as one long undifferentiated moment. Yet the historical process requires that each period undergo historical development. Each period begins, develops, reaches its apex, declines, and is eventually superseded by another period.

I refer to the more comprehensive changes between periods as interperiod transformations and the shifts within the same racial formation as interstage transitions.⁹⁶ Both transformations and transitions can change the production relations and subsequently not only alter the composition of but also produce a new class structure in the Black community, as Boston delineates. They can also significantly change Blacks' relationship to the state and civil society and transform African-American cultural productions. Transitions or intermediary phases are foundational to Black Racial Formation and Transformation theory.

How do transitions and transformations in racial formations occur? According to Boston, the motor driving change between stages and periods is the "racial contradiction," or the clash between Black agency and

TABLE 3.1 Racial Formation and Transformation

I. Components and Processes			
Components		Process	
A. Races		A. Racialization	
B. Racism		B. Structural Dom.	
		B. Ideological Dom.	
C. Modes of Production		C. Racial Formations	

II. Periods of United States Capitalist Accumulation			
1. Commercial Capitalism, 1607-1865	2. Industrial Capitalism, 1865-1920	3. Corporate Capitalism, 1920-1989	4. Globalization, 1990 -Present

III. Periods of African American Racial Formation and Transformation			
Transformation	Transformation	Transformation	Transformation
1. Slavery, 1619-1865	2. Plantation Economy, 1865-1940	3. Proletarianization 1910-1979	4. Marginalization, 1980-Present
<i>Transitions</i>	<i>Transitions</i>	<i>Transitions</i>	<i>Transitions</i>
Coerced Labor, 1619-1660	Civil War & Reconstruction, 1861-1877	Migrations, 1910-1970	Deproletarianization, 1976-1992
Consolidation, 1661-1700	Contract Labor, 1865-1870	Civil Rights & Black Power Movements 1955-1975	
Expansion, 1700-1800	Westward Migration, 1879-1910		Subproletarianization, 1992-Present
King Cotton, 1800-1865			

IV. Periods of Racist Ideological Representation			
Transformation	Transformation	Transformation	Transformation
Religious & National Prejudice, 1619-1680	Social Darwinism, 1802-1920s	Cultural Deprivation, 1940s-1990s	Color-Blind Racism, 1990s-Present
<i>Transitions</i>	<i>Transitions</i>	<i>Transitions</i>	<i>Transitions</i>
Biological Inferiority, 1661-1940s	Scientific Racism, 1880s-1940s		

the forces of racial oppression. Here Boston seems to view agency, the strength of racial organizations, ideological development, and the quality of Black leadership as the major transformative force. Baron views "the demand for black labor," the degree of incorporation of Blacks in the political economy, as

the main source of change. Whereas Boston stresses self-activity, Baron emphasizes structural factors. But it is important to understand that these are emphases, because neither approaches the topic one-dimensionally. For instance, Baron's stress on occupational incorporation implies much more than

mere employment. It suggests specific contradictions between the production relations under which Blacks labor and the level of the productive forces. Baron's model delineates particular impacts that each advance in the productive forces has had in structuring its corresponding racial formation. This clearly implies that his notion, "the demand for black labor," includes the whole complex of the forces and relations of production operating in that racial formation. Together Boston's and Baron's ideas encompass both processes by which Marxists theorize historical change: an accelerating crisis between the forces and relations of production and an increase in revolutionary struggles.⁹⁷

Black Racial Formation and Transformation theory conceives of history as ultimately progressive but views the movement between stages and from one period to the next as possibly possessing improvements, stasis, and deteriorations in the oppressed race's situation. Thus although each movement to the next phase or historical period could be a qualitative advancement or a retreat, the range of the racial formation and transformation process is best depicted as a spiral. That is, despite setbacks and apparent lack of movement, the historic motion of African-American history is toward freedom and self-determination.⁹⁸

**The New Racial Formation:
Class Stratification,
Subproletarianization,
Segregation, and Superfluosity**

In 1865, Frederick Douglass speculated that emancipation would witness the metamorphosis rather than the end of "slavery." According to Douglass,

Slavery has been fruitful in giving itself names. It has been called "the peculiar insti-

tion," "the social system," and the "impediment." It has been called by a great many names, and it will call itself by yet another name; and you and I and all of us had better wait and see what new form this old monster will assume, in what new skin this old snake will come forth next.⁹⁹

That "old snake" that Douglass spoke so eloquently of is again undergoing a transformation. As we enter the twenty-first century, many gains won by the Civil Rights and Black Power movements have been nullified and African Americans are being plunged into a new nadir. We are in the midst of the construction of a new racial formation.¹⁰⁰

The transformation to a new racial formation represents a comprehensive restructuring of the previous relationship of racial oppression. It preserves elements of the old, recasts others, creates new forms, and weaves these strands into a coherent tapestry. Over the past quarter of a century, globalization has produced profound change in African Americans' role and position in the political economy, the state, and civil society. The emerging U.S. racial formation is characterized by eight new structural adjustments and a corresponding new ideological rationalization: (1) the diversification of the Black population via the immigration of blacks from the Caribbean and Africa, (2) the marginalization of African-American workers, (3) accelerating class stratification, (4) the "New Segregation," (5) the "New Illiteracy," (6) the "New Disfranchisement," (7) a resurgence in state terrorism and private racial violence, and (8) racialized incarceration. Moreover, the new racial formation has produced a new rationalization for racial oppression, "color-blind racism," which denies the salience of race in U.S. society.¹⁰¹

A major feature of the new Black racial formation is the demographic transformation of the U.S. black population. Demographic

change is occurring on two levels: population diversification and regional distribution. First, globalization has stimulated a labor migration of black peoples from less developed peripheral areas to more developed core economies.¹⁰² Although small when compared with Latino/as and Asians, the immigration of black peoples from the Caribbean and Africa into the United States is remaking the African-American population. Ethnic diversity among black people in the United States is not new, but the percentage of foreign-born blacks has grown considerably over the last quarter of the twentieth century. In 1960, foreign-born blacks constituted only 1 percent of the U.S. Black population. In 1990, they composed 4 percent and undoubtedly currently constitute a much higher percentage. Racialization and creolization are the historic processes by which the African-American people were initially constructed from many African ethnicities.¹⁰³ Because of racism, African-descended immigrants do not become "Americans," but blacks, and perhaps, eventually, African Americans. Additionally, African Americans are more regionally diversified than ever before, although they are still concentrated in the central cities of metropolitan areas, where 54 percent reside. Moreover, the South-to-North migration pattern that had characterized African-American migration patterns since slavery has been dramatically reversed. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, between April 1, 1990, and July 1, 1997, five southern states registered the largest population increases among African Americans: (1) Florida, 480,255; (2) Georgia, 374,946; (3) Texas, 326,065; (4) Maryland, 200,609; and (5) North Carolina, 181,417. Consequently, by 1998, 55 percent of African Americans were living in the South. But the distinctive feature of the new black racial formation is not ethnic or regional diversification, but the economic, social, and political transformation of black communities.¹⁰⁴

Deindustrialization and downsizing disproportionately affected Blacks, making large sectors of the Black population marginal to the economy. The marginalization of Black workers is more the result of company failures and the permanent loss of jobs than of factories relocating to low-wage areas outside or inside the United States. Globalization has had its greatest effect on unskilled labor. Technological innovation, the downward mobility of skilled workers, and governmental trade policies have escalated the unemployment rate for unskilled workers. Because Blacks constitute 46 percent of the poorly paid unskilled workers, their unemployment rate soared from 5.6 percent in 1970 to 12.9 in 1993. Moreover, Black youth unemployment in 1998 was 17 percent, twice that of white youth. Deproletarianization is a major factor; nevertheless, the main economic dynamic affecting Blacks may be employment as subproletarians in menial minimum-wage jobs.¹⁰⁵

Another characteristic of the new racial formation is the accelerating class stratification among Blacks. This is a consequence of the widening gulf between the world's rich and poor generated by globalization. The surging growth of the elite and the slow recovery of the working class and poor from their dramatic decline during the 1980s have drastically exacerbated wealth disparities among Black people. Also, according to Richard L. Zweigenhaft and G. William Domhoff, America's power elite is increasingly becoming more racially diverse.¹⁰⁶ The new Black elite is a product of the expansion of black-owned businesses and the incorporation in professional positions in government and private corporations. In 1998, 23 percent of African-American women and 17 percent of Black men were employed in the traditional professions or in the new managerial and technical class. Between 1987 and 1992, African American-owned busi-

nesses increased from 424,165 to 620,912, or 46 percent. Their revenue increased 63 percent from \$19.8 billion to \$32.2 billion. Although the real median income of African-American households rose 4.3 percent from \$24,021 to \$25,050 between 1996 and 1997 and the percentage of Blacks in poverty decreased from 28.4 percent to 26.5 percent, they actually lost ground.¹⁰⁷ This apparently contradictory phenomenon has occurred because 95 percent of the "economic boom" over the past twenty-five years has gone to the country's richest 5 percent. Thus, despite the income gains over the past three years, the "real purchasing power" of the nation's bottom fifth remains below 1979 levels. Moreover, their percentage of the national total "has declined steadily, from 5.4 percent . . . in 1979, to 4.6 percent in 1989, to 4.2 percent in 1997."¹⁰⁸

