Anti-imperial World Politics:

Race, class, and internationalism in the making of post-colonial order

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ABSTRACT

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Why did many 'black' anti-imperial thinkers and leaders articulate projects for colonial freedom based in *transnational* identities and solidarities?

This thesis excavates a discourse of anti-imperial globalism, which helped shape world politics from the early to late 20th century. Although usually reduced to the anticolonial nationalist politics of sovereignty and recognition, this study interprets 'anti-imperialism globalism from below' as a transnational counter-discourse, primarily concerned with social justice, social freedom, and equality. Anti-imperial globalism emerged and changed in response to developing world events, but it was also shaped by boundary-crossing discourses. One discourse understood global progress as dependent on the ability of different societies to unite through large-scale organisation and political integration. These political visions – which were often articulated as 'federation' – were enabled, but ultimately limited, by a second dominant discourse of racial hierarchy and race development. I argue that anti-imperial strategies changed throughout the 20th century not because the hierarchical relations of empire were defeated, but because empire was able to rehabilitate itself according to more ethno-culturally inclusive principles of global governance. This thesis makes two contributions to existing literature. Firstly, it builds on recent debates concerning empire, decolonisation, and world order. Empire is usually conceptualised as one polity's alien rule over another, or, along with nation-states and international institutions, another type of unitary actor. This effectively flattens imperial relations into a coloniser/colonised binary, and relegates them to a distant, deniable past which predated the post-1945 nation-state system. Tracing the histories of men and women who struggled against empire reveals it as a productive and adaptable form of transnational power, which created stratified yet lasting social identities. Secondly, in pursuing this historical-relational approach to empire and race, this study offers an alternative to sovereignty and recognition based models of state, political community, and world order.

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Chapter One

Introduction:

Anti-imperialism as world politics

1.1. Recovering anti-imperial globalism 'from below'

Over the course of the 20th century, politics based in different national, international, and transnational solidarities played out against a backdrop of global upheavals. These upheavals – world war, economic crisis, revolution -- appeared to offer opportunities to transform race relations within societies, as well as more fundamentally address political and economic hierarchy within the dominant Euro-American configuration of world order. While these political solidarities helped bring about a renewed post-colonial order based upon the image of an international system of sovereign nation-states, theoretically rich discourses on social justice, social freedom, and egalitarian democracy sought more than national sovereignty and self-determination for the post-colonial state. This study excavates the international political theory of one such discourse and reveals how political ideas advocating an anti-imperial globalism from below emerged concomitantly with more familiar and well-studied anticolonial nationalist discourses.

This study attempts to offer a better understanding of why so many 'black' thinkers and leaders articulated projects for colonial freedom based in *transnational* identities and solidarities.[1] It concentrates on the connected trajectories of two proposed unions, both as they were imagined as 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' projects: Pan-African federation and West Indies Federation. A central, yet under-acknowledged, aspect of anti-imperial political thought was the goal of creating a new kind of multinational state and/or a poly-racial

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[1] For aesthetic reasons I have limited the use of scare quotes around Western, non-Western, native, black, white and their variants, but do use them periodically to emphasise the contested character of these terms.

citizenry.[2] From the end of WWI to the beginning of the 1960s, activists and leaders from the colonies argued and organised for an end to the existing colonial order, but they also argued and organised for a deeper transformation of the social hierarchies, based in race and class, which sustained empire as a form of international power relation. Individuals such as Cyril Briggs, George Padmore, CLR James, Claudia Jones, Frantz Fanon, and Julius Nyerere challenged formal imperialism and colonialism as alien rule, but also pushed for the eradication of established social and material divisions, which both were the result of, and motivation for, imperial conquest and rule. Failure to attend to social inequality and injustice meant failure to attend to the underlying pathologies of empire. The goal of national unity and sovereign fortitude was articulated as a necessary condition of establishing a new world order on fairer and more radically democratic terms. These goals ultimately helped shape what is typically called the post-war, or post-colonial international order, informing projects to create new forms of state and international organisation.

In taking 'federation' as a discursive anchor point for various post-colonial visions, I am not advocating for the return to a federalist politics for the global South, nor even emphasising some crucial category distinction between federation and multi-national state.[3] Instead this study reveals the multivalence of 'federation': how the term was deployed to express different political visions and ideals.[4] Federalism provides a lens onto the wider rhetorical content of anti-imperial nationalist discourse, revealing more of its political imagination, horizons of possibility, and the mechanisms of its delimitation. A federal structure was pursued by imperial authorities and national elites to more closely integrate

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[2] That African or Caribbean decolonisation concerned the quest for a *new kind of state* – not derivate political forms -- has been acknowledged by a few historical and political theory studies. For example, see Rathbone, 2000; Lal, 2015; Sealy, 2020.

[3] For a study which emphasises the difference between federation and nation-state as political forms, see Burbank and Cooper, 2010.

[4] The West Indies Federation and United States of Africa were actually proposed federal unions, and the former realised for a time under that name. However, I am making a distinction between these specific real and proposed organisations, and the variety of imagined multinational configurations invoked in anti-imperial globalist discourse.

colonised societies into imperial organisation, but it was also pursued by anti-imperial writers and activists as a way to disable or diminish the possibility of neo-imperialism, state oppression, and top-down control of the global economy. More often than not, the sovereign nation-state came to replace federalist visions, creating a shifting political divide between ethno-nationalist conceptions of the state, and those who hoped it could contain a more just and equal multinational and multi-/poly-racial citizenship.[5]

Recovering the multivalence of anti-imperial federation also helps reveal the multi-scalar character of decolonisation, and the plurality of subaltern politics. Thus, it can serve as a resource for those students of world politics not content with mainstream International Relations' (IR) 'Athenian' focus on inter-governmental relations.[6] This wider scope constructively complicates nation-state historiography in the story of 'the transition from empire to nation-state.' Framing anti-imperial globalism as from above and below offers an analytical position from which to critique both mainstream IR's over-emphasis on state sovereignty and recognition, and decolonial IR's over-emphasis on ethno-cultural essences, 'indigenous' authenticity, and essential representations of 'Western modernity.' By emphasising the shifting historical connection and interaction between different politics of resistance and reform, this study attempts to move away from ontologies of peoples and polities as autonomous and unitary actors.

This thesis also attempts to give a partial answer to why transnational solidarities and visions did not remain the dominant driving force of African and black Atlantic politics after independence. While on one level this study is concerned with political ideas – or, more specifically, *arguments* and *claims* – it is also concerned with why those ideas took one form and not another. The subjects of this thesis were simultaneously historical actors and weavers

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[5] A tension which has given rise to, what David Lloyd has called, 'nationalisms against the state.' Lloyd, 1997.
[6] Hoffman, 1977.

of analytical narrative.[7] As historical actors, their actions and arguments were enabled and constrained by the dominant discourse of their times. In order to avoid fetishization of political thought by abstracting it from its sociohistorical conditions of possibility, I employ a hybrid approach. This involves a symptomatic reading of historical discourse drawn from primary and secondary sources, whilst also putting this discourse into conversation with social theory. A key finding of this approach was the consistent and pervasive structural impetus to delimit political aims to ethno-cultural exclusivity, despite widespread feeling that this could not be the ultimate objective of anti-imperial world politics.

This structural impetus is best understood in terms of racialisation: a form of orientalism, through which contingent hierarchies are defined and presented as reflections of collective nature, character, or personality.[8] Historical processes of European expansion, colonisation, and great power rivalry created racial divisions globally, which were reinforced through thick social relations in the colonies and metropole. Insulting caricatures of 'African-ness', 'blackness', 'coloured', etc. were appropriated and redeployed as more flattering self-stereotypes for a variety of different purposes. While these self-representations were sometimes adopted reflexively, and seen as a preliminary stage of more inclusive, longer term goals, they proved far stickier than some had hoped. In other words, ethno-national exclusivity and essentialism were more than 'strategic.'[9] They were over-determined by the discursive parameters of hierarchical empire/colony relations, and they consistently marginalised or delimited other strategic articulations of multi- or poly-racial political community.

In drawing this conclusion I am not suggesting that there is always equivalency, nor reproving all political organisation based in racial unity. Racialisation merely suggests that

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[7] See Trouillot, 1995: 2.
[8] Said, 1979; Cf. Robinson, 1983.
[9] Cf. Spivak, 1996.

'race' matters, in that it places limits on the possibility of pursuing social change and different political outcomes. More than attitudes, which can simply be discarded voluntarily or ameliorated with better norms, notions of racial difference make class solidarity or civic national solidarity structurally fragile. For contemporary political analysis, this conclusion does not imply an inevitable victory of ethno-nationalism over democratic globalism, but it does suggest a stubborn durability to identitarian politics. Identitarian politics are not simply personal prejudices arrived at through some process of reasoned cogitation, and they place limits on ambitions to improve racial and ethnic relations through reasoned argument alone.[10]

The remainder of this chapter gives an outline of the main themes, scope, and frame of analysis of the thesis. It briefly introduces the theoretical problematic of the study; situates the study within IR debates; and specifies in more detail, the historical parameters, the thinkers analysed, and the approach taken. These elements are all elaborated upon further in the next chapter.

1.2. Anti-imperial globalism and racialisation

Anticolonial nationalism was usually also internationalism.[11] Over the course of the 20th century, people from different parts of the world and different sectors of society argued that world war and economic crisis were pathologies of colonialism and imperial rivalry. Whether

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[10] The notion that better norms can be sewn into the social fabric through top-down argument and policy is claimed or heavily implied in Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998; Risse, 2000; Crawford, 2002. However, these studies tend to overlook how power and historical structures of in-group/out-group formation (such as racialisation) might severely limit the socialisation of norms. See Krebs and Jackson, 2007; Zarakol, 2014.

[11] I began research for this project around the same time Adom Getachew's similar dissertation *Worldmaking After Empire: the Rise and Fall of Self-Determination* (2019) was being revised as a book. I generally share Getachew's view that the anti-imperial projects of African, Caribbean, and Africa-American intellectual activists should be understood as worldmaking projects, rather than merely as rejections of alien rule. However, I disagree with Getachew's framing which defends the top-down nation-building of these projects, largely ignores the larger black radical tradition which serves as a foil to her worldmakers, and ultimately reduces anti-imperialism to non-domination as racial sovereignty. Similarities and differences with Getachew's study are discussed further in the next chapter. The conception of 'the particular' and 'the global' as overlapping political orientations is also explored in Rao, 2010; Younis, 2018.

or not they advocated an end to empire, several black writers and activists from colonised societies framed these problems as arising from institutionalised white supremacy and racial hierarchy, not global disorder. The solutions posited by these discourses concerned reforming and strengthening international organisation, even as they increasingly presented the need for national consciousness, sovereignty, and the right to pursue collective destiny without foreign rule. European and American statesmen, jurists, and professors were far from the only people working to build a better world after the First World War.[12]

Anti-imperial discourse – especially during the 'third wave' of decolonisation in the mid-20th century – eventually characterised empires' failings as beyond the policies of any particular empire.[13] Anti-imperialists rarely followed this diagnosis with prescriptions of inert nationalism or 'communitarianism.' For example, the anti-imperial poet and politician, Aimé Césaire (1913-2008), argued in 1955, that 'it is a good thing to place different civilizations in contact with each other; that it is an excellent thing to blend different worlds; that whatever its own particular genius may be, a civilization that withdraws into itself atrophies; that for civilizations, exchange is oxygen.' The connection and inter-penetration of societies which had characterised the modern world were thus welcome in principle; but Césaire concluded, 'has colonization really placed civilizations in contact? Or, if you prefer, of all the ways of establishing contact, was it the best? I answer *no*.'[14]

There were always more progressive and conservative visions of the world 'after empire', even amongst those outside the social and professional spaces of Euro-American diplomacy and scholarship. As Stephen Howe writes, anticolonial arguments shared four

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[12] Hathaway and Shapiro, 2017 and Rosenboim, 2017 both concentrate on white Europeans as the architects of a new world after empire. Sluga, 2013 gives a more balanced history, showing how these new governance agendas were shaped through dialogue and debate between statesman, jurists, and scholars on one side, and activists, theorists, and radicals representing different social movements.