In the new nadir, the Black elite (the richest quintile) has dramatically increased its share of the aggregate income of Black families. But this trend accelerated as Black Power was erupting out of the Civil Rights movement. During the thirty-year period from 1968 to 1998, the share of the Black working class and poor (the lowest, second, and third quintiles) of Black families' aggregate income plummeted. Meanwhile, the Black middle class's (the fourth quintile) share has remained stagnate. A generation ago, in 1968, the poorest fifth, the wealthiest fifth, and the top 5 percent received 5 percent, 42.7 percent, and 15 percent shares of the aggregate income of Black families, respectively. Two decades ago, the bottom fifth's share declined to 4.4 percent whereas the shares of richest fifth and the top 5 percent rose to 44.3 and 15.3 percent, respectively. A decade ago, they received 3.3, 47.9, and 17.7 percent, respectively. In 1998, the percentage gap for the lowest fifth and the wealthiest 5 percent of Black families remained the same.¹⁰⁹ The wealthiest 5 percent of Black families claimed

17.8 percent of the aggregate share of Black family income, compared to 3.4 percent for the poorest fifth. Meanwhile, the richest fifth's share only declined by 0.3 percent to 47 percent.¹¹⁰ The surging growth of the Black elite, the gradual increase in the Black middle class, and the dramatic decline of the working class and poor have drastically exacerbated wealth disparities among Black people. Currently, the richest 1 percent of Americans control 40 percent of the nation's wealth, and the richest 10 percent own more than the bottom 80 percent. Wealth disparities have not reached such proportions in the Black community, but the trend has mirrored the world and U.S. distribution patterns. The journalist Salim Muwakkil reports, "The richest one-fifth of African-Americans now earn a record 50 percent of the total income of the Black community."¹¹¹

Ghettoization and racial segregation, although still central, have been transformed in the new racial formation. Using an index called "hypersegregation," Douglas S. Massey and Nancy A. Denton discovered that 35 percent of blacks have almost no day-to-day contact with nonblacks, especially Euro-Americans.¹¹² David Theo Goldberg calls this phenomenon "the new segregation." According to him:

Today, while state and county level segregation has largely dissipated, neighborhood segregation has solidified and it has been bolstered by a new form as a consequence of suburbanization; where blacks are located in large numbers, whites and blacks tend not only to live, work, go to school, and die in different neighborhoods but in different cities.¹¹³

Furthermore, the possession of wealth, education, jobs, and almost all other public goods corresponds to the new municipal apartheid.

Public education mirrors and reproduces the racialclass structure. Thus the quality of education varies dramatically between inner-city and suburban school districts. The caliber of education was always poor in black communities. Therefore Blacks traditionally lagged behind Euro-Americans in educational attainment. But over the past four decades, African Americans have eliminated the statistical difference between them and whites in high school completion. Currently, 88 percent of African Americans between age twenty-five and twenty-nine graduate from high school. In 1998, approximately 3 million, or 15 percent, of African Americans in this age group had completed at least a bachelor's degree. This is nearly four times the percentage of African Americans who held four-year college degrees in 1960. Moreover, according to the Census Bureau, "More than 800,000 had advanced degrees."¹⁴ But just as African Americans closed the gap in traditional educational attainments, the revolution in computer technology made possession of higher-level mathematics and computer skills "basic" for job acquisition. Consequently, the inequalities in school funding and racial discrimination have produced a "new illiteracy."¹⁵

The "stagflation" of the mid-1970s, globalization, and the resulting deindustrialization and downsizing led to policies of racial retrenchment producing what Stephen Steinberg has called "the white backlash and liberal retreat."¹⁶ One aspect of this retrenchment was the 1980s judicial assault on the gains of the Civil Rights and Black Power eras. An especial target of the conservative attack has been political representation, specifically majority Black and Latino/a voting districts. The purpose of majority-minority districts was to ensure that racial minorities' votes counted. After the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, various electoral mechanisms, such as gerrymandering, multi-

member districts, and run-off elections were used to dilute the votes of Blacks and other people of color. The 1990 reapportionment and redistricting process addressed vote dilution by creating majority-minority districts. Redistricting increased the number of majority-minority congressional districts from twenty-nine to fifty-two and also substantially increased the number of majority-minority legislative districts. By the mid-1990s, the number of Black and Latino/a elected officials had risen to their highest number, 8,000 and 5,000, respectively.

In 1980, Alkalimat termed the use of the census undercount to undermine the black vote the "new disfranchisement."¹⁷ Winnett Hagens and Ellen Spears appropriated the term to identify the effort by white voters to repeal majority-minority congressional and legislative districts: "The 'new' disfranchisement gives people the right to vote, and in doing so it breathes life into the illusion of a society based on consent. This 'new' disfranchisement steals from the voters not their ballot but their choice of candidates and representatives. It also steals the power of the vote through dilution."¹⁸

In essence, the new disfranchisement nullifies the long-standing principle that "The right to have one's vote counted is as open to protection as the right to put a ballot in a box." Established in *United States v. Mosley*, 525 U.S. 120 (1915), this principle was reaffirmed in *Gomillion v. Lightfoot*, 364 U.S. 339 (1960), and *Thornburg v. Gingles*, 478 U.S. 30 (1986). The Supreme Court in *Gomillion* ruled the racially motivated gerrymandering of the city of Tuskegee, Alabama, unconstitutional because it diluted Blacks' votes. And *Thornburg* determined that North Carolina's 1980 redistricting undermined Blacks' ability to "participate in the political process and to elect representatives of their choice."¹⁹ Rejecting the principle that a person's vote must count, white voters chal-

lenged the new majority-minority voting districts.

Immediately after the 1990 redistricting, whites began contesting voting districts that were drawn to ensure African Americans a chance to "elect representatives of their choice." In *Shaw v. Reno*, 509 U.S. 630 (1993), the Court ruled a majority-Black North Carolina congressional district was unconstitutional according to the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment because voters could be separated on the basis of race. In *Miller v. Johnson*, 515 U.S. 900 (1995), the Court made a similar determination, finding race was the "predominant, overriding factor" behind the shape of Georgia's Eleventh District. Contradictorily, in *Shaw v. Reno* the Supreme Court ruled that Black plaintiffs must prove "discriminatory intent" and "discriminatory effect," yet did not impose these same requirements on white plaintiffs in *Miller v. Johnson*. These decisions undermine the Fifteenth Amendment and the Voting Rights Act. Collectively, *Shaw v. Reno*, *Miller v. Johnson*, and more recent decisions not only restrict the growth of black and brown political power but attack African Americans' and Latino/as' right to choose their representatives.¹²⁰

The right's judicial-legislative assault extends far beyond voting rights, however, and their attack on African Americans transcends legal means. Since California's repeal of affirmative action, eleven other states are poised to follow its lead. Similar to the overthrow of the "first reconstruction" and initiation of the "first nadir," the right's strategy again involves a coordinated use of legal and extralegal tactics. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, the number of hate groups increased 12 percent from 1997 to 1998, from 474 to 537.¹²¹ Private and public racist violence has increased at an alarming rate and become more heinous. The murder of James Byrd Jr. represents the former; the

police brutalization of Abner Louima and murders of Tynisha Miller and Amadou Diallo accent the latter.

Perhaps the most devastating aspect of the right-wing assault has been the criminalization of a generation of Black youth. The criminalization of Black youth is a consequence of the emergence of the prison-industrial complex, which is a product of the globalization of capital. According to prison rights activist Eve Goldberg and political prisoner Linda Evans, like the military-industrial complex, the prison-industrial complex represents the "interweaving of private business and government interests" for the purposes of profit and social control.¹²² President Reagan's "war on drugs" has through its racial profiling, targeting of urban areas, mandatory minimum sentences, and sentencing disparities created a legal superstructure that has made it a war on Black youth. The assault on Black youth has had three interrelated impacts: (1) it has accelerated racialized incarceration; (2) it has facilitated the "mugging of the black male image"; and (3) it has increased racial polarization.