[13] 'Three Waves of Decolonisation' are postulated by Kennedy, 2016: ch. 1. The first wave was constituted by decolonisation in the Americas beginning in the late 18th century. The second, in the Hapsburg, Russian, Ottoman, and German empires after World War I. The third predominantly in Africa and Asia after World War II.

[14] Césaire, 2000 [1955]: 33.

main features: claims of a right to national independence and self-determination; the recognition that struggles for national independence are interdependent with similar struggles elsewhere; the assertion of social equality between Europeans and non-Europeans, including the eradication of racism; and the commitment to 'oppose the colonialism of one's own nation.' Howe also raises a fifth claim 'popularised in the writings of Lenin and his disciples', that colonialism is a consequence of global capitalism, and therefore must be addressed through the construction of 'a socialist society.'[15]

While, as we will see, some were more authentically 'socialist' or 'Leninist' than others, demands for deeper transformation of national and international society were pervasive in the anticolonial nationalist arguments of the 20th century. Drawing on the black internationalist tradition, arguments that racism could not be eradicated by ending formal colonialism alone did not begin as an entirely separate political agenda from the 'mainstream' anticolonial nationalist discourse. Rather, radical internationalist elements grew concomitantly within nationalist movements. Concerns that 'sovereigntism' or 'racialism' would only reproduce ethnic chauvinism and inequality served as internal critiques of black nationalist politics. Rather than functioning always as discrete camps with an isomorphic membership representing consistent positions, nationalism and internationalism served different rhetorical positions depending on the claimant and context. The most visible and globally significant post-war anticolonial nationalist projects drew heavily on a more radical vision as a resource for their own legitimation. Pan-African unity was often presented as for the benefit of humanity: a global progressive step towards a world unencumbered by race prejudice or class division.

Rather than binary – conservative/progressive, cosmopolitan/communitarian, radical/mainstream – the rhetorical differences within anti-imperial globalism can be better

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[15] Howe, 1993: 1-2

clarified by emphasising their ultimate objectives and constituent solidarities, both implicit and explicit. As Or Rosenboim defines it, globalism 'emerged from an awareness of the political significance of the globe as a unitary whole made of interconnected, diverse political units…. Globalism often implied a renewed awareness of diversity, and an attempt to envisage a world order to preserve it.'[16] However, the preservation of a world of diversity is a highly ambiguous prospect, and does not always suggest the most progressive politics. Indeed, 'to preserve' connotes conservatism. Thus it is useful to sub-categorise anti-imperial globalism, which I do here as 'from above' and 'from below.'

Anti-imperial globalism from above posited *inter-governmental* cooperation as the locus of projects to end imperialism and draw the world into more pacific and equitable integration. The ultimate objective of this position was inclusion and autonomy within the existing liberal capitalist order. By 'liberal' I do not mean that every nation-state would necessarily adhere to liberal democratic governance, but that international relations have a liberal foundation in the sovereign right to enter into cooperation and contract.[17] Anti-imperial globalism from above pursued a path to decolonisation, which sometimes emphasised regionalism or future world government; but most importantly, robust sovereignty for states and representative leaders by reforming international institutions with redistributive policies, or creating new institutions.

When the ultimate objectives of anti-imperial globalism from above intersected with a political imagination based in racial solidarity, this resulted in an ethno-nationalist anti-imperialism. This is not to deny the existence of ethno-nationalist populism by saying that only political elites pursue racial solidarity. Rather it is to distinguish a particular discursive position, which premised regional unification or national building on the demand for racial sovereignty and race leadership, needed to protect the race from 'outside' intervention. These

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[16] Rosenboim, 2017: 4.
[17] See Devji, 2012: 69

politics were usually legitimated and gained currency through reference to racial grievance and essential characterisations of the race. As we will see in Chapter 3, this rhetorical position most consistently describes the politics of Marcus Garvey (1887-1940), although others drew upon it less consistently. Importantly, anti-imperial ethno-nationalism is conceptualised here as a type of globalism, not 'isolationism' or the like.[18] The ultimate objective of these politics was still to order and participate in the world envisaged as whole, and to preserve its diversity. Actually, ethno-nationalist politics of this type were only anti-imperial in the particular, and not the abstract. For while they challenged European empire, they also sought the opportunity for every race to build its own regional empire.

Anti-imperial globalism from above sometimes pursued class solidarity, rather than racial solidarity. This rhetorical position stressed the need for economic integration with the West, modernisation, multiculturalism, and 'colour-blind' nation-building and internationalism. This sometimes included low priority for the problem of racial or ethnic disparities in political power. It was legitimated by the perceived need to attain parity with the West in economic, social, and political terms. Diversity was to be preserved by international order: yet, diversity was drawn superficially, belonging to the realm of thinly conceptualised 'culture', which was framed as important, but ultimately separate and secondary to integration with liberal capitalist order.

Anti-imperialism globalism from below was a different politics both in terms of where it placed the locus of change and how it conceptualised diversity. While diversity was to be preserved as a principle and a right, social transformation was necessary to address the racial hierarchy encoded into *imperial diversity*. Speaking or writing from this rhetorical position, activists and leaders advocated social transformation through popular control of the global economy, through community driven, synchronised action with other nations and

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[18] A similar point is made by Younis, 2018: ch. 1.

regions. They also expressed the goal of total social equality: freedom of association, racial mixing, cultural freedom and cultural poly-genesis. Some, especially C.L.R. James (1901-1989), sought an end to representative democracy, and envisaged a global order constituted by direct democratic control through the apparatus of a reconstructed state. When racial solidarity was invoked from this position, it was usually in the form of strategic and temporary segregation. For example, as we will see in Chapter 4, W.E.B. Du Bois (1868-1963) advocated an initial stage of segregation for black communities so they could attain parity with white communities: at which point equal citizenship could be pursued. Du Bois diagnosed the causes of WWI as homologous with the drivers of imperialism and imperial rivalry: chauvinistic nationalism, global racism, militarism, and predatory capitalism. An adequate solution therefore required an end to racial discrimination and increased political power for workers – what he called 'industrial democracy for all humanity.' These ideals needed to be enshrined by some international authority. A preliminary stage to achieving this would be to found 'a new African World State, a Black Africa… recognizing in Africa, the declaration of the American Federation of Labor, that 'no people must be forced under sovereignty under which it does not wish to live.'[19]

These anti-imperial world politics both 'from above' and 'below' did not really exist anywhere in the form of stable camps. Rather, the terms represent different positions taken up by activists, writers, and leaders in the pursuit of different political and personal goals. In recovering these histories, I do not assume that each historical actor held a completely coherent political ideology, which they ceaselessly put towards the achievement of consistent goals. Neither do I wish to reproduce the fallacy of a unified and undifferentiated anticolonial nationalism, which cast off the shackles of imperialism in the name of 'the nation.' As Jeremy Adelman observes in his history of Latin American decolonisation in the late 18th and

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[19] Du Bois, 2016 [1920]: 37.

early 19th centuries, the political dynamics between colonists and their respective dynastic empires in Europe can be read in terms of Albert O. Hirschman's famous triad, *exit, voice, and loyalty*.[20] These categories can also help distinguish between political visions and rhetoric in the case of African and Caribbean decolonisation. Empires engendered and sustained varying degrees of loyalty between social groups. Rather than a process of a nation's self-recognition which logically resulted in a unified demand for independence, colonial 'exit, voice, and loyalty' reflected internally divided interests and opinions, which jostled against one another within the same political space.[21] Although always also practiced by groups who took a principled stand against empire, anti-imperialism only emerged as a dominant discourse when empire came to be perceived as irreparably incapable of reforming itself to meet the demands of different strata of a colonised society. The transition of anti-imperialism from a marginal discourse to a dominant discourse in the 20th century is only explicable in light of the catastrophic world events of that century, and the failure or inability of European empires to amend themselves accordingly. However, there was never a period when independence was not contested by colonial subjects. Influential leaders in French Africa, for example, fought for the reformation of empire along more egalitarian principles through the extension of citizenship rights until as late as 1956.[22]

Racialisation was a common denominator in all of these politics. In its loftier forms, and typical of modern political ideologies, anti-imperial globalism from below idealised abstractions, such as 'the revolutionary working class', and maybe too readily subscribed to the redemption of humanity through large-scale organisation and integration. Yet, even when race was reflected upon and posited as a barrier to overcome for the good of humanity, social and material divisions structured on racial lines held an almost inescapable agency. I

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[20] Adelman, 2006; Hirschman, 1970
[21] Adelman 2006, 8.
[22] Wilder, 2015; Cooper, 2014

approach racialisation here as both dominant discourse and social practice, each reproducing the other. The pervasive idea that races needed to act, develop, redeem themselves *as races* structured the possibilities of political argument and action. The ability to act for the benefit of social and world change were evaluated through the prism of skin colour, with each race possessing certain qualities, rendering them more or less fit agents for governance or revolutionary action. Such stereotyping was reinforced by disparities in material resources and political power, but also geographically, in societies where space was divided by racial difference. As we will see, racialisation played a prominent role from the early organising after WWI, to the state development projects of the 1950s and 1960s.

Another central finding of this study is the sheer flexibility of 'federation' as a rhetorical commonplace of anti-imperial argument. The United States of Africa and the West Indies Federation each existed in a variety of discursive forms, both representing anti-imperial visions from 'above' and 'below.' Federalism from above pertained to the outward facing relationship with the international system/order, self-determination for the post-colonial state, and the business of political, economic, cultural, and military development as these related to an integrated federal unit. Federalism from below pertained to class unity, the transnational organisation of workers' interests, and the maintenance of progressive race relations within the independent nation and the rest of the world. Both forms of federation were initially suggested by colonial leaders as a way to improve relations with European empire rather than end them entirely. In their anti-imperial form, federal visions did not survive the transition from activist rhetoric to national policy, except in the case of Tanzania. After independence, antagonism over who federation was for became impossible to ignore. For the leaders of new states, federation became an impediment to new economic and political alliances with powers in the East and West. Political opponents in newly independent regions accused the other of betraying the federal dream over class, racial, and

tribal interests. Imperial racialisation also presented significant challenges to federal unification, even as some continued to look to unification as the means to improve race relations within the state and the international community.

1.3. Sovereignty and difference

After the Second World War, black anti-imperial writers, activists, and leaders argued for sovereignty and/or self-determination, but they also posited these as potential threats to social justice, freedom, and equality. The argument that sovereignty and self-determination could not be pursued as ends in themselves emerged concomitantly with nationalist discourse and organising. The 'self' of black self-determination was usually open to a certain degree of contestation, and was complicated by a widely held belief in the need for institutionalised forms of transnational solidarity, coalition, and integration. This conception of the post-imperial 'self' as flexible – of needing to be flexible – even extended beyond the era of formal decolonisation. As Burbank and Cooper write,

> Other possibilities for a post-imperial world lived on in political imagination around the world in the second half of the twentieth century. Among these projects were an alliance of ex-colonial states in a "Third World bloc," peasant revolutions that crossed state boundaries, diasporic solidarities, and regional groupings in Asia, Africa, and elsewhere. The United Nations both reinforced the new norm of equivalence among states and led some to hope that it could institutionalize community among all the world's people.[23]

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[23] Burbank and Cooper, 2010: 414

Sovereignty was seen as potentially divisive: as a threat to anti-imperial unity, and a tool of neo-imperialism. Most progressive anti-imperial globalists eventually pursued sovereignty as a necessary first stage, but it could not be the ultimate objective. What was needed was a remaking of modern political form to address the iniquities and violence of racialisation and imperial society. Some argued for the voluntary surrender of sovereignty almost as soon as it had been won.