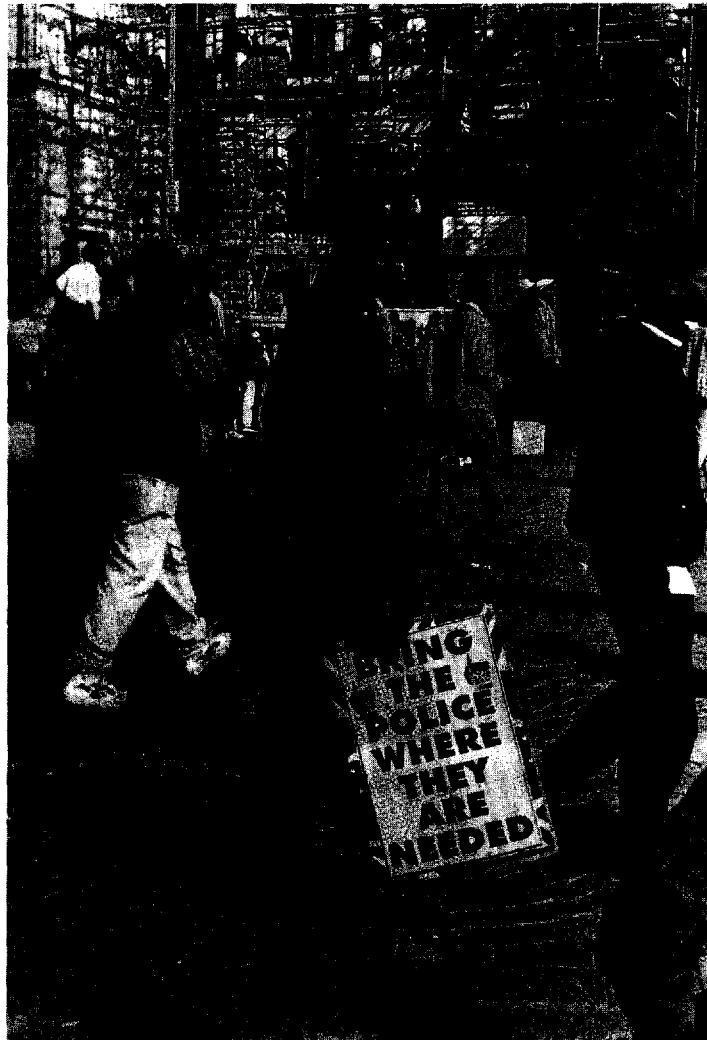
The pursuit of profits has driven major corporations such as American Express and General Electric to invest in private prison companies and new prison construction and contractual services. The resulting prison-industrial complex produces profits on two levels: first, for contractors, including private prison operators; and second, from prison labor. According to the journalist Joe Davidson, "the real money from crime" is made by "those who profit from the expanding correctional-industrial complex" and "vie for everything from the building contracts to the right to sell hair care products to prisoners."¹²³ Although private prisons warehouse only about 80,000 of the nation's 1.8 million inmates, the two largest U.S. private prison companies, Corrections Corporation of America and Wacken Corrections Corporation, made a

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combined net profit of nearly \$65 million in 1997.¹²⁴

In addition, the exploitation of prison labor is escalating. Some southern states have reinstated chain gang labor, and major Fortune 500 companies are profiteering from the cheapest and most disciplined labor since slavery. Prisoners work forty hours a week for UNICOR (the federal prison industry corporation) for about forty dollars a month and they make twenty-two cents an hour working on contracts for giant transnationals like AT&T, Chevron, IBM, Microsoft, Boeing, Texas Instruments, Dial Soap, and TWA.

Contemporary drug policy has been a thinly veiled rationalization for expanding social control. In 1985, 21,200 whites were in state penitentiaries, compared to 16,600 Blacks. Between 1990 and 1997, five years after the passage of harsh “drug” laws, state expenditures on “correctional institutions” soared from approximately \$17 billion to \$29 billion. By 1995, the racial composition of America’s prisons was dramatically reversed, and Blacks now outnumbered whites 134,000 to 86,100!¹²⁵ Moreover, the state has used the war on drugs to extend the police state created in response to the urban rebellions. Presidents Reagan, Bush, and Clinton have built on the “federal-



Anti-Discrimination Rally. Photo by Rima Vesely

ization” of local police forces incorporated in President Nixon’s 1968 Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act. Clinton has not only added 100,000 street cops, but, more important, he has further blurred the lines separating local police from federal agencies such as the FBI; the Bureau of Alcohol, Firearms, and Tobacco (AFT); and the military. The federal government now supplies “surplus” weapons and vehicles to local police, funds

the purchase of battlefield high technology, and uses the military to provide "tactical" training to police forces.

Furthermore, the huge profits enable the ruling racial class to pay relatively large salaries to working-class whites who work in correctional institutions. In California, beginning college professors make \$41,000, whereas prison guards can make \$51,000 a year! According to Akua Njera, "These high salaries and the strategic placement of prisons in economically depressed rural white communities work to cement white working-class support for harsh criminal laws, extensive prison building, and racism."¹²⁶ Moreover, prisons are the grounds that spawn the most violent white supremacist groups, such as the Aryan Brotherhood.¹²⁷ Racialized incarceration has made the major victims of deindustrialization invisible, generated a new source of profits, and provided material and ideological incentives for consolidating impoverished whites (especially those living in rural areas) to a racist right-wing agenda.

Concomitant with economic, social, political, and cultural changes in the system of domination have come a new rationalization of racial oppression, "color-blind" racism. What is color-blind racist ideology? Color-blind advocates claim race (read: discrimination against people of color) has declined and is no longer, nor should be, salient in U.S. society. Over the past quarter of a century, theorists have attempted to conceptualize the transition to what Baron called "advanced racism." Recently, social scientists and journalists have coalesced around the concept of "color-blind racism." According to Helen Neville and her associates, color blindness rejects race consciousness and entails beliefs that race ought to be and is irrelevant in U.S. social relations. More specifically, in one of the few empirical studies on color-blind racial attitudes they found that persons who hold color-blind racial attitudes (1) deny the

existence of white privilege, (2) deny the existence of racial oppression, and (3) reject the need for ameliorative social programming. Additionally, they discovered that color-blind racists might acknowledge past discrimination but believe that racism "is not an important problem today." Yet, contradictorily, Neville et al. found that individuals who adopt a "color-blind" perspective believe race-conscious remedial policies such as affirmative action discriminate against whites.¹²⁸

Leslie Carr traces the roots of "color-blind" racist ideology to the founding fathers' evasion of the words "slave," "African," "Negro," or any other term that specified enslaved or quasi-free blacks in the Constitution. According to Carr, the notion of color blindness received one of its first and perhaps best articulations in Justice Harlan's dissent in *Plessey v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537 (1896). Objecting to the Court's majority, Harlan declared:

The white race deems itself to be the dominant race in this country. And so it is, in prestige, in achievements, in education, in wealth, and in power. . . . But in view of the constitution, in the eye of the law, there is in this country no superior, dominant, ruling class of citizens. There is no caste here. Our constitution is color-blind, and neither knows or tolerates classes among citizens. In respect of civil rights, all citizens are equal before the law.¹²⁹

In the 1950s, elite civil rights activists adopted this argument to support their struggle against racial segregation. Reverend Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech is the quintessential example of civil rights elites' use of color-blind rhetoric.

Beginning in the late 1970s, neoconservative ideologues who rejected the stigma of racism appropriated the color-blind thesis. By

decontextualizing civil rights activists' call for a color-blind society, neoconservatives inverted their meaning and converted a liberal antiracist ideology into a rationalization for conservative policies that negatively impact Blacks and other people of color. Neoconservative color-blind advocates ignore the fact that when King requested that people be judged by "the content of their character, rather than the color of their skin" he was fighting for the dismantling of white supremacy. Equally important, neoconservatives marshal the color-blind thesis to oppose all public programs designed to remedy the effects of structural racism. Their attack on affirmative action and majority-minority voting districts and promotion of winner-take-all territorial districts are two examples.¹³⁰ Extending Wilson's thesis from the economy to the polity and civil society, color-blind racists evade evidence that demonstrates the resurgence of racism in all facets of U.S. life.

Building on the residues of the "culture of poverty thesis" color-blind racists explain the contemporary position, condition, and status of individual African Americans as a consequence of the deviant values of African-American culture. Moreover, despite its white supremacist history, color-blind racists miscast the Constitution as a color-blind document and invert laws and court decisions designed to eliminate white supremacy into rationalizations for repealing racial reforms enacted during the Civil Rights and Black Power eras.¹³¹

Conclusion

The most pressing task for African-American activist intellectuals is to explain racial oppression and the historic and contemporary transformations to new racial formations. To do so requires the development of a theory of rac(e)ism and the construction a theory of African-American history. Theories of his-

tory, according to Alex Callinicos, include theories of structure, transformation, and directionality. Black Racial Formation and Transformation theory argues that racial formations are structured by the dialectical relationship between processes of racialization and modes of production. Racialization includes both the concept of race and the processes of rac(e)ism. Rac(e)ism is viewed as a relationship of domination in which labor exploitation has historically been its animating feature. It includes structural domination and corresponding ideologies. Racial oppression through superexploitation, discrimination or exclusion, and degradation has been integral to both public and private U.S. institutions. In addition to systemic organization of institutional regulations and practices, individual beliefs and behaviors have manifested in hostility and vicious violence, including race riots, lynching, and hate crimes. Racial oppression has also produced corresponding ideological rationalizations and representations. Each racial formation generates a unique rationalization of its racial distribution of power. Thus theories of African biological inferiority were used to justify slavery. After African Americans were proletarianized and incorporated in industrial and corporate production, social-Darwinist theories of cultural deprivation replaced notions of genetic inferiority as the dominant explanation for those racial formations. And in the contemporary conjuncture, color-blind racism has emerged as the rationalization of the deproletarianization and subproletarianization attending global capitalist restructuring.

Rac(e)ism has been integral to the development of the U.S. social formation virtually since its inception as thirteen British colonies.¹³² The term "racial capitalism" conveys the centrality of racial oppression to the development and maintenance of capitalism in the United States. (Black) racial oppres-

sion has not been an aberration or a contradiction of the American creed; it has been a constitutive part of the society. Moreover, it has been dynamic, extremely adaptable, and capable of transforming itself into newer racial formations. Each new racial formation took shape in a specific sociohistorical context and constituted a particular racist arrangement of both repressive and ideological institutions and individual actions. It has been undying, constantly changing, shedding its old skin as Douglass said, and reappearing in ever newer forms: slavery, sharecropping, proletarianization, and labor marginalization.

Callinicos also argues that in addition to analyzing the process of change, historical theories also posit the direction of historical change. Racial formation and transformation theory argues that change in African Americans' relationship to the political economy, the state, and civil society has multiple sources, that it is overdetermined. Transitions and transformations in racial formations are the consequence of technological innovations, economic reorganization, and political conflict. Specifically, change results from the dialectical interactions between the dominant U.S. mode of production, the subordinate political economy in which Blacks are located, the structures and ideologies of Black racial oppression, and African-American agency. Racial formation and transformation theory also posits that the nature and extent of African Americans' incorporation in the labor force has been the central factor determining whether their quality of life was improving, static, or regressing. Racial formation and transformation theory self-consciously repudiates objectivity and offers a meta-narrative that facilitates the construction of radical readings of the African-American experience that reconstruct the past into arguments for Black liberation and socialist construction.

Notes

1. 2Pac Shakur, "Changes," *Greatest Hits* CD (INTD2-90301) (DeathRow Records/Interscope Records, 1999).

2. Stanley B. Greenberg, *Race & State in Capitalist Development* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), p. 26.

3. Harold Baron, "Racism Transformed: The Implications of the 1960s," *Review of Radical Political Economics*, Vol. 17 (Fall 1985), p. 12.

4. Contemporary writers have recently begun to use the terms race and racism interchangeably. This problem has combined with a revitalization of the practice of defining "racism" as an ideology. I do not consider them synonyms, nor do I believe "racism" consists only of attitudes and beliefs. Although it is an awkward construction, the concept rac(e)ism is designed to (1) emphasize the differences and the relationship between the category of race and the system of oppression known as "racism," and (2) highlight the structural and ideological aspects of racial oppression. Race as way of categorizing people who differ in some physical traits is essential to the creation of a system of domination that systematically discriminates and degrades people who have been deemed inferior while privileging people who have been deemed superior due to race. Although it is a necessary condition, race does not necessitate the construction of a social order built on racial oppression. Historically, social hierarchies among people with some physical traits that differed appeared before the creation of the race concept. Or as Martin Bulmer and John Solomos put it, "Race is a product of racism and not vice versa"; Martin Bulmer and John Solomos, "Introduction: Re-Thinking Ethnic and Racial Studies," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 21, (September 1998), p. 823. Moreover, it is the social processes of exploitation, appropriation, and exclusion, rather than the genetic classification, per se, that determine one's role, position, and status in society. Consequently, rac(e)ism consists of both institutional arrangements and ideological rationalizations of those social structures. Bulmer and Solomos, "Introduction," p. 819; Baron, "Racism Transformed," note 3, p. 31.

5. Theodore W. Allen, *The Invention of the White Race, Vol. 1: Racial Oppression and Social Control* (London: Verso, 1994); Theodore W. Allen, *The Invention of the White Race, Vol. 2: Racial Oppression and Social Control* (London: Verso, 1997); Oliver C. Cox, *Caste, Class and Race: A Study in Social Dynamics* (New York: Monthly Review, 1948; reprint Modern Reader Paperbacks, 1970); Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, ed., *Race and the Enlightenment: A Reader* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1997); Audrey Smedley, *Race in North America: Origin and Evolution of a Worldview* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998).

6. Bulmer and Solomos, "Introduction," p. 819.

7. Elizabeth A. Klonoff and Hope Landrine discuss the development of new instruments for investigating

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and measuring the effect of racism on African Americans in "Cross-Validation of the Schedule of Racist Events," *Journal of Black Psychology*, Vol. 25 (May 1999), pp. 232, 231-254.

8. Bulmer and Solomos, "Introduction," p. 825.

9. I am using the capitalized "Black" as a synonym of African American, that is, as a designator of ethnicity or nationality. I am using the lower case "black" as a racial designator.

10. Amiri Baraka coined this term to describe the continuities and discontinuities in Black music. William J. Harris, *The Leroi Jones/Amiri Baraka Reader* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1991), p. 186.

11. Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, "Re-Thinking Racism: Toward A Structural Interpretation," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 62 (June 1996), pp. 465, 465-480; Mara Loveman, "Is 'Race' Essential?," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 66 (June 2000), pp. 491-498; Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, "The Essential Social Fact of Race," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 62 (June 2000), pp. 899-906.

12. The social psychologist James M. Jones argues that racism operates on three levels: institutional, individual, and cultural. Here I include cultural rac(e)ism in the rubric of institutional rac(e)ism, since culture is transmitted to new generations through institutional processes. See James M. Jones, *Prejudice and Racism* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997), pp. 417-435.

13. Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 1994); Howard Winant, *Racial Conditions* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994); Harold Baron, *The Demand for Black Labor* (Cambridge, Mass.: Radical America, 1971); Baron, "Racism Transformed," pp. 10-33. Paul Gilroy conceives of racial formation in the same way as Omi and Winant; see Paul Gilroy, "There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack": *The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation* (London: Hutchinson, 1987), pp. 38-40. E. San Juan Jr., like Baron, views racial formation in material terms; for San Juan it is "the sociohistorical field of forces that racism inhabits"; see *Racial Formations/Critical Transformations: Articulations of Power in Ethnic and Racial Studies in the United States* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1992), p. 2.

14. Like many scholars, I view the sixties as connoting more than a chronological "decade." The events and perspectives that symbolize the "Black sixties," civil rights protests, mass direct action and civil disobedience, urban rebellions, militant Black nationalist and radical organizations, and Black political mobilizations, transcend the arbitrary ten-year demarcation. From this perspective, the sixties encompass the Montgomery Bus Boycott (1955-1957), *Griggs v. Duke Power* (1971), the Gary convention (1972), the formation of the Congressional Black Caucus (1972), the COINTELPRO assault on Black militants and radicals, and the second extension

of the 1965 Voting Rights Act (1975). For an alternative periodization of the sixties, see Fredric Jameson, *The Cultural Turn: Selected Writing on the Postmodern, 1983-1998* (London: Verso, 1998), p. 78.

15. Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation*, p. 55

16. *Ibid.*

17. This distinction was not made in the first edition of their work, however.

18. Robert C. Tucker, *The Marx and Engels Reader*, 2nd ed. (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1978), p. 187.

19. Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation*, pp. 82-83.

20. Tucker, *Marx and Engels*, p. 187.

21. Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation*, pp. 55-56; Greenberg, *Race & State*, p. 80.

22. My critique of Omi and Winant is influenced by E. San Juan Jr.'s analysis of their work. See San Juan, *Racial Formations/Critical Transformations*, pp. 52, 50-54, 42-59.

23. Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation*, pp. 71, 78.

24. Bonilla-Silva contends that the second edition makes advances toward a structural perspective, but remains burdened by an overemphasis on the "ideological and juridico-political" aspects of racial oppression. Bonilla-Silva, "Re-Thinking Racism," note 11, p. 466.