The notion that sovereignty and self-determination might not be the *sine qua non* of anticolonial nationalist politics has rarely been explored in IR. By highlighting the anti-imperial goals which could not be addressed with sovereignty for its own sake, this study offers a response to IR's taken-for-granted focus on sovereignty. For many IR scholars, sovereignty and self-determination are basic ontological conditions for the discipline's main object of analysis: relations between modern nation-states. The English School, and Constructivism with a Liberal bent, posit sovereignty and self-determination as norms, which, though they are subject to change, allow the international system to hang together.[24] When mainstream constructivists have explored sovereignty and self-determination in connection to anticolonial nationalist politics, it has usually been to argue for the diffusion of liberal norms, to premise non-Western rational agency, and to demonstrate the efficacy of rational argument.[25] We might hope that, by including African or Asian agency in the socialisation of global norms, this might go some way to reversing the normative polarity of dominant discourses, which have posited the West as the carrier of liberal democratic norms throughout the world, and 'non-Western' states and societies as 'communitarian' impediments to the spread of these norms.[26] Yet, by foregrounding liberal sovereignty – not social justice -- as the ultimate objective of anticolonial politics, Liberal Constructivists unintentionally valorise

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[24] Jackson, 1993; Bull, 1977; Philpott, 2001; Crawford, 2002; Barkin and Cronin, 1994.
[25] Crawford, 2002; Philpott, 2001; Risse, 2000.
[26] See Zarakol, 2014.

the slide from progressive anti-imperialism to conservative sovereigntism, which characterised the period from about 1965 to the present.[27] This analytical position can also create the illusion that nationalists were free to argue whatever they wanted, were not constrained by external power, discursive 'common sense', and internal division, and had their complaints resolved by the transfer of sovereignty. Often left out are the ongoing relations of informal empire, and the ways sovereignty for its own sake has not prevented the conversion of colonies into dependent, penetrable, and oppressive states.

Sovereignty and self-determination in anticolonial and anti-imperial discourse were often bound up with questions of preserving difference and diversity. As mentioned in the previous section, how to preserve difference and diversity varied; but, race and its connection to cultural development was prevalent. At stake were not only black populations' relations with other races, but their relationship to modernity and potential to drive global progress. Political thinkers as different as Marcus Garvey, Claude McKay (1889-1948), and George Padmore (1903-1959) could all argue that 'the black race' was exceptional in its difference. Certain world historical and political developments made this justifiable: the socioeconomic legacies of slavery in the Americas; the mandates system, which effectively classified black populations at the bottom of a pyramid of world races; the fragmentation of labour organising on black and white lines; and Mussolini's invasion of Abyssinia, which met with approval or relative indifference from much of the white metropolitan political class. With the emergence of black advocacy networks and international race leadership, insult and injury to black populations were countered with reference to Africa's great civilizational past, as well as the potential of revolutionary blacks to bring about an ultra-modern transformation of global order. Especially after WWII, some, including C.L.R. James, Claudia Jones (1915-1964), and Amílcar Cabral (1924-1973), argued that standards of modernity and civilisation could not be

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[27] A related argument is made by Grovogui, 2002.

imposed on existing societies from outside. Transformation would need to come from radically democratic collaboration between races and classes. Not a Western-educated elite bringing modernity to the masses -- the more common prescription during the interwar period – but through direct democratic access to the state, individual and communal sovereignty, pluralistic representation, and through the principle of 'diversity in unity.'

Anti-imperialists saw ethnic and cultural difference – and used difference claims – as variable and often ambiguous tools of political strategy. By this I do not mean that anti-imperialists had a free choice of a 'menu' of possibilities. As Meera Sabaratnam writes, recognizing 'decolonial' theory as strategy means we acknowledge that 'the philosophical wagers and commitments made are located in and directed towards a particular problem, and express different interests.'[28] Discourse about the world and for world change is necessarily situated in a specific set of historical presumptions and partisan loyalties: 'problem-spaces' in which a limited set of questions and answers can come to prominence.[29] The strategies of those who wanted *exit* were shaped in part by those who expressed *voice* or *loyalty*. Because difference and authenticity politics could also act as a debilitating legacies of colonial divide and rule, part of the struggle to transform world order from below necessarily entailed the transcendence of difference in order to build revolutionary coalitions, and disable the hierarchal divisions which sustained imperialism.

Recent IR studies have retrained focus on ethnic and cultural difference and diversity, both as ontological features of society and as political referents. This study contributes to this emerging literature by highlighting: connections between 'global' imperial orders and 'particular' social genesis; the importance of an international social imaginary of 'world

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[28] Sabaratnam, 2011: 783.
[29] The term 'problem-space' is David Scott's, who builds on the work of R.G. Collingwood to conceptualise the post-colonial condition (1999; 2004). However, the role of power-knowledge formations in limiting the 'menu' of questions we can ask about history, politics, and society is more clearly emphasised in Trouillot, 1995.

races' before and after WWII[30]; and the plurality of power relations and knowledge formations between and within racialised groups. As we will see, political discourse often conflates racial and cultural difference.[31] 'Blackness' in anti-imperial discourse was not conceptualised purely in terms of physical traits, but ascribed a host of cultural characteristics.

Questions about difference and diversity are raised to critique the totalising and homogenising tendencies of Realism, Liberalism, or modernisation theories more broadly.[32] I concur with the argument that international theory needs to cast a wider net, and open its analytic scope to account for global processes and inequalities, subaltern politics, and inter-societal connections. However, some anti-Eurocentric IR carries a danger of reifying 'non-Western difference' by ascribing to it a geography and an essence. Take for example 'Global IR', which has come to stand in as the latest iteration of this longstanding debate. In his 2014 declaration of Global IR's new agenda to the International Studies Association, Amitav Acharya accepts Stanley Hoffmann's account of IR as 'born and raised in America', but adds that the discipline has now 'mushroomed' through 'schools, departments, institutes, and conventions' around the world.[33] He argues that this new state of affairs presents an opportunity to open IR to the rest of the world; to push for 'greater inclusiveness and diversity', and to address the widely acknowledged problem of the discipline's empirical focus and 'main theories' being 'too deeply rooted in, and beholden to, the history, intellectual traditions, and agency claims of the West.'[34]

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[30] Charles Taylor defines a social imaginary as more than a 'set of ideas', but a background system of thought, which 'enables, through making sense of, the practices of a society' (2002: 91). I am thus making a strong claim about racial and cultural hierarchy as a system which enables particular formations of social practice and organisation.

[31] Ford, 2006.

[32] Inayatullah and Blaney, 2004; Hobson, 2013.

[33] Acharya, 2014: 647

[34] Ibid.: 649

Such a conception reproduces, what I call, *epistemic mapping*: the notion that knowledge has a single or rightful geographic provenance, that it is owned by a single race, culture, nation, or region. Similarly 'decolonial' scholars, often drawing on the work of Enrique Dussel or Walter Mignolo, characterise modernity as a bifurcated process in which 'epistemologies of the South' have been systematically disenfranchised, excluded, or eradicated according to the racial chauvinism inherent to Western thought systems.[35] Some writing in this register argue for the need to seek out 'places of otherness', to borrow a phrase from Gyan Prakash, as a resource from which to contest the fundamental assumptions of hegemonic liberal politics and nationalist historiography, which are characterised as essentially Western.[36] Similar to Global IR, there is a danger of reproducing essential and stereotypical definitions of human difference in promoting a Western universalism/non-Western authenticity binary. Strategic essentialism has long been a feature of political discourse; it can serve progressive or conservative ends, as well as have unintended consequences. The role of the scholar should not be to do strategic essentialism ourselves, but to better understand how it becomes possible, and/or to assess its aims and outcomes.

I also argue that inquiry into 'difference' in world politics should expand its conception of 'recognition', and even depart from it. Christian Reus-Smit's recent project has done important work reconceptualising IR's dominant notion of culture as bounded and homogenous, towards a conception which takes it as open to 'external' influence, contested, and prone to various forms of transformation and hybridity. Yet, Reus-Smit augments his ontology of culture with a complementary concept, which he calls 'diversity regimes.' Diversity regimes seem to have a lot in common with what Talal Asad called 'authorizing discourses', assemblages of practice, communicative action, and human authorities, which discipline rightful adherence to a culture, and how it gets represented to 'the outside.' Unlike

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[35] E.g. Dussel, 2013; Mignolo, 2011
[36] Prakash, 1994: 5; see also Chatterjee, 1993

Asad's authorising discourses, Reus-Smit's diversity regimes manifest as IR's familiar 'unitary actors': states, governments, and empires.[37] According to Reus-Smit, these units' primary impetus for cultural politics is 'recognition.'[38] Of course, authorities, such as states, do seek international recognition, but authority over *cultural representation* is sought for a host of reasons not reducible to recognition. The lost opportunity here would be to reassert cultural politics purely as form of particularism, which unitary actors rationally seek in order to make sovereignty claims. What I show in this thesis is very different: cultural politics were asserted and contested to advance rival *universalisms* and alternative world orders, but were strongly delimited by *trans-boundary discourses*, relational racial imaginaries, and not simply the recognition struggles of unitary actors.

Anti-imperial globalism was shaped through its interaction with a dominant trans-boundary discourse, which understood the problems of the 20th century as requiring large-scale forms of political organisation and integration. This discourse was *determining* in that it delimited the avenues out of empire. Representations of difference and identity were likewise determined by strategic necessity and historical possibility. I define *to determine* in a similar sense to the way Stuart Hall defined it, when he wrote:

Structures exhibit tendencies- lines of force, openings and closures which

constrain, shape, channel and in that sense, "determine." But they cannot

determine in the harder sense of fix absolutely, guarantee. People are not

irrevocably and indelibly inscribed with the ideas that they ought to think; the

politics that they ought to have are not, as it were, already imprinted in their

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[37] For a critique of IR's adherence to a unitary actor ontology, see Zarakol, 2017.
[38] Reus-Smit, 2018; Asad, 2009.

sociological genes. The question is not the unfolding of some inevitable law but rather the linkages which, although they can be made, need not necessarily be.[39]

As we will see in the chapters that follow, the socio-economic structure of the British (and French) empire, the emergence of transnational black power, the legitimacy crises of 'Western civilisation', and prevailing – though not uncontested – discourses of both racial and global progress all created linkages, which allowed for difference and identity to be articulated in different ways. While these articulations confirm the importance of ethno-cultural difference to world politics, they also reveal a consistent imperative to prevent justice and freedom struggles from being reduced to it.

1.4. Empire and race in IR, towards a historical-relational approach

The period I have chosen to examine for this study encompasses six decades: the end of the 1910s to the middle of the 1970s. Any decision to choose a beginning and an end for this kind of historical study must be somewhat artificial, and so my analysis sometimes reaches outside this range of dates. Some sections concentrate on the primordial form of this discourse, before anti-imperialism was widely or formally articulated; some look at what remained of the discourse after anti-imperial globalism had guttered out. While the discourse of 1919 drew on events and ideas that came before, the aftermath of WWI and the Russian Revolutions of 1917 gave rise to a new constellation of strategic possibilities. New polarities between the Soviet, Fascist, and Democratic capitalist empires galvanised and drew new intersections within loosely organized networks of empire-critical leaders and activists. The ambitions of the post-war Anglo-American alliance to build an 'international order' in the

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[39] Hall, 1985: 96.

wake of WWI created a new focal point—whether or not critics of empire entirely trusted or shared its professed ideals.