25. Baron, "Racism Transformed," p. 11.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 10-12.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-14.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

32. Since African Americans were the first group to be racialized in the United States, and the incorporation of other social groups in systems of rac(e)ism was predicated on the Black/white model, it is important to highlight the centrality of antiblack rac(e)ism to U.S. social formations.

33. Daniel Scott Smith, "Recent Change and Periodization of American Family History," *Journal of Family History*, Vol. 20, no. 4 (1995), p. 342.

34. Rayford Logan, *The Negro in American Life and Thought, 1877-1901* (New York: Dial, 1954), reprinted as *The Betrayal of the Negro: The Negro in American Thought, 1877-1917* (New York: Collier, 1965); Robert C. Smith, *We Have No Leaders: Black Politics in the Post Civil Rights Era* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996).

35. Thomas Holt, "African-American History," in Eric Foner, ed., *The New American History* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), pp. 212, 211-231.

36. Ian Tyrell, *The Absent Marx: Class Analysis and Liberal History in Twentieth-Century America* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), p. 189; Keith Jenkins, *On "What Is History?": From Carr and Elton to Rorty and White* (New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 5.

37. E. Franklin Frazier, "Theoretical Structure of Sociology and Sociological Research," and "Sociological

Theory and Race Relations," in G. Franklin Edwards, ed., *E. Franklin Frazier: On Race Relations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), pp. 3-29; 30-42; Cox, *Caste, Class and Race*.

38. A few scholars, such as Cedric Robinson, have explicitly rejected periodization in favor of a postmodernist ordering schema. Robinson's rejection of historical periodization is derived from his opposition to historical materialism. See Cedric Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (London: Zed Press, 1988), p. 253.

39. For periodization schemes of social scientists, also see Abdul Alkalimat and Associates, *Introduction to Afro-American Studies: A Peoples College Primer* (Chicago: Twenty-First Century Books, 1987), pp. 24-27; Abdul Alkalimat, *Paradigms in Black Studies* (Chicago: Twenty-First Century Books and Publications, 1990), p. 44-47; Baron, *Demand for Black Labor*; Baron, "Racism Transformed"; Thomas D. Boston, "Racial Inequality and Class Stratification: A Contribution to a Critique of Black Conservatism," *Review of Radical Political Economics*, Vol. 17 (Fall 1985), pp. 47-71; Thomas D. Boston, *Race, Class and Conservatism* (London: Urwin Books, 1988); Joe F. Feagin, "Slavery Unwilling to Die: The Background of Black Oppression in the 1980s," *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 17 (December 1986), pp. 173-200; Sidney Willhelm, "The Economic Demise of Blacks in America: A Prelude to Genocide?," *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 17 (December 1986), pp. 201-254; William Julius Wilson, *The Declining Significance of Race* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), pp. 2-3; Lloyd Hogan, a political economist, offered a periodization schema that like Alkalimat's and Boston's is derived from Baron's pioneering work; see Lloyd Hogan, *Principles of Black Political Economy* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984). For a periodization by a historian, see Robert L. Harris, *A Framework for African American History* (Washington, D.C.: American Historical Society, 1990).

40. Willhelm, "Economic Demise," pp. 230-233.

41. Feagin, "Slavery Unwilling to Die," Table 1, "Basic Features of Slavery and Semi-Slavery," p. 178.

42. Wilson, *Declining Significance*, pp. 2-3.

43. Hogan, *Principles*, pp. 1-3.

44. Alkalimat, *Introduction*, pp. 24-25; Alkalimat, *Paradigms*, pp. 44-45. Perry A. Hall offers an elaboration of Alkalimat's periodization schema in *In the Vineyard: Working in African American Studies* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999), p. 99. For a discussion of the significance of the Paradigm of Unity, see also Ronald Bailey, "Black Studies in the Third Millennium," *Souls*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (Summer 2000), pp. 82, 77-90.

45. Nevertheless, gender remains underconceptualized in relationship to race, class, and nationality. Although Black women and the particularity of their oppressions and struggles are discussed, the Paradigm of

Unity does not fully acknowledge the role of gender as a structure of oppression with attendant ideologies.

46. Boston, "Racial Inequality and Class Stratification," pp. 47-71.

47. Ibid.

48. Ibid., pp. 47-71. p. 24.

49. Harris, *Teaching Afro-American History* (Washington, D.C.: American Historical Association, 1985), n.p. "A Conceptual Design..." is the title of his model which appears in *Teaching Afro-American History*.

50. Harris's framework appears on an unnumbered page across from page 1. Harris, *A Framework*, n.p.

51. Willhelm, "Economic Demise," p. 230.

52. Feagin, "Slavery Unwilling to Die," p. 176.

53. Feagin, "Slavery Unwilling to Die," especially Table 1, p. 178. Willhelm, "Economic Demise," pp. 230-233; Wilson, *Declining Significance*, pp. 2-3.

54. Alkalimat, *Introduction and Paradigms*; Baron, "Racism Transformed"; Boston, "Racial Inequality and Class Stratification," and *Race, Class and Conservatism*; Hogan, *Principles*.

55. Wilson, *Declining Significance*, p. 2; Alkalimat, *Introduction*, pp. 24-27; Alkalimat, *Paradigms*, pp. 44-47; Feagin, "Slavery Unwilling to Die," p. 178; Hogan, *Principles*, p. 102; Harris, *Teaching Afro-American History*; Willhelm, "Economic Demise," pp. 230-232.

56. Hogan, *Principles*, especially p. 102.

57. Although Boston labels this epoch "free labor," his actual analysis suggest that he views it more complexly, as coerced labor within the framework of free market relations. Nevertheless, by not distinguishing the method of surplus appropriation under sharecropping from that of free wage labor, Boston collapses the difference between sharecropping and proletarianization. Under sharecropping, labor exploitation is indirect, occurring through a contractual arrangement in which a portion of the crop is exchanged for use of the instruments of labor (land, tools, and work animals) and often food provisions. Under capitalism, labor exploitation is direct and unmediated. See Hogan, *Principles*, especially pp. 102, 102-108; Alkalimat, *Introduction*, p. 26, and *Paradigms*, p. 46; Baron, "Racism Transformed," pp. 16-17; Boston, "Racial Inequality and Class Stratification," p. 22; Feagin, "Slavery Unwilling to Die," pp. 179-183. For a discussion of the difference between sharecropping and wage labor, see R. Pearce, "Sharecropping: Toward a Marxist View," *Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol. 10 (January-April 1983), pp. 42-70; Susan A. Mann, "Sharecropping in the Cotton South: A Case of Uneven Development in Agriculture," *Rural Sociology*, Vol. 49 (Fall 1984), pp. 412-429.

58. Alex T. Callinicos, *Theories and Narratives: Reflections on the Philosophy of History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), p. 98.

59. Ibid., pp. 98-103. See also Alex T. Callinicos, *Making History: Agency, Structure and Change in Social*

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Theory (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 94–95.

60. Szymanski's structural model of racism incorporates different racial formations for Blacks and other people of color and ethnic minorities. He argues that racial oppression for Blacks and Latino/as has been characterized by superexploitation. Richard Child Hill has given perhaps the best explanation of superexploitation. According to Hill, a class fraction is superexploited when (1) "that group wholly or disproportionately makes up the labor force in certain job categories, firms, or industries or selected localities or regions"; and (2) because this segment of the workforce is unable to freely move from one job or sphere of production to another, it (3) produces a higher rate of surplus value than would be the case if the labor force were in fact "homogeneous, transferable, continuously in competition and freely mobile." Although controversial, evidence suggests that Hill's three scenarios encompass most of the African-American historical experience.

According to Szymanski, Jews (and by extension Japanese, Koreans, and various Arab nationalities) experience racial oppression in a system he refers to as mediation, the classic middleman or model minority position. Amerindian racial oppression he characterizes as exclusion. Whereas Blacks, Latino/as, Asians, and Jews were incorporated in either the political economy or the polity, Amerindians were not. Thus he terms the racial oppression that indigenous peoples experienced as exclusion. See Baron, *Demand for Black Labor* and "Racism Transformed"; Al Szymanski, *Class Structure: A Critical Perspective* (New York: Praeger, 1983), pp. 355–496, and "The Structure of Race," *Review of Radical Political Economics*, Vol. 17 (Fall 1985), pp. 106–120. See Richard Child Hill, "Race, Class and the State: The Metropolitan Enclave System in the United States," *Insurgent Sociologist*, Vol. 10, no. 2, (Fall 1980), pp. 45–57; Victor Perlo, *Economics of Racism II*. (New York: International Publishers, 1996), pp. 152–155; Morton G. Wenger, "State Responses to Afro-American Rebellion: Internal Neo-Colonialism and the Rise of a New Black Petite Bourgeoisie," *Insurgent Sociologist*, Vol. 10 (Fall 1980), pp. 61–72. For a critique of the superexploitation thesis, see Donald J. Harris, "The Black Ghetto as Colony: A Theoretical Critique and an Alternative Formulation," *Review of Black Political Economy*, Vol. 2 (Summer 1972), pp. 3–33, and "Capitalist Exploitation and Black Labor: Some Conceptual Issues," *Review of Black Political Economy*, Vol. 8 (Winter 1978), pp. 133–151.

61. Ronald Bailey, "The Slavery Trade(ry) and the Development of Capitalism in the United States: The Textile Industry in New England," *Social Science History*, Vol. 14 (Fall 1990), pp. 372–414, and "The Slavery Trade(ry) and the Development of Industrial Capitalism in New England," in Marty Blatt and David Roediger, eds., *The Meaning of Slavery in the North* (New York: Garland Press, 1998).

62. T. H. Breen, "A Changing Labor Force in Virginia, 1660–1700," *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 7 (Fall 1973), pp. 3–25; Charles W. Mills, *The Racial Contract* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 21; Betty Wood, *The Origins of American Slavery: Freedom and Bondage in the English Colonies* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1997), p. 91; Ian F. Haney Lopez, *White by Law: The Legal Construction of Race* (New York: New York University Press, 1996).

63. Charles W. Mills and Clarence J. Munford both use the term white supremacy, but they arrive at it from different conceptual points. Mills conceives white supremacy, or what he calls the racial contract, as the material reality of European world dominance. He views it as the consequence of Europeans' "voyages of expansion," African enslavement, colonialism, and the development of capitalism. For Mills, a material relationship, economic exploitation, is "the most salient" aspect of white supremacy (Mills, *Racial Contract*, p. 32). Munford locates white supremacy in the same historical processes that Mills does; yet, in contrast, he views it as the fulfillment of a racial imperative, as the essence of white civilization. Thus, for him, white supremacy derives from his idealist belief in an "a priori . . . racist predisposition"; Clarence J. Munford, *Race and Reparations: A Black Perspective for the 21st Century* (Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press, 1996), pp. 1–9, 27–32. See also Victor Kiernan, *The Lords of Humankind: European Attitudes to Other Cultures in the Imperial Age* (London: Serif, 1995). Munford's current position represents a 180-degree turn from his previous interpretation; see his *Production Relations, Class and Black Liberation: A Marxist Perspective in Afro-American Studies* (Amsterdam: B. R. Gruner Publishing, 1978).

64. Mills, *Racial Contract*, p. 32. I have also used a periodization of capitalism presented by Roger Burbach and William I. Robinson in "The Fin de Siecle Debate: Globalization as Epochal Shift," *Science & Society*, Vol. 63, no. 1 (Spring 1999), pp. 10–11, 10–39.

65. Callinicos, *Theories and Narratives*, pp. 98–99.

66. Marci Green and Bob Carter. "'Races' and 'Race-makers': The Politics of Racialization," *Sage Race Abstracts*, Vol. 13, no. 2 (Summer 1992), pp. 4–30; Anthony Marx, *Making Race and Nation: A Comparison of South Africa, the United States, and Brazil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 2–6, 10–17; Robert Miles, *Racism After "Race Relations"* (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 50–52.

67. See Note 17.

68. Munford, *Race and Reparations*, p. 7. Oppressed groups have inverted the concept's negative denotations and converted it to a basis for developing a positive identity, community building, and mobilizing emancipatory movements. For discussions of Blacks' counter use of race for emancipatory purposes, see Mills, *Racial Contract*, especially pp. 111–120; Albert Mosley, "Are Racial Categories Racist?" *Research in African Litera-*

tures, Vol. 28 (Winter 1997); W.E.B. Du Bois, *Dusk to Dawn: An Essay Toward an Autobiography of a Race Concept* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1940; reprint Transaction Publishers, 1995); Wilson Moses, *Classical Black Nationalism: From the American Revolution to Marcus Garvey* (New York: New York University Press, 1996); Kinfe Abraham, *Politics of Black Nationalism: From Harlem to Soweto* (Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press, 1993).

For discussions of the role of the white working class in constructing an identity based on white supremacist ideology, see Greenberg, *Race & State*; Ruth Frankenberg, *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993); David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (London: Verso, 1991) and "Whiteness and Ethnicity in the History of 'White Ethnics' in the United States," in *Toward the Abolition of Whiteness* (London: Verso, 1994), pp. 181-198.

69. Mosley, "Are Racial Categories Racist?" p. 105; Smedley, *Race in North America*, p. xi.

70. Barbara Fields and Paul Gilroy offer the most extreme and absurd versions of this argument; see Barbara J. Fields, "Ideology and Race in American History," in J. Morgan Kousser and James McPherson, eds., *Region, Race and Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 143-177, and "Slavery, Race and Ideology in the United States of America," *New Left Review*, Vol. 181 (May-June), pp. 95-118; Paul Gilroy, "Race Ends Here," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 21 (September 1998), pp. 838-847.

71. Harry Chang, "Toward a Marxist Theory of Racism: Two Essays by Harry Chang," Paul Liem and Eric Montague, eds., *Review of Radical Political Economics*, Vol. 17, no. 3 (Fall 1985), p. 38; Mosley, "Are Racial Categories Racist?" p. 105. Most scholars agree that humanity is not divided into distinct races, yet no universal agreement exists concerning the continued use of the term to identify social groups. For instance, whereas Robert Miles contends that its use as an analytical concept constitutes reification, Clarence J. Munford claims that race is a useful "ethnographic and biological concept" that has been misused by Europeans. Satyananda Gabriel contends that most often when scholars refer to race they mean or should mean racism. Like Munford, he argues that race can be a useful concept for conducting social and medical research. If one abolishes the term, as Miles and others propose, would not another concept be invented or recast to convey essentially the same ideas? Like Harry Chang and Albert Mosley, I believe race refers to at least some real phenotypic differences. Moreover, I agree with Munford that it is not necessarily imbricated with notions of superiority and inferiority. The problem is only partially located in the definition of this concept. Thus, advocating the abolition of race as an analytical concept is tantamount to

"fighting against phrases." The problem lies mainly with particular sets of social relations, specifically with racism, which, as I have stated, is a relationship of domination, discrimination, and degradation. See Munford, *Race and Reparations*, pp. 27-28; Chang, "Toward a Marxist Theory," pp. 34-45; Miles, *Racism After "Race Relations"*, pp. 44-49; Satyananda Gabriel, "The Continuing Significance of Race: An Overdeterminist Approach to Racism," *Rethinking Marxism*, Vol. 3 (Fall-Winter 1990), pp. 66, note 1, 68-69, 65-78.

72. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983), p. 3.

73. For a discussion of the importance of distinguishing between race and racism, see Gabriel, "The Continuing Significance," pp. 66, note 1, 66-67. James M. Jones argues that racism operates on three levels, institutional, individual, and cultural, in *Prejudice and Racism*, pp. 417-435.

74. Louis Althusser, "State Ideological and Repressive Apparatuses," in *Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), pp. 127-186. See also Mills, *Racial Contract*; Chang, "Toward a Marxist Theory," pp. 34-45; Szymanski, *Class Structure*, pp. 355-632, and "The Structure of Race," pp. 106-120; Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation*, pp. 54-55.

75. For empirical data and arguments supporting the superexploitation thesis, see George Wright, *Life Behind A Veil: Blacks in Louisville, Kentucky, 1865-1930* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1985), pp. 77-84; Ronald Bailey, "Economic Aspects of the Black Internal Colony," in Frank Bonilla and Robert Girling, eds., *Structures of Dependency* (Stanford: Stanford University, Institute of Political Studies, 1973), pp. 43-71; Warren C. Whatley, "African-American Strikebreaking from the Civil War to the New Deal," *Social Science History*, Vol. 17 (Winter 1993), pp. 525-58; Melvin Leiman, *The Political Economy of Racism: A History* (London: Pluto Press, 1993), pp. 146-195.

76. George Lipsitz has an excellent overview of racial discrimination in federal policy in "Law and Order: Civil rights Laws and White Privilege," in *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Profit from Identity Politics* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998), pp. 24-46.

For unemployment, see David Schwartzman, "Black Male Employment," *Review of Black Political Economy*, Vol. 28 (Winter 1997), pp. 77-93. Victor Perlo discusses what he calls a "black tax"; see *Economics of Racism*, pp. 152-155.

For examples of the discriminatory policies of the Federal Housing Administration, the Veterans Administration, local housing authorities, and other federal programs, see Douglass Massey and Nancy Denton, *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993); Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*

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(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); Nancy Kleniewski, "From Industrial to Corporate City: The Role of Urban Renewal," in William K. Tabb and Larry Sawers, eds., *Marxism and the Metropolis: New Perspectives in Urban Political Economy*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), pp. 205-222; George Anders, "Disparities in Medicare Access Found Among Poor, Black or Disabled Patients," *Wall Street Journal*, November 2, 1994.