My analytical approach follows, to an extent, Duncan Bell's 'hybrid contextualism.'[40] I analyse the primary sources and biographies of certain figures, and combine and juxtapose these with contemporaneous patterns and assumptions expressed in the discourse more broadly. As well as secondary sources, my research materials include primary source books, personal papers, articles, newspapers, pamphlets, periodicals, and novels. The main anchor point in my reading of these texts is how the idea of federation was articulated over time. My approach has the aim of both accounting for the contextual possibilities of discourse, as well as emphasising its theoretical implications. This involves *symptomatic reading*: drawing out the theoretical wagers of texts, which were not necessarily produced originally as systematic or scholarly knowledge.[41] For example, in Chapter Three, I show how Cyril Briggs (1888-1966) and Hubert Harrison (1883-1927) theorised the possibility of a global cosmopolitan democracy, which would be attained through analysis and mobilisation of actually existing political communities in the United States and Africa. These theories were not produced as academic knowledge, but as political discourse meant to affect opinion and policy.

My approach is hybrid in that it also draws on the tools of global historical sociology to show how structures of racialisation cut across empire/colony relations in African, Caribbean, European, and North American politics. In practice this means drawing on a synthesis of secondary source histories in order to better contextualise and explain the possibilities of anti-imperial thought. It is putting the analytical frame of 'the global' into constant conversation with the analytical frame of 'the particular.' Imperial order in the 20th century can be described as, what George Lawson has called, a 'transnational field of

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[40] Bell, 2007: 26
[41] Althusser et. al., 2016 [1965].

contention.'[42] Resistance and critique were constitutive aspects of imperial-colonial order in that they informed imperial strategies.[43] The British Empire, for example, was less a rigid structure than a system or a 'patchwork', 'whose contingent parts were constantly influencing the reevalution of British imperial policy.'[44] But resistance and critique usually went beyond a two-way relationship between colonial nationalists and their respective imperial authorities. Anti-imperial globalists reacted and were informed by international processes: world wars, economic crashes, boundary-crossing ideas, social movements, revolutions, and the rise of multilateral organisations.

The British Empire worked through processes and relations of inclusion and differentiation, not binary inclusion and exclusion.[45] Different groups were *included* to varying extents to serve a global division of labour related to extraction, production, security, and bureaucracy.[46] In part, this differentiation followed logics related to the historical concentration of capital in particular geographical spaces,[47] hierarchical classifications of economic sectors and forms of work, and logics of indirect rule, where owners and managers of capital needed to attain the loyalty of local clients. States, laws, and other institutions were modified to facilitate the flow of global capital.[48] Although they were transformed in various ways after the dissolution of the old colonial order, the roots of these transnational processes are imperial, not post-war.[49] The significance of this is that the reproduction of inclusion and differentiation in the contemporary world system was set in train by an imperial order which operated according to a social imaginary based on a hierarchy of races and cultures.[50]

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[42] Lawson, 2019: 25.
[43] Burbank and Cooper, 2010: 290.
[44] James, 2015: 6.
[45] As Anghie, 2005 and Getachew, 2019 argue, the *modus operandi* of empire was 'unequal integration.'
[46] E.g. Wallerstein, 2004. See discussion of Wallerstein's 'word empire' thesis in Buzan and Little, 2000: 62-64; Sassen, 2014; Anghie, 2005; Getachew, 2019
[47] Eg. Harvey, 2014; Das, 2017
[48] Brenner, 1997; Barkawi and Laffey, 1999
[49] Barkawi and Laffey, 1999: 407; Hopkins, 2002; Grant, Levine, and Trentmann, 2007: 17; Norfield, 2017
[50] Buzan and Lawson, 2015: 51-54; Wolfe, 2016; Getachew, 2019

This conception of empire as a relational and differentiated network of societies, politics, and practices – rather than simply the dominant type of unitary actor before the nation-state -- builds on recent studies on empire and race in historical and historical sociological IR.[51] While challenging the notion that the 'transition from empire to nation-state' was uniform and seamless, these studies also seek to bridge the 'analytical bifurcations' reflected in many of IR's traditional categories: for example, domestic vs. international and west vs. non-west.[52] Anti-imperial globalism does not, in my reading, reflect something that we can reduce to the binary of 'Western' *or* 'non-Western thought.' Rather, I approach these categories in terms of their historical relation, inter-societal engagement, and co-constitution. Race and the common sense of racial development conditioned the possibility of thought and argument across the 'black Atlantic.'[53] Global events structured the social imaginaries, struggles, and political visions of people around the world and in various walks of life. Anti-imperial globalism reflected 'connected histories' and 'connected sociologies.'[54]

In excavating the different sides of anti-imperial discourse, and analysing how they were co-implicated, this study aims to challenge 'attributional thinking' in the study of empire and race. Attributional thinking refers to the notion that 'the social world consists of fixed entities (the units of analysis) that have attributes (the variables).'[55] The practice of fixing units and their variables as context-distant entities fails to recognise that social formations and subjectivities are not comprised of transhistorical properties, but are processes 'on the move', and situated within matrices of relation informed by events.[56] This does not mean total 'fluidity', because it is still possible to account for patterns and 'stickier' dynamics

[51] E.g. Bayly, 2016; Barkawi, 2017; Phillips and Sharman, 2015; Go and Lawson, 2017; Shilliam, 2009; Younis, 2019.

[52] See Hutchings, 2011; Krishna 2015: 139.

[53] Gilroy, 1993 posits the 'black Atlantic' as a particular geographical, social, and cultural field, defined by patterns of hybridity and interchange.

[54] See Bhambra, 2014.

[55] Abbott, 2001: 39

[56] Go and Lawson, 2017: 3; Sewell, 2005; chs. 7 and 8

and relationships between societies.[57] Yet, as James Tully writes, from his Foucauldian framing, 'it is practical conflict and war that lie at the foundations of modern political thought: not a war of all against all nor of economic classes, but of shifting yet analysable alliances.'[58]

The decision to focus almost exclusively on Anglophone black internationalist discourses was partly a matter of time and language constraints, but it also allowed for a deeper exploration of a particular political conversation.[59] This meant sacrificing a certain degree of generalisability for nuance and detail: a trade-off which might have been the opposite had I opted for trans-geographic survey to produce a comparativist typology of anti-imperial discourse.[60] While I do not claim that the discourses analysed in this thesis can be said to represent anti-imperial world politics in all its forms everywhere, it has been possible to draw conclusions, which qualify relevant debates within IR and international theory in a more general way. There are precedents for this. Partha Chatterjee's (1986) classic study reveals the limits of viewing Third World nationalism as purely 'derivative' by concentrating solely on three generations of Indian nationalist discourse. In a similar way, this study shows the limits of viewing decolonisation purely through the lens of state sovereignty and self-determination, through analysis of three discursive shifts in (mostly) Anglophone black internationalist discourse. It also reveals the limits of approaching any intellectual tradition as if it were a hermetic container for a specified social group's monolithic hopes and ideals. [61]

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[57] Lawson, 2010
[58] Tully, 1988: 24
[59] This study has benefitted from a recent proliferation of excellent historical studies on black internationalism and anti-imperialism. E.g. Von Eschen, 1997; Makalani, 2011; Edwards, 2003; Polsgrove, 2009; Irwin, 2012; Bogues, 2003; James, 2015; Umoren, 2018.
[60] Cf. Lawson, 2010.
[61] With David Scott, I understand 'traditions' generally, and 'the black radical tradition' specifically, as 'essentially contentious.' Traditions take place within 'socially embodied and historically extended discursive terrain on which the identity of a community is *argued* out.' They are also 'modes of *authorization*' which seek to express the durability of a community's historical experience (Scott, 2013: 3).

Black internationalist anti-imperialism was entangled with other people's politics in a variety of ways: economic, political, and social.

The discourses of Africans and people of African descent, which ultimately helped bring about the end of formal empire in Africa and the Caribbean, took place during a particularly important moment in the formation of 'the international.'[62] While the first and second waves of decolonisation comprised similar dynamics of empire-colony relations, and the internal divergences within colonised societies, the third wave of decolonisation came as the result of a uniquely *global* discourse around the role of imperialism in the First World War, the threat this represented to 'world civilisation', and the new forms of international governance and social relations needed to address global conflict. During this moment, empire came to be seen as in need of reform by some, and inherently destructive and regressive by others. In each case, the emergence of more powerful and organised racial advocacy networks and the depreciating returns of white imperial legitimacy galvanised arguments for non-white inclusion in governance. Objection to white supremacy proliferated in various transnational advocacy organizations and through colonial and metropolitan print cultures. These ideas were facilitated by the synchronisation of racial grievance throughout colonised populations, but also by the ideological and organisational resources supplied by the COMINTERN and the United States. Black anti-imperialism is not reducible to Soviet communism or American liberalism, but its entanglements with other political movements often led to important consequences, such as the crackdown on its print materials and organising by colonial authorities.[63]

The focus on black internationalism also has a rationale related to the relative neglect of certain discourses and ideologies in the formation of the international/states system. While

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[62] Although anticolonial nationalists like Gandhi and Du Bois play only small roles in their narratives, the constitution of the international as a particular social and political sphere, which gradually became inimical to older forms of imperialism is discussed in Sluga, 2013 and Pedersen, 2015. Cf. Mazower, 2009

[63] The argument that the black radical politics of the 20th century are not reducible to class politics or organised Marxism is well made in Robinson, 1983 and Makalani, 2011.

it would be possible to dig deeper into the anti-imperial politics of white metropolitan activists, the view that independence was gifted to the colonies by benevolent whites does not need further elaboration. The notion that white Western societies came around on their own to new moral positions on practices like colonialism already forms the bedrock for a plethora of liberal constructivist studies and popular histories.[64] Analysis of the world political discourse of individuals like Marcus Garvey, Cyril Briggs, J.E. and Adelaide Casely Hayford, Paulette Nardal, George Padmore, among others, forms part of the unique contribution of this study.

Although they usually *referred to* peasant and worker communities, the discourses I analyse here were relatively elite. However, there is more in the history of anti-imperial, intra-elite discourse than has been sometimes suggested by historians of the subaltern. Excluded socially and politically, but rich in cultural capital, sufficiently resourced to travel between colony and metropole, and tailored towards low level, white collar professions, many anti-imperial writers and leaders were acutely aware of the transnational pecking order, and occupied a position of relative subalternity. For the most part, these individuals fit Edward Said's category of the 'secular intellectual.'[65] Said defines secular intellectuals by six axes of activity and thought: 1.) the 'archival function' of preserving and deploying 'counter-information' which is hidden by the 'prevailing consensus'; 2.) translating specialized knowledge and literature into forms accessible to broad groups of people; 3.) demystifying the language of authority which appeals to so-called pragmatic common-sense in order to highlight the underlying ethical or political implications; 4.) disrupting attempts to privatize knowledge by challenging the boundaries of specialized domains of practice; 5.) resisting a

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[64] E.g. Jackson, 1993; Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998; Hathaway and Shapiro, 2017; see Grovogui, 1996 Barkawi, 2018.