For political representation, see Lani Guinier, *The Tyranny of the Majority: Fundamental Fairness in Representative Democracy* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), especially pp. 119-156; Cynthia A. McKinney, "The Politics of Geography," *Emerge* (January 1996), pp. 62-66; Smith, *We Have No Leaders*, pp. 3-29.

77. Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic, "Cultural Imagery," in Juan Perea, Richard Delgado, Angela P. Harris, and Stephine Wildman, eds., *Race and Races: Cases and Resources for a Multicultural America* (St. Paul, Minn.: West Group, 2000), pp. 959-974, especially 959-963; Tony Chappelle, "Soul for Sale," *Emerge* (January 1998), pp. 42-48; Clarence Lusane, "Thug Life: The Rap on Capitalism," in *Race in the Global Era: African Americans at the Millennium* (Boston: South End Press, 1997), pp. 85-97, and "Globalizing the Black Image," in *Race in the Global Era*, pp. 99-116.

78. In Jones, *Prejudice and Racism*, pp. 417-435.

79. D. R. Williams, Y. Yu, J. S. Jackson, and N. Anderson, "Racial Differences in Physical and Mental Health," *Journal of Health Psychology*, Vol. 2, (1997), pp. 335-351.

80. John Ashworth provides an outstanding discussion of the ways in which slave and wage labor differs in *Slavery, Capitalism, and Politics in Antebellum Republic: Vol. 1. Commerce and Compromise, 1820-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 198-199. See also Baron, "Racism Transformed," p. 11; Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation*, pp. 55-61.

81. Ashworth finds the term "petty-commodity production" problematic because these independent farmers were only marginally involved in commodity production. But he agrees with Post's description of the three modes of production that existed in early America. See Ashworth, *Slavery, Capitalism, and Politics*, p. 83; Charles Post, "The American Road to Capitalism," *New Left Review*, Vol. 133 (May-June 1982), p. 44.

82. According to Post, during the 1840s and 1850s northeastern manufacturers in "leading branches of capitalist industry" such as textiles, railroads, meatpacking, and production of farm equipment broke their dependence on merchant capital and revolutionized both the labor process and the social division of labor. By 1840, 37 percent of U.S. workers were working for wages: "The 'Agricultural Revolution' in the United States: The Development of Capitalism and the Adoption of the Reaper in the Antebellum U.S. North," *Science & Society*, Vol. 61 (Summer 1997), pp. 216-228; Post, "The American

Road," pp. 38-39. See also Sue E. Headlee, *The Political Economy of the Family Farm: The Agrarian Roots of American Capitalism* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger Publishers, 1991); Allan Kulikoff, *The Agrarian Origins of American Capitalism* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1992).

83. Munford, *Production Relations*, p. 32; Post, "The American Road," pp. 34-37, and "The 'Agricultural Revolution.'"

84. Callinicos, *Theories and Narratives*, pp. 100-101.

85. For discussions of the overdeterminist view regarding racism, see Gabriel, "The Continuing Significance," pp. 66-67. For a discussion of overdetermination in historical theorizing, see Stephen Resnick and Richard Wolff, "A Reformulation of Marxian Theory and Historical Analysis," *Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 42 (March 1982), pp. 54-55, 53-59.

86. C.L.R. James, "Stalinism and Negro History" in Scott McLemee and Paul LeBlanc, eds., *C.L.R. James and Revolutionary Marxism: Selected Writing of C.L.R. James, 1939-1949* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1994), p. 190.

87. Post, "The American Road," pp. 34-37, and "The 'Agricultural Revolution.'"

88. Logan, *The Betrayal of the Negro*; Saidiya Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

89. Mann, "Sharecropping in the Cotton South," p. 414.

90. Evelyn Nakano Glenn, "From Servitude to Service Work: Historical Continuities in the Racial Division of Paid Reproductive Labor," *Signs*, Vol. 18 (Autumn 1992), pp. 1-41; Sharon Harley, "When Your Work Is Not Who You Are: The Development of a Working-Class Consciousness Among Afro-American Women," in Darlene Clark Hine, Wilma King, Linda Reed, eds., *We Specialize in the Wholly Impossible: A Reader in Black Women's History* (Brooklyn, N.Y.: Carlson Publishing, 1995), pp. 25-37; Tera W. Hunter, "To 'Joy My Freedom,'" in Elizabeth Clark-Lewis and Deborah Baker, eds., *Living In, Living Out: African American Domestic and the Great Migration* (New York: Kodansha International, 1996); Stephine J. Shaw, *What a Woman Ought to Be and to Do: Black Professional Women Workers During the Jim Crow Era* (Women in Culture and Society) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

91. Callinicos, *Theories and Narratives*, pp. 102-104.

92. Baron, "Racism Transformed," p. 15.

93. Erik Olin Wright, "Class Analysis, History and Emancipation," *New Left Review*, Vol. 202 (1993), pp. 15-35; Erik Olin Wright, Andrew Levine, and Elliot Sober, *Reconstructing Marxism: Essays on Explanation and the Theory of History* (London: Verso, 1992).

94. Baron, "Racism Transformed," p. 14; Jay R. Mandle, *The Roots of Black Poverty: The Southern Plantation Economy After the War* (Durham, N.C.: Duke Uni-

versity Press, 1978); Jay R. Mandle, *Not Slave, Not Free: The African American Economic Experience Since the Civil War* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1992); David M. Gordon, Richard C. Edwards, and Michael Reich, *Segmented Work, Divided Workers: The Historical Transformation of Labor in the United States* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982). Gordon, Edwards, and Reich identified three structures of U.S. capital accumulation: Commercial Capitalism, Industrial Capitalism, and Corporate Capitalism. Baron builds on their insights. I borrow Jay Mandle's term plantation economy to characterize my second period, but I define it differently from the way Mandle does. Mandle views slavery and sharecropping as specific moments within the broader period of the plantation economy. I use the term only to characterize the production and social relations of tenancy. See Gordon, Edwards, and Reich, 1982; Jay Mandle, 1978, 1992.

95. The nadir is a concept created by the historian Rayford Logan to describe the socioeconomic and political condition of Black people in the period 1877-1917. Slavery had been abolished, but economic exploitation, social discrimination, and cultural degradation were recast, rationalized, and rearticulated in a new system of racial domination. The first nadir was premised on economic exploitation in the plantation economy, but its cutting edge came in the form a two-pronged political strategy: extralegal violence and nonviolent political and legal assault on African Americans' civil rights. Logan, *Betrayal of the Negro*.

96. The Civil War represented one type of the metamorphoses that Boston theorized. He considered it an interperiod transition, or a change from one racial formation to another. The second type was an interstage transition, or a shift from one stage to another within a racial formation. Boston, *Race, Class and Conservatism*, p. 22 and "Racial Inequality and Class Stratification," p. 51.

97. Boston, "Racial Inequality and Class Stratification," p. 51, and *Race, Class and Conservatism*, pp. 22-23. Baron, *Demand for Black Labor*, and "Racism Transformed," pp. 12-14.

98. Are historical analyses derived from BRFT theory teleological? Yes, but teleology is unavoidable. The question is not whether histories should be teleological but, as Norman Wilson put it, "What degree of teleology is tolerable." See Norman Wilson, *History in Crisis: Recent Directions in Historiography* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1999), pp. 9, 25-26.

99. Speech by Frederick Douglass, May 9, 1865, in Lerone Bennett, *The Shaping of Black America* (Chicago: Johnson Publishing Company, 1983), p. 207.

100. Elizabeth Ansell, *New Right, New Racism: Race and Reaction in the United States and Britain* (New York: New York University Press, 1997); Baron, "Racism Transformed," pp. 10-33; Boston, "Racial Inequality and Class Stratification," pp. 47-71, and *Race,*

Class and Conservatism, pp. 22-53; Rodney D. Green and Joseph P. Reidy, "Accumulation Urban Segregation and the Black Role in the U.S. Economy: A Stylized History," *Review of Political Economics* Vol. 24, no. 2 (1992), pp. 83-90; Feagin, "Slavery Unwilling to Die"; Willhelm, "Economic Demise," pp. 201-254.