[65] See also, Biswas, 2007

culture's slide into total domination or trivialization; and 6.) insisting on the irreconcilability and irreducibility of oppositions.[66]

In Antonio Gramsci's problematic and the European context, such figures would normally be considered intellectuals proper, the 'organizers of culture' contrasted with the 'organic intellectuals' who derive their ideology from the 'essential task of economic production.'[67] But the relative marginality of colonial anti-imperial activists created a unique position where the function of intellectual critique often needed to be exercised outside the realms of formal knowledge production—in the function rooms and public parks of metropolitan centres, through art and literature, and in transnational print media.[68]

Through its empirics and approach this study seeks to contribute to the '(re)turn' to empire and race in IR.[69] A few scholars now recognise that analysis of contemporary international relations, whether it concerns Brexit; Russian, Chinese, and Western rivalry in Africa; NATO operations in the Middle East; Salafist movements; transnational protest movements like Black Lives Matter; or developments in organisations like CARICOM, the African Union, or ASEAN, is often poorer for not attending to legacies of empire and colonialism, as well as ongoing imperial relations. Critical histories of IR have pointed to IR as an academic discipline which got its start through the policy science of race development and imperial management[70]; which continues to advance self-flattering myths about Western exceptionalism; and which claims or assumes the universality of European history, institutions, and technologies. This can have the effect of whitewashing Euro-American

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[66] Said, 1996: 29-32.
[67] Cammett, 1967: 202.
[68] In her authoritative intellectual biography of Claudia Jones, Carole Boyce Davies also finds use for Said's conception of the secular intellectual. She also points out its limitations in failing to account for the critical function of those who work by choice or opportunity outside the academy and – in her words – outside the "'status identity' of the professoriat" (2007: 9).
[69] Bayly, 2014; Vucetic, 2011; Vitalis, 2015.
[70] E.g. Vucetic, 2011; Hobson, 2012; Vitalis, 2015; Bayly, 2016; Thakur *et. al.*, 2017

world politics, or, more insidiously, continuing to normalise state-sanctioned violence and inequality.[71]

These critiques of IR as a Eurocentric discipline, historically bound up with white supremacy, have carried the discipline to a crossroads. Down one road, there is the possibility of attempting to address these omissions and biases with analysis based in liberal pluralist inclusion: adding a host of 'non-Western' categories and biases, which posit cultural and territorialised particularities. I argue that the likely outcome here is not an amelioration of Eurocentrism, but an extension of it. The West is still granted the terrain of the universal, with 'the non-West' granted tolerance to tack on a variety of cultural 'differences', as long as it largely continues to adhere to disciplinary shibboleths, such as order, sovereignty, and recognition. Another path – though not the only one -- is the relational-historical approach to empire and race I put forward in this study. This understands relations between former empires and colonies as asymmetrical and differentiated but connected, constituted through resistance and alliance as well as oppression, and interpretable through discourse, which often concerned bounded communities, but was usually also boundary-crossing.

1.5. Structure of the thesis

The remainder of the thesis is divided into four chapters plus a concluding chapter. *Chapter Two* explicates the theoretical wagers behind anti-imperialism as a world politics. I argue that the empire-building which emerged in the modern period should be understood as a part of a generative, networked hegemony. Not a collective will, but a loose agglomeration of practices and rationalisations sustained by inter-societal rivalry and the apparent existence of civilisational difference and inequality. The global hegemony of small L liberal imperialism

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[71] E.g. Inayatullah & Blaney, 2004; Grovogui, 2006; Jones, 2006; Agathangelou & Ling, 2009; Barkawi, 2010; Shilliam, 2010; Muppidi, 2012; Rutazibwa, 2014; Shilliam, 2015; Barkawi, 2016; Sabaratnam, 2017

was a generative yet uneven system of capital dispensation and social ordering. Accordingly, the critiques and resistance to imperial authority and imperial legitimation scripts which began to emerge – at first infrequently -- in the late 18th century reflected this unevenness. Rather than purely expressions of autogenous national identity, the narration and assertion of different collective identities represented both strategic and principled claims on the injustices of imperial-colonial order.

Chapter Three is the first of three empirical chapters tracing the trajectory of pan-African and black radical discourse from WWI to the final decades of the Cold War. These chapters are divided chronologically, but also thematically around different *articulations* of dominant anti-imperial discourse. The first chapter in this series analyses the concept of *civilisation* as it was deployed by race leaders from two continents: particularly Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, Joseph Ephraim (J.E.) Casely Hayford (1866–1930), Hubert Henry Harrison, and Cyril Valentine Briggs. I situate this discourse in its world political context, and show how the concept of civilisation was deployed in a variety of ways, but always to denote some vision of global progress. Although this intra-elite discourse took place between black leaders opposed to white supremacy, divergences within it based on attitudes towards class consciousness demonstrate an early example of the irreducibility of anti-imperialism to ethnic nationalism. Ultimately these differences demonstrate a tension between political decisions that emphasise race leadership and race development, and those that foreground *global* cosmopolitan democracy.

Chapter four analyses the articulation to *revolution* in pan-African and black radical discourse. This discursive shift is characterised by a more widespread rejection of the imperial civilising mission, and the argument that empire is essentially a destructive and regressive form of political organisation. I argue that movements which helped bring about a rapid dissolution of the imperial-colonial order in Africa and the West Indies grew out of a

relatively small subculture of intellectuals centred in imperial metropoles. Thus, rather than anti-imperialism and anticolonialism stemming from a pre-existing and widely felt ethnic nationalism, these politics were products of a specific intra-elite discourse engendered by the imperial social world. These groups were spurred by the Italian invasion of Ethopia in 1935, which resulted in a strengthened conception of a transnational black public. They were also significantly facilitated by Leninist anti-imperialism and the Communist International (COMINTERN); although an important split opened between Communism and African and Asian anti-imperialists due to the Stalinisation of the COMINTERN. Within this discourse there was a divergence between those for whom revolution should be for black sovereignty only, and those who wanted a systemic revolution in the fabric of imperial-colonial society. Some of the important voices of the period I analyse are Claude McKay, Paulette Nardal (1896-1985), George Padmore, T. Ras Makonnen (1909-1983), Cyril Lionel Robert (C.L.R.) James, Frantz Fanon (1925-1961), Nnamdi Azikiwe (1904-1996), and Jomo Kenyatta (1897-1978).

Chapter five analyses the discursive articulation to *development* and *liberation.* This articulation was enabled by global Cold War rivalries, which strongly determined a conception of Third World history as taking place on the same temporal terrain as American and Soviet history. This world political context was defined by new national elites choosing strategic alliances within a Cold War dynamic, rejecting old 'revolutionary' alliances, and getting drawn deeper into a new paradigm of the international state system and the logics of national development. However, the development logics of Third World elites were rarely nationalistic in the narrow sense of the term, and encompassed demands to remake the global economy according to more democratic and egalitarian principles.

Chapter six concludes by reviewing the main takeaways of the thesis, and suggests general ways forward for the study of empire and race in IR.

Chapter Two

Imperial modernity and its others:

Theory of anti-imperial world politics

2.1. Introduction

Only 13 years after the independence of India, and 3 years after Ghana's independence, anticolonial nationalist projects were celebrated and enshrined by the General Assembly of the United Nations. However, anti-imperial theorists like C.L.R. James saw that they were also already building towards crisis. Writing on October 23, 1961 to Carl La Corbiniere, the Deputy Prime Minister of the West Indies Federation (WIF), James protested Norman Manley's decision to hold a public referendum on the future of the WIF. The Jamaican premier had ignored James's repeated advice not to hold the referendum. Now, not only had Jamaica voted to leave, but the 'political atmosphere in the WI' had been 'poisoned.'[72]

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[72] Letter from James to La Corbiniere. C.L.R. James Collection, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine (UWI). Box 5, Folder 105.

 The referendum result gave Eric Williams, the first Prime Minister of James's native Trinidad and Tobago, an excuse to withdraw his own nation from the federation. For James, Manley and William's actions represented competition over power within the WIF. But even worse, abandonment of the WIF represented the collapse of a decades' long dream to build an allied democratic front against the influence of imperialist capital in the West Indies.

Less than three years later, James published two articles in the *Trinidad Evening News* which expressed grave concern for the future of Kwame Nkrumah's premiership in Ghana.[73] The articles came after Nkrumah had unconstitutionally dismissed a Chief Justice who had just exonerated five people charged with attempting to assassinate Nkrumah. For James, this too represented the failure of an anticolonial nationalist leader to deliver on the democratic promise which had been the whole point of independence from imperial rule. With a single-minded focus on nation-building, as part of his push to build a federated United States of Africa, Nkrumah was driving the young nation too hard towards modernisation. As with the WIF, James supported pan-African federation in principle, but it would never work without a strict adherence to democratic accountability, which would ultimately mean state deference to Ghana's multi-cultural, multi-ethnic masses.

The early years of West Indian and African independence have usually been subsumed under dominant accounts of the expansion of international society, the birth of the states system, and the end of empire. These narratives assume a global acquiescence to liberal principles of national self-determination and territorial sovereignty, a universal ratification of Wilson's fourteen points envisioned decades earlier. This account is premised on a model of West-to-Rest diffusion, which has further enabled the assumption that formerly colonised nations appropriated liberal principles in order to defend authoritarian sovereignties. These diffusionist accounts have virtually erased histories of anti-imperial projects to build

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[73] James, 1977: ch. 12

federations, multilateral economic organisations, and other formal associations meant to address the uneven terms of the international system.

On the other hand, recent scholarly attempts to set the record straight have resulted in indirect promotions of elite nation and institution-building. Recasting anticolonial leaders from narrow nationalists to worldmakers effectively provides excuses for the democracy-undermining projects of national elites. While these studies have enabled further inquiry into the hierarchical structure of world politics by theorising double-tiered relations, they have yet to include the third tier of transnational democratic politics. As a result, this scholarship performs a further erasure of the radical democratic and egalitarian politics of anti-imperial activists throughout the interwar period and after decolonisation.

Reframing the hierarchical relations of the 20th century as multi-tiered allows us to recover the discourse that I call anti-imperial globalism. Anti-imperial globalists were all concerned with the ideological and material underpinnings of imperial hegemony, and not just ending specific power relations with Western states. These concerns led them to challenge the world ordering of liberal empire and to push for radical democratic and egalitarian principles on a global scale. Understanding the trajectory of anti-imperial world politics first requires us to understand international order not as the sum of legitimate practices of a particular civilisation which became universalised, but as the world political arm of a historically contingent global hegemony. Second, it requires us to account for the various forms of unevenness that structure relations between societies, and the ways in which liberal hegemony serves to naturalise historically contingent hierarchies in the form of class, race, gender, and culture. Third, it requires us to study the dialectical dynamics between the 'local' and the 'global.' More specifically, how global processes are concretised at the local level, the tensions they cause between elite institution-building and democratic decision-

making, the various loyalties created by the uneven penetration of capital, and the ways these processes engender and constrain different forms of resistance and critique.