101. Sundiata Keita Cha-Jua and Clarence Lang, "Strategies for Black Liberation in the Era of Globalism: Retronouveau Civil Rights, Militant Black Conservatism, and the Black Radicalism," *Black Scholar*, Vol. 29, No. 4 (Winter 1999), pp. 25-47; Leslie Carr, "Color-Blind" Racism (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1997); Helen Neville, Roderick L. Lilly, Richard M. Lee, Georgia Duran, and LaVonne Browne, "Construction and Initial Validation of the Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS)," *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, Vol. 47, no. 1, (January 2000), pp. 1-12. See also Amy Guttmann, "Responding to Racial Injustice," in K. Anthony Appiah and Amy Guttmann, eds., *Color Conscious: The Political Morality of Race* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), pp. 106-178; Patricia J. Williams, *Seeing a Color-Blind Future: The Paradox of Race* (New York: The Noonday Press, 1997).

102. Carole Marks, *Farewell, We Are Good and Gone: Black Migration to the North* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), p. 4.

103. I share with Albert Szymanski the view that African Americans are not a nation, but a people. By a people, I mean "an historically evolved stable community of common language, and common psychological makeup, traditions, and culture, which does not share a common territory or possess an all-around class structure." Unlike Szymanski, I believe African Americans are undergoing nationality formation. Antonio McDaniel, "The Dynamic Racial Composition of the United States," *Daedalus*, Vol. 124 (Winter 1995), pp. 187, 179-198. See Szymanski, *Class Structure*, p. 355. For support of the Black Nation thesis see Carr, "Color-Blind" Racism.

104. The U.S. Bureau of the Census, <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-127.html>; <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-159.html>.

105. William J. Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged: When Work Disappears* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), pp. 23; Manuel Castells, *End of Millennium: Information Age, Vol. 3* (New York: Blackwell Publishers, 1998), pp. 138-141; Perlo, *Economics of Racism*, pp. 27, 82; Schwartzman, "Black Male Employment," p. 79; Ron Martin, Peter Sunley, and Jane Willis, "Unions and the Politics of Deindustrialization: Some Comments on How Geography Complicates Class Analysis," *Antipode*, Vol. 26, no. 1 (1994), pp. 62, 59-76.

The scholars Richard B. Freeman and William M. Rogers report that between 1992 and 1998 the employment rate among young Black men with a high school education or less has risen from 52 percent to 64 percent. But their study was limited to the fourteen metropolitan

areas that had an unemployment rate below 4 percent. Few of these areas were located in northeastern or mid-western cities with large black populations. *New York Times*, May 23, 1999, pp. A1, A21.

106. Richard L. Zweigenhaft and William G. Domhoff, *Diversity in the Power Elite: Women and Minorities in the Higher Circle* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), and *Blacks in the White Establishment?: A Study of Race and Class in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991).

107. U.S. Bureau of the Census, <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-127.html>; <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb95-219.html>; <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-176.html>.

108. Doug Henwood points out that between 1989 and 1993 real median income declined 7.3 percent and that only 3.7 percent of that has been recouped in "America's best economy in decades." Doug Henwood, "Income and Poverty," *Left Business Observer* (electronic journal), February 1, 1998, http://www.panix.com/~dhenwood/stats_incpov.html; Robert Kuttner, "The Boom in Poverty," *Boston Globe*, March 21, 1999, p. E7.

109. Recently, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported a 2.4 percent rise, after inflation, in "hourly wages for adults in the bottom 20 percent of the pay scale to \$7.77," the highest since 1989 (Kuttner, "The Boom in Poverty," p. E7).

Since Blacks constitute 46 percent of the poorly paid unskilled workers, this class of African Americans has actually fallen further behind.

110. Kuttner, "The Boom in Poverty," p. E7.

111. Salim Muwakkil, "So Goes the Movement," *In These Times*, September 6, 1998, p. 17.

112. Massey and Denton, *American Apartheid*, pp. 77-78.

113. David Theo Goldberg, "The New Segregation," *Race and Society*, Vol. 1, no. 1 (1998), p. 16.

114. U.S. Bureau of the Census, <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-221.html>.

115. Abdul Alkalimat, in Ronald Bailey, ed., *Black People and the 1980 Census* (Chicago: Illinois Council for Black Studies, 1979), p. 146, and "Racism and the Numbers Game: A Critique of the Census Underenumeration of Black People and a Proposal for Action," pp. 87-155.

116. Steven Steinberg, *Turning Back: The Retreat from Racial Justice in American Thought and Policy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), p. 108.

117. Alkalimat, in Bailey, ed., *Black People*, p. 138.

118. Winnett Hagens and Ellen Spears, "The 'New' Disfranchisement," *Southern Changes*, Vol. 20, no. 3 (Fall 1998); Laughlin McDonald, "The 'New' Disfranchisement: Redistricting at the Millennium," *Southern Changes*, Vol. 20, no. 3 (Fall 1998), http://www.src.w1.com/sochanges/sc203_mcdonald.htm. For additional discussion of how the votes of African Americans and other people of color are diluted, see Lani Guinier, *The*

Tyranny of the Majority, especially "The Tyranny of the Majority," pp. 1-20, and "Groups, Representation, and Race Conscious Districting: A Case of the Emperor's Clothes," pp. 119-156, and "Race, Voting, and Participation in Democracy," in Perea et al., eds., *Race and Races*, pp. 580-645, especially 590-614. For a conservative argument against majority-minority voting districts, see Robert J. McKeever, "Race and Representation in the United States: The Constitutional Validity of Majority-Minority Congressional Districts," *Journal of American Studies*, Vol. 33, no. 3 (1999), 491-507.

119. Perea et al., eds., *Race and Races*, pp. 590, 595, 602, 580-602.

120. Lani Guinier points out that the North Carolina district in question was 54 percent Black, and thus it was the "the most integrated in the state." Guinier argues that liberal individualism masks the fundamental group character of voting and representation. She views geography-based representation as at best an imperfect proxy for interest groups. Winner-take-all electoral policies nullify the votes of losers and work to reify white supremacy, or what she calls "the tyranny of the majority"; Guinier, "Groups, Representation, and Race Conscious Districting," pp. 120, 119-156; Perea et al., eds., *Race and Races*, pp. 602, 608, 603-612.

121. *USA Today*, February 23, 1999, p. 3; Carol Marie Cropper, "Black Man Fatally Dragged in a Possible Racial Killing," *New York Times* 16 June 1998, p. A16; David Firestone, "Speakers Stress Racial Healing at Service for Dragging Victim," *New York Times* 14 June 1998, p. A20; *Jet*, June 29, 1998, pp. 10-18; *Jet*, July 13, 1998, pp. 14-16.

122. Eve Goldberg and Linda Evans, *The Prison Industrial Complex and the Global Economy* (Berkeley, Calif., Agit Press, 1999), p. 5.

123. Joe Davidson, "Crime Pays Big Time: Caged Cargo," *Emerge* (October 1997), p. 36.

124. *Ibid.*

125. *Ibid.*, p. 44; Timothy Egan, "The War on Crack Retreats, Still Taking Prisoners," *New York Times*, February 28, 1999, pp. A1, A20-A21. See also Eric Schlosser, "The Prison-Industrial Complex," *Atlantic Monthly* (August 1998), pp. 51-77.

126. Akua Njeri is the former Deborah Johnson, a survivor of the FBI assassinations of Black Panther Party leaders Fred Hampton and Mark Clark; from notes taken by me during the workshop on police brutality and state terrorism at the founding convention of the Black Radical Congress, Juneteenth (June 19) 1998.

127. Avery Gordon, "Globalism and the Prison Industrial Complex: An Interview with Angela Davis," *Race & Class*, Vol. 40 (October 1998-March 1999), p. 150; James Ridgeway, *Blood in the Face: The Ku Klux Klan, Aryan Nations, Nazi Skinheads, and the Rise of a New White Culture*, 2nd ed. (New York: Thunder Mouth Press, 1995), p. 109.

128. Neville and associates conducted five empirical studies on the Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS) involving 1,143 subjects. Baron, "Racism Transformed," p. 11; Neville et al., "Construction and Initial Validation," pp. 10, 1-12. See also Carr, "Color-Blind" Racism; Ellis Cose, *Color-Blind Racism: Seeing Beyond Race in a Race Obsessed World* (New York: Harper-Collins, 1997); Guttman, "Responding to Racial Injustice," pp. 106-178; Williams, *Seeing a Color-Blind Future*.

129. Perea et al., eds., *Race and Races*, pp. 146, 147-147.

130. Carr, "Color-Blind" Racism, pp. 107-118; Guinier, "Groups, Representation, and Race Conscious Districting," pp. 120-121.

131. Carr, "Color-Blind" Racism; Neville et al., "Construction and Initial Validation," pp. 1-12.

132. Massachusetts passed the first slave law in 1641. A hundred years before the U.S. federal state was founded, the enslavement of Africans was a growing feature in every colony. Three clauses in the 1787 U.S. Constitution recognized and protected the institution of slavery as it protected ownership of other forms of property.