2.2. Beyond diffusion: pluralising anti-imperial politics

With the momentum of decolonisation building in the late 1950s and early 1960s came a rush of analysis from Western theorists to explain it. Chief among these interpretations was the framework of *diffusion*, which continues to orient the debate. Diffusion is the notion that ideological principles which belong to 'Western civilisation' spread from Europe to the rest of the world. Works published in 1960, such as *On Alien Rule and Self-Government* by John Plamenatz and *From Empire to Nation* by Rupert Emerson heralded a framework of diffusion for the post-colonial world. Seeking to explain the delegitimation of colonial rule, Plamenatz and Emerson concurred that Western imperialism had caused its own downfall by supplying a set of principles – 'self-determination, democracy, and freedom' – which allowed colonial nations to win their liberty.[74]

Two decades later, Hedley Bull and Adam Watson applied the doctrine of diffusion to explain the convergence of norms, values, and institutional forms within a globalising international society. 'Standards of civilisation' such as 'right of all nations to self-determination, the right of all states equally to sovereignty, racial equality, the duty of rich nations to assist poor, were all ideas present, or at least implicit, in the liberal political tradition of the Western countries.' Decolonisation could be largely explained by 'the impact of this tradition on the beliefs of Western-educated leaders of Asian and African countries.'[75] However, Bull and Watson used the same analysis to explain the *divergence* of norms and values within their own post-colonial context. Primarily, Bull was concerned with what he

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[74] Getachew, 2019: 15-16
[75] Bull and Watson, 1984a: 429

called 'the revolt against the West', which was also a revolt against a universalised Western civilisation and its right to order the world.[76] Bull attributed post-colonial despotism, in part, to non-Western rejection of Western values, to the fact that Third World states had 'been freer to adopt a different rhetoric that sets Western values aside.'[77]

For Bull, international order is not a static object or a historical accident, but an ongoing practice of organisation, re-enforcement, and adjustment. The purpose of order is to maintain favourable conditions for the social intercourse of states: sovereignty, coordinated action, and the minimization of violence.[78] Colonies, for Bull and Watson, rather than being extensions of international society, represent that which is excluded or 'outside' international society.[79] 'Western norms and values' are essentialised as 'good', or as representing an essentially legitimate and benevolent form of hegemony (see also Doyle, 1986: 20). Failure to recognise the colonies as already an extension of international society was not due to any trait of Western civilisation, but to the colonies initially providing poor conditions for Western norms and values. It is only when 'Westernised' colonial elites learned these values through imperial channels that they were able to demand and win their inclusion in international society.[80]

The diffusion framework has done a lot to obfuscate and occlude historical and theoretical analysis of anti-imperialism. I refer to the analytical assumption which structures the debate around diffusion as civilisational ordering. Civilisational ordering operates, on one hand, on the belief that world politics should be managed according to a set of rules, values, and norms, and on the other that the world is divided into rival civilisations, and the social

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[76] Bull, 1984; see Hobson, 2012: 229
[77] Quoted in ibid.
[78] Bull, 1977: 4, 8
[79] Bull and Watson, 1984
[80] Similar arguments have been reproduced and embellished outside 'the English School' by liberal constructivists. See Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998; Philpott, 2001; Crawford, 2002.

codes used to establish order derive from self-contained, *sui generis* civilisations. I refer to the politics which arise from an ontology of rival civilisations as *civilisationism.*

The obfuscation of hierarchy works in three ways. First is through an ahistorical notion that the transition from empire to nation-state was 'seamless and inevitable.'[81] The diffusionist story of state sovereignty's global approval effectively erases the political histories of anticolonial thinkers and movements, many of whom viewed decolonisation as either a revolutionary upending of Western global hegemony,[82] or as a threat to the possibility of reforming relations with the West along egalitarian principles.[83] This story also facilitates the 'failed states' ideology, which legitimates continued intervention of Western powers.[84] The logic goes that because the West is the assumed standards bearer of international norms, it has the right and duty to assess latecomers and discipline them accordingly.

The second obfuscation is the analytical bifurcation of ideas and material power. While this is a more general problem of mainstream IR theory,[85] it takes on particular significance in the context of empire-colony relations. In defining the divide between Western order and non-Western disorder in terms of essentialised values and norms, civilisational ordering obfuscates how hegemonic orders are arranged *for the purpose* of reproducing hierarchies which protect imperial capital. For example, Anthony Anghie (2007) shows that sovereignty was always an important feature of imperial-colonial ordering, demarcating indigenous peoples as both subject to the law of nations and ineligible for its protections due to their political and cultural otherness. This was not primarily for the purpose of ethnic humiliation, but to extend European power in order to make European states rich.

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[81] Getachew, 2019: 17
[82] Jones, 2010; Getachew, 2019
[83] Cooper, 2014; Wilder, 2015
[84] Grovogui, 1996; Grovogui, 2002; Jones, 2008; cf. Jackson, 1993
[85] Bieler, 2001; Barkawi, 2010

Hierarchy is obscured a third way through an analytical bias which privileges ethnic and cultural political leaders over forms of racial, class, and gender hierarchy *internal* to groups. The sole focus on elite representatives can reproduce a civilisationist ontology, and can lead to self-orientalism, or the appropriation and inversion of stereotypes about 'non-Western' civilisations in order to carve out autonomous space for ethnicised authority (Said, 1979). Against the claim that non-Western civilisations cannot order because of inferior values, comes the counter-claim that they can, and that those values will make them just as good 'orderers' – if not better – than the West. This can lead to the inclusion of non-Western values which are seen to be more amenable to hegemonic international order, and the marginalisation of other non-Western values deemed destabilising.[86]

Even recent scholarship which has attempted to nuance and pluralise the historiography of anticolonial nationalism remains stuck in this way. For example, Getachew (2019) presents a convincing and welcome argument that the anticolonial nationalisms of Caribbean and African thinkers were not inert and narrow, but should be judged as attempts at worldmaking. She correctly argues that activist theorists like Du Bois, Padmore, Nkrumah, and Eric Williams were not building nations as ends in themselves, but were initiating international projects meant to address the disparities within international society.

However, against her own intentions, Getachew ends up valorising the democracy-undermining projects of elite worldmakers by focussing entirely on the activities of racial – i.e. civilisational -- representatives. Instead of opening possibilities for a truly transnational approach to the problems of post-colonial politics, Getachew reinscribes R.B.J. Walker's (1993) 'inside/outside' divide between 'the international problem of hierarchy' and 'the internal question of pluralism and diversity.'[87] Critiques of elite nationalism, such as those by Fanon, James, Lorde, Glissant, or even Du Bois in his later years, are mostly missing from

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[86] Reus-Smit, 2018
[87] Getachew, 2019: 135

Getachew's analysis. These writers did not accept that hierarchy was simply an inter-governmental problem which was separate from 'internal' problems of pluralism and diversity. Getachew is correct that worldmakers like Kwame Nkrumah or Norman Manley were concerned with establishing an international norm of non-domination. However, her framing does not sufficiently address the problem that international non-domination built on 'domestic' domination of cultural minorities not only reproduced the logics of empire, but it also undermined the moral upper hand and strategic alliances between oppressed groups represented by the transnational solidarity of radical activists pushing for greater democratic controls on global capitalism. The democratic scale required to address problems of international hierarchy was, and is, transnational, making pluralism and diversity not just the province of national elites, but the concern of any group attempting to build solidarities and alliances to address global ills.

In agreement with the view that anti-imperialism is worldmaking, but against civilisational ordering, I argue that a major animating impetus of anti-imperialism was the desire to remake the world in order to enable the continual formation of pro-democratic alliances beyond national or civilisational boundaries. As a broader discourse, anti-imperialism was not just about negative right to freedom from alien rule, but about democratic access to the international realm of politics and the global economy.[88] *Within* the anti-imperial discourses which began in the interwar period, there was a fundamental tension over where the authorisation of democratic right would come from: post-colonial states or the international proletariat. While worldmakers like Nkrumah or Manley wished to build the capacity of post-colonial nation-states, critics like Fanon or James also wished to radically extend the franchise of global democracy.

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[88] see also Jabri, 2013; Getachew, 2019

As C.L.R. James argued in a lecture series in August, 1960, the increasingly global penetration of capital gave rise to a need for new forms of political and economic unification beyond the national state. 'National capitalistic states' were already in the process of unification, with new states in the formerly colonised world in danger of simply replicating a political form which was quickly becoming subordinate to the demands of the world market.[89] Presaging Quinn Slobodian's (2018) recent argument about the symbiosis of free market ideologues and nation-states, James saw that

[A]t a certain stage capitalism begins to run to the government for salvation. Government also begins to enclose its production within the national boundaries because of war and tariffs. The capitalist, as soon as he gets into trouble, runs to the government and says, "Look how many people I am feeding, and look at the value of the production that I am producing for the benefit of the country. I am in a crisis. I am in difficulties owing to no fault of my own, but these miserable people in the other countries are under-selling me. They are paying their workers very little. Look how much I am paying mine. I would be glad if you could give me a subsidy of some kind." And as he has helped to put the government into power, the government looks into the matter and appoints a commission and tells the commission to examine the industry rigorously and give him the subsidy he wants. He takes hold of the subsidy and, especially if an election is near, he goes to his political party, passes a little bit to them, and tells them to be careful to say how government interference is ruining capitalist production all over the world.[90]

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[89] James, 2013: 92, 87
[90] Ibid.: 86

For James, the unification of states into larger federations was a particular means to a more important end: the creation of radical democratic controls on the world market and the global promotion of egalitarianism as justice. The most important question of the post-colonial world was not which civilization should have the right to impose order, but 'who' – as in *which class* – 'will control the world market?'[91] Because the national state's democratic accountability was compromised by capital, James believed that a progressive form of unification could only be achieved 'by a social class which, from its very position in industry and the structure of society, can reach out to others of the same class in other countries.' As I discuss further in Chapters 4 and 5, James was not of the opinion that states could be abandoned entirely, but it was a necessity that '[m]ankind… leave behind the outmoded bourgeois class and all the obstacles which the national state now places in the way of an *international socialist order*.'[92]

Importantly, 'international socialist order' was not West-to-Rest diffusion, nor just a scaling-up of the state-civil society relationship, but a new global order built on the coordination of different national and sub-national organisations, each working through its own sociohistorically particular processes of cultural, political, and economic change. Writing favourably of Julius Nyerere's Tanzania in 1969, James argued that no Western thinker – not 'Plato or Aristotle, Rousseau or Karl Marx' -- had yet dared propose a national society so radically progressive.[93] Yet it was necessary to stress the particular 'African-ness' of Nyerere's progressivism, because

from the beginning of the contact between Western civilization and Africa, it has been the almost universal practice to treat African achievement, discoveries and creations as

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[91] Ibid.: 87
[92] Ibid.: 92, italics added
[93] James, 2012: 128-129

if Western civilization was the norm and the African people spent their years in imitating, trying to reach or, worse still, if necessary going through the primitive early stages of the Western world.[94]

Anti-imperial globalism is not an alternative analytical framework to civilisationism, but a neglected critical problematic which requires an alternative frame of analysis to become visible. Civilisationism and the framework of West-to-Rest diffusion ultimately obfuscate the inter-societal character of world politics and the hierarchical structure of international order. A hierarchical order which 'ensured that non-European states were not afforded the full rights of membership in international society' after decolonisation.[95] For anti-imperial theorists like James, international order was multi-tiered. Imperial nation-states and transnational capital comprised one tier, the transnational proletariat another, and the anticolonial nationalist elite, he hoped, would be able to serve as a force to protect the interests of the latter against the former.

2.3. Generative empire: imperialism and the modern mode of power

Hegemonic and counter-hegemonic discourses are not binary and autonomous, but built on dialectical relationships characterised by differentiation and co-constitution. Differentiation makes it necessary to distinguish between *counter*-imperial politics and *anti*-imperial politics. Both are categories of counter-hegemonic critique, with the first corresponding to a range of calls for imperial and colonial *reform*, and the second to various calls for *abolition* of imperial and colonial practice. (However, reform and abolition should be imagined as positions on a continuum, not necessarily as opposites). Counter-hegemonic politics cannot

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[94] Ibid. 127
[95] Getachew, 2019: 18; see also Prashad, 2013

speak from an 'autonomous zone' uncontaminated by hegemony, but must do so with respect to shared terms, categories, and sociohistorical conditions.[96] Hegemony is not autonomous either, but can be shaped and transformed by counter-hegemonic resistance and critique. While hegemony limits the utopian scale of counter-hegemonic political action, counter-hegemonic politics can coerce or persuade hegemony to self-adjust.[97]

The anti-imperial politics which arose in reaction to the globalisation of liberal capitalism from about the middle of the 19th century differed from those of earlier periods. The transition to global modernity was not an epochal rupture, but was 'gradual and uneven.'[98] Many aspects of anti-imperial critique and resistance after the globalisation of liberal capitalism had antecedents in prior moments. Non-European responses to liberalism and European success – many of them favourable and emulative -- predate the period of widespread European expansion.[99] Challenges to the ethno-cultural chauvinism of Europeans and the maltreatment of non-European peoples are as old as the so-called 'Age of Discovery.' European thinkers like Giambattista Vico (1668-1744), Bartolomé de las Casas (1484(?)-1566), and Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) all wrote passionately against racial hierarchy and imperial force. The 'Age of Revolution' from 1789-1848, to use Eric Hobsbawm's (1988) periodization, saw mobilisations of liberal ideology to challenge monarchical 'mercantilism' and imperial conquest.[100] This period also saw major colonial confrontations, such as the Haitian Revolution of 1791-1804, the American Revolution, and the gradual decolonisation of much of South America. These conflicts mobilised combinations of new productive and communication technologies, transnational networks, coercive and ideological forces in forms which looked similar to those of global modernity

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[96] see Goswami, 2004: 25

[97] 'Utopian scale' refers again to Benhabib's 'explanatory-diagnostic' and 'anticipatory-utopian' axes of critique (1986: 142).

[98] Buzan and Lawson, 2015: 32

[99] See, for example, Hourani, 1983; Chatterjee, 2012

[100] Morrison, 2012; Pitts, 2009; Muthu, 2009

full-blown.[101] So what was different about anti-imperial politics in the age of global modernity?

The important difference for the purposes of this thesis is the increased perception during the modern period that 'Europe' constituted a hegemonic civilisation, which had a right to order the world and direct the destinies of other civilisations.[102] This further established a picture of the world in which contingent hierarchies between different human groups could be read into nature. This perception was enabled and promoted by the globalisation of market capitalism, the rationalisations inherent to the modern mode of power,[103] and the expansion of liberal, and nominally illiberal, European empires.[104]

By 'liberalism' I am invoking a particular definition which is not necessarily reducible to the forms of economic *laissez-faire* and plural political contestation associated with representative democracies. Instead, liberalism here is defined in terms of an ontology of inter-state relations: where the state is viewed in dominant social imaginaries as the sovereign owner of territory, the arbiter of 'internal' pluralism, and a contractual party with the right to enter into contract relations with other rights-holding parties.[105] Liberalism thus refers to a form of relationality between political communities, and not necessarily to the form of governance by which any particular political community identifies or operates. As Buzan and Lawson (2015) define it, 'global modernity' emerged through a constellation of political expansion, productive practice, and dominant ideology.[106] Industrialisation, rational state building, and ideologies of progress allowed a collection of European empires

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[101] There is now a large literature on the Age of Revolution, its constitutive conflicts, and its relation to modernity. A more complete reference list might include James, 1938; Bayly, 2004; Adelman, 2006; Armitage and Subrahmanyam, 2009; Ferrer, 2014; Scott, 2018.

[102] The idea of Europe, where it begins and ends temporally and spatially, its cultural origins, and its authentic civilisational character has never been stable, homogenous, or entirely separable from political claims about it. This goes for European ideas about Europe (Pagden, 1995; 2002) and non-European ideas (e.g. Aydin, 2007). See also, Lewis and Wigen, 1997.

[103] Adas, 2015, Buzan and Lawson, 2015: 29

[104] Gilroy, 1993: ch. 3

[105] See Devji, 2012: 69

[106] Buzan and Lawson, 2015: 24-27; cf. Pomeranz, 2009

to gain an enormous advantage over others in the 19th century. Like never before, significant disparities in wealth and power were felt between societies as well as within. While a few European monarchies had gained prominence even earlier,[107] this 'modern mode of power' produced a global division premised on 'civilisational' – and also racialised – hierarchy.[108]

For most of the mid to late-19th century, liberal hegemony had really been the hegemony of two states, Great Britain and France, with the United States emerging as a third liberal hegemon later. Modern Britain and France were virtually unmatched until about 1870 when the German Reich rose to defeat France in the Franco-Prussian War. France and Britain had built vast empires through commercial imperial enterprises and wars of expansion, eventually formalising quasi-feudal relations with overseas territories. Along with other imperial players like Germany, Belgium, and Portugal, Britain and France attempted to regulate their own competition for overseas possessions through a series of congresses beginning in 1815.[109] Internal European organisation ultimately failed to prevent world war between the imperial powers, after which, fascist and communist counter-hegemons rose to challenge the war's nominally democratic victors.

In employing the term 'hegemony' I am not only referring to a state of prominence, but to a networked politics of world ordering. My use of hegemony therefore aligns with the critical tradition of Gramsci, Perry Anderson, Robert Cox, and Stuart Hall, and not hegemonic stability theorists like Kindleberger (1986) or Gilpin (1988). Hegemony in the critical sense is both a direct and diffuse, coercive and productive form of power.[110] Hegemony is 'inherently interventionist' in that, through its agents, it interfaces with its historical conditions, strategizes, and implements policies to justify and reproduce itself.[111]

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[107] Jones, 1987
[108] Drayton, 2000; Osterhammel, 2014: 625
[109] see Burbank and Cooper, 2010: 315
[110] see Barnett and Duvall, 2004
[111] Anderson, 2017: 5; Hall, 1986

Hegemony is also scalable, in that it can refer to the dominion of a particular empire,[112] to the upper hand gained by a revolutionary group, such as the Bolsheviks after 1917,[113] or to 'the prevailing order of the world.'[114] Hegemony utilises some combination of authority through acquiescence – or 'domination' in Weber's usage[115] – and force, or tacit threat of force.[116] One channel of hegemony's rule through acquiescence is its ideological reproduction through mass culture, media, and education. Race ideology, for example, can be reproduced through mass representations of ethnicity.[117]

Hegemonic liberal imperialism proceeded through a specific 'regime of power' which promoted and enforced certain ideological principles.[118] These principles included the belief that 'free trade' between highly unequal societies was not imperialism, but its antidote; that liberal reform and cultivation of 'higher' culture represented progress; and that all societies should be integrated into the global market economy in some way, with all meant to play by the same rules even if they did not enjoy equal protections.[119] The realisation of these principles often legitimated interventionist politics.

In the 1860s, the civilizing mission was less the concern of British parliamentarians – who would have rather not spent Treasury money 'civilizing' Africans -- than missionaries.[120] By the turn of the century, the British imperial state saw itself as a liberal democracy and a force for good in the world. Some historians have attached the transition to the Edwardian period in British history to this 'second British Empire.'[121] However, 'the civilizing mission' ideology which served to legitimate imperial intervention was expressed

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112 Anderson, 2017: 6, n. 15
113 Ibid.: 14-15
114 Bieler and Morton, 2004: 86; cf. Hardt and Negri, 2001
115 Weber, 1978: 53
116 Anderson, 2017: 23
117 Hall, 1986
118 Chatterjee, 1993: 15
119 Tully, 2009: 6-7; see Gallagher and Robinson, 1953
120 Parsons, 2014: 6
121 Ibid.

as a range of policies which changed over time, and there is some discrepancy over when or if the civilising mission was abandoned as a moral project.[122] This could have something to do with a lag or unevenness in the application of new rationales, or even heterogeneous opinion amongst imperial authorities. Karuna Mantena shows that 'sociological understandings of subject societies' had begun to replace 'moral justifications' for imperial rule in India by the latter half of the nineteenth century.[123] The sociological interpretations of non-European 'backwardness' by imperial theorists like John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) created alibis for empire, supplying a 'scientific' justification for the failure of empire to sufficiently 'civilise' subject populations. According to this logic, 'a savage or barbarous society, unable to either suppress immediate instincts or conceptualize long-term interests, was fundamentally incapable of the organization and discipline necessary for the development of the division, for commerce and manufacture, and for military achievement—in short, for civilization.'[124]

From this premise, Henry Maine's (1822-1888) theory of 'traditional society' helped inform new policies of indirect rule, and to enshrine the 'native' as a political and juridical category.[125] Under new rubrics of traditional society and indirect rule, highly educated colonial subjects in Asia and Africa were reclassified as 'trousered natives' who had 'aped the trappings of Western culture without ever really understanding it.' Africans who had held senior positions in colonial governance, medicine, law, and journalism in the 1880s had nearly all been culled from middle class professions by the turn of the twentieth century.[126] Meanwhile, representatives of 'traditional societies' could rule with relative autonomy over

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[122] It is not possible here to detail all the different variations of late Victorian 'civilising' promoted and practiced in political, economic, military, and religious spheres. Adas (2004) provides a good overview, and Parsons (2014) a more detailed account. Pagden (1995) and Armitage (2000) give useful accounts of earlier ideological foundations for empire.
[123] 2010: 21
[124] Ibid.: 33
[125] Ibid.: 3; see also Mamdani, 2012
[126] Parsons, 2014: 9

local communities. Colonial officials who believed themselves experts on native culture were often open to manipulation by these representatives.[127]

Thus, imperial capital and liberal ideology were dispensed unevenly in the colonies. The result of unevenness was the generation, transformation, and differentiation of societies. As Amílcar Cabral argued, writing for a UNESCO conference in 1972, 'imperialist capital' had 'imposed new kind of relations on the indigenous society, imparting to it a more complex structure, and engendered, fostered, sharpened, or resolved contradictions and social conflicts… it gave birth to new nations based on human groupings or peoples at different stages of development.'[128] Imperial unevenness gave counter-imperial critique and anti-imperial resistance an internally 'classed' character, which fundamentally shaped the dynamics of decolonisation throughout the 20th century and after.

In referring to 'modern', 'liberal', 'European' empire as global hegemony, I am not attributing to it a collective, monolithic will situated in a transhistorical Europe. I do not subscribe to a grand theory of 'coloniality.'[129] There is no single Europe, liberalism, or modernity which is reducible to the worst practices of empire and colonialism.[130] The globalisation and hegemony of market capitalism does not belong to one civilisation, but comprises globally-dispersed networks of practices, laws, power relations, and legitimating rationalisations.[131]

Yet, the complexity of liberal imperial hegemony does not immunise it from serving as a concrete referent. Liberal imperial politics have produced and reproduced worldwide effects, and are therefore a shared reference point for multiple generations of anti-imperial thinkers. Rather than flattening liberal imperial hegemony, it is necessary to account for its

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[127] Ibid.: 8, 20)
[128] Cabral, 2016: 160-161
[129] cf. Mignolo, 2007; 2011
[130] Cooper, 2005: 20-22; Brennan, 2014; Bell, 2016; Sartori, 2014; cf. Mehta 2018
[131] see Anievas and Nişancıoğlu, 2015

internal complexities and mutations over time, a pursuit which also helps us to pluralise and historicise anti-imperial world politics.

2.4. The structure of anti-imperial counter-discourse

2.4.1. A modern discourse

The counter-hegemonic politics of anti-imperial activists and intellectuals did not begin and end with specific relations with Western states, but as a response to the underlying ideologies, rationalisations, and overriding practices of the modern mode of power. Counter-hegemonic anti-imperialism was also envisaged and practiced on a global scale, and thus comprised projects to utilise, as well as subvert and displace, networked hegemonic power. Critics representing colonial peripheries or metropolitan ethnic minorities initially attempted to avoid weak, inert forms of national sovereignty, and sought to remake the world through new alliances, international organisations, and federated polities.[132]

In these aspects, anticolonial nationalism and anti-imperial globalism should be understood as *modern* discourses. My definition of what constitutes a modern discourse is more expansive than other studies which have theorised the relationship between anti-imperialism and modernity. As outlined in the previous section, modernity describes a world system of relations between ethnic and culturally-defined societies characterised in terms of unprecedented inequality. Modernity comprises, what Manu Goswami calls, a 'historical-geographical field': 'a multi-form, differentiated, and profoundly uneven global space-time engendered by the deepening and widening of colonial territorial and capitalist expansion

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[132] Fraser, 1994; Cooper, 2014; Wilder, 2015; Dietrich, 2017; Getachew, 2019

during the last third of the nineteenth century.'[133] It is also a site of 'material and symbolic struggles', where social forms, ideologies, and categories spread and are contested across relations of varying interdependence.[134] A modern discourse is therefore a site of political dialogue which is enabled and constrained by the shared yet highly unequal historical-geographical field. The nation-state, when analysed through this lens, can neither be reduced to a generic form of political organisation which emerged through objective processes of social development, a social form which has been imposed upon a passive society, nor the end result of an epochal struggle characterised by the total failure of the weaker society to reinvent itself. Though it attains its premises from concrete referents -- material and political institutions and practices -- the nation-state is a *discourse*, an ongoing process of identity negotiation and assertion, which is heavily determined by the constantly developing social and material relations with other societies.[135]

In this conception, attempts by some scholars to replace modernity and the global nation-state ontology with indigenous universalisms and the pre-modern practices of non-Western societies are not external to modern discourse. As Dipesh Chakrabarty writes in a critique of Ashis Nandy, the political impetus to replace 'myth for history, tradition for modernity, wisdom and intellect for science and intelligence' is a form of 'decisionism', which 'entails the same kind of heroic self-invention that has characterized the modern in Europe.'[136] Postcolonial scholars have sometimes interpreted the post-colonial condition in terms of a bifurcation between hegemonic modernity and cultural authenticity. This scholarship sometimes presents legacies of imperial unevenness as having preserved particular spaces -- although officially within the boundaries of modern, liberal, post-colonial states -- from hegemonic liberal modernity. In these spaces, European empires and post-

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[133] Goswami, 2004: 16
[134] Ibid.
[135] Weber, 1998: 90
[136] Chakrabarty, 2002: 41

colonial rulers achieved 'dominance without hegemony.'[137] This condition produced a Janus-faced subject position for elites. Looking 'out', elites constructed a nationalist historiography in order to oppose the subjugation of their Western rulers, matching 'the alien colonialist project of appropriation' with 'an indigenous nationalist project of counter-appropriation.'[138] Looking 'in', elites held no more sway over these autonomous zones than had their imperial rulers: '[b]ecause liberal capital never acquired hegemony, the ruling class has never been able to authentically speak for "the nation."'[139]

Yet, these autonomous zones remained constantly under threat of 'deterritorialisation' and 'deculturation' from post-colonial states acting on behalf of global capital and modern standards of statehood.[140] Anti-Eurocentric scholars often understand this conflict as between modernity and tradition, or between two forms of modernity, depending on how the argument is formulated. One modernity reproduces the logics of global hegemonic liberalism, and the other preserves 'local' authenticity, both in terms of categories of thought and productive practice. These 'places of otherness', to borrow a phrase from Gyan Prakash, are resources from which to contest the fundamental assumptions of hegemonic liberal politics and nationalist historiography.[141]

Although formulations of hegemony/authenticity have often been based in a spatial ontology of ancestral lands and territorialised tradition, more recent formulations attempt to remove the territorial element. For example, Robbie Shilliam (2011; 2015; 2016; 2017) argues that modernity was ruptured in the slave societies of the West Indies. Thus, 'other' 'hybrid' modernities composed of imported West African cultural traditions, creole slave cultures, and the communities of escaped slaves, or 'maroons', also provide 'places of otherness' from which to imagine alternatives to hegemonic liberal politics. Butler and

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[137] Guha, 1997
[138] Ibid.: 3
[139] Ibid.: 19
[140] Walker, 1994; Nandy, 1997
[141] Prakash, 1994: 5; see also Chatterjee, 1993

Athanasiou (2013) appear to go even further, arguing that political claims to territory are themselves 'hallmarks' of hegemonic liberal capitalism, and therefore new forms of 'performative politics' drawn from Western and non-Western struggles must replace old battles over territorial rights.[142]

Instead of attempting to uphold the analytical autonomy of non-colonial social and cultural space, I argue that it was precisely those questions of how to incorporate difference into new solidarities and institutions that made up the substance of anti-imperial activists' worldmaking projects. Critical postcolonial inquiry into world politics is itself a counter-hegemonic practice, and is therefore usually obliged to position itself in contradistinction to 'mainstream', 'Western' scholarship. In practice, this has produced critical literature which can reproduce the spatial and ethnicised imaginary of the diffusion framework. Some postcolonial scholarship posits 'autonomous zones' outside of the diffusion of 'Western civilization', some posits hybrid formations such as 'Buddhist IR' or 'Confucian capitalism.' Such interventions employ that which needs to be better understood: the politicisation of ethnic and cultural difference, and the related difficulty in building strategic alliances between ascriptive groups.

Deep structural hierarchies bolstered by race, culture, and gender differentiation were not always neglected by 'Westernised' anti-imperial activists, but formed the content and horizons of possibility for anti-imperial strategy and collaboration. Different imperial, counter-imperial, and anti-imperial discourses were coproduced, as Manu Goswami writes, 'within a common, if asymmetrically structured, social field.[143] To suggest otherwise is to overlook how claims of difference and identity exist within a dialectical relationship, which not only underwrote the contentious processes of decolonisation, but also the strategic

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[142] see Chandler and Reid, 2018
[143] Goswami, 2004: 25

alliance-building and worldmaking viewed as essential to disabling the possibility of future imperial encroachment after the formal end of empire.

2.4.2. Colonial recognition and imperial dialectics

Recognition of the legal personality of 'the native' was a central aspect of the modern expansion of European empire. Moral comportment to non-Christians, the remit of law to protect commercial interests outside state territory, and the right of the state to wage war were all aspects of international society theorised by 16th and 17th century writers with respect to imperial encounters.[144] The ideas of Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) in particular, devised to enable Dutch treaty alliances with East Indian rulers against the Portuguese, allowed for the expansion of commercial relations with non-Christians to include legal relations.[145] By the modern period, inclusion of non-Europeans into the law of nations reflected uneven and selective integration.[146] Treaties between imperial patrons and colonial clients 'presupposed a common legal universe to which both parties adhered.'[147] Subjugated non-Europeans dispossessed by imperial expansion were also drawn into the common legal universe, but were ruled by a 'logic of exclusion-inclusion.[148] This logic both recognised the potential of natives to achieve the standard of civilization and punished them for deviating from the standard in practice.[149] Thus, colonial *recognition* was qualified by *normalisation*: a form of disciplining where power grants itself permission to apply an 'exceptional policy to bring the deviation closer to the norm.' [150]

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[144] Keene, 2002; Anghie, 2005
[145] Tuck, 2012
[146] Anghie, 2005; Getachew, 2019: 18
[147] Anghie, 2005: 70
[148] Koskenniemi, 2001: 127-131
[149] Anghie, 2005: 22
[150] Chatterjee, 2012: 186

At the height of the British Empire in the late 19th century, this international hierarchy which was 'internal to the very development of the legal regimes that came to govern international relations', could be justified in terms of racial difference.[151] The international dispersal of Europeans through settlement, and the global phenomenon of non-European subjugation and resistance to European expansion spread and reinforced the notion that 'white' symbolised a race of civilizers in a world of races to be civilised. Liberal advocacy of empire as a training ground for uncivilised races lived in tension with other views which cast doubt on whether this was really possible.[152] This tension characterised the turn to indirect rule, and the greater concern with the management of colonised populations than their evolution into civilised equals.[153] Although it had local variants, the management of uncivilised races was practiced and theorised as a transnational issue. For example, the question of how to train African-Americans for their integration into the American economy was linked to a 'transnational problem of how to rule large black populations.'[154] As Getachew argues, W.E.B. Du Bois's comment in 1900 that 'the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line' was 'not only an empirical description of a world in which Europe was dominant but also a reference to how a set of ideologies and practices of racial domination, emerging out of the experience of New World slavery, were internationalized.'[155]

However, imperial uneven integration in the modern period was often about the *intersecting* categories of class and race. As is discussed in the next chapter, Du Bois was equally concerned with the colour *bar* as the colour-line: the limits imposed on black populations for entry into existing social, professional, and political hierarchies. Throughout his life, Du Bois remained an energetic defender of world civilisation as a *telos* to be

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[151] Getachew, 2019: 20
[152] Adas, 2004; Parsons, 2014; Getachew, 2019
[153] Mantena, 2010: 30-39
[154] Getachew, 2019: 21; see also Lake and Reynolds, 2008: 67; Zimmerman, 2012
[155] Getachew, 2019: 21

achieved through the cultural education of non-European peoples and the global adaption of modern forms of political, economic, and social organisation. His commitments in this respect rendered him an elitist, and an unrepresentative member of the black race, in the eyes of some black leaders in the United States, the Caribbean, and continental Africa. Employing the logics of a counter-hegemonic discourse, Du Bois, as well as many other nationalist leaders, were often obliged to reverse the signs of white superiority and non-white inferiority rather than reject these essentialisms entirely. The supposed characteristic traits of ethno-cultural personalities thus became contested symbols for deeper struggles over political inclusion and social and economic justice. For Partha Chatterjee, the reversal of signs is an early stage of any nationalist discourse, meant to appropriate and invert the essentialisms of the coloniser. Thus, the claim that Europeans are rational and material while non-Europeans are spiritual and cultural is appropriated as a positive collective identity against the colonising other.[156]

   This is a problem for scholars who want to reduce conflict and cooperation between societies to recognition and non-recognition. Take as an example Frost's normative theory of world politics, which is based on a colour-blind reading of Hegelian co-constitution:

> The relationship of mutual valuation is not a contractual type of relationship in which one individual approaches another and says, "I'll value you, if you'll value me." In the contractual perspective the parties do indeed only value one another as individuals who can make contracts. But constitutive theory understands mutual valuation in a different way. Individiuality only becomes a value where it is the case that two or more people do, through their reciprocal recognition of one another, give concrete practical expression to valuing one another, rather than through merely saying that they value

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[156] Chatterjee, 1986: ch. 3

one another. Thus the task for normative theory become the one of showing how we as individuals are constituted as such through our participation in a particular set of social, economic and political institutions which in turn are grounded in our adherence to certain norms.[157]

Frost's theory neglects how 'certain norms' and the institutions they sustain can codify highly unequal forms of mutual valuation: for example, Hegel's own master/slave dialectic which was probably inspired by the slave uprisings in Haiti.[158]

Reading the imperial-colonial encounter into this formulation emphasises the need to account for *what* the other is being recognised *as*. For Inayatullah and Blaney, after Todorov[159], colonial recognition stems from an archetypal colonial encounter, where the agents of European Christendom arrived in the 'new world' to face an existential challenge from the mere existence of the Amerindian. Rather than 'embrace' the 'ambiguity' of contact with such radical difference, which 'seemed to open the possibility of alternative political and ethical understandings, challenging existing constructions of self and other and threatening degeneration into disorder', the Christian European split himself in two and attributed his less desirable traits to the other. The Amerindian was designated the qualities of the wild savage, the Christian European the rational civiliser.'[160]

Colonial recognition refers to the different ways in which hierarchies in social relations can be reproduced despite the appearance of, or rhetorical adherence to, formal equality. Notions that certain social identities are better suited to specific roles and positions within a socioeconomic hierarchy become naturalised through their reproduction. Thus,

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[157] Frost, 1996: 141-142

[158] Buck-Morss, 2005. There is also a parallel between colonial recognition and Marx's theorisation of the difference between political emancipation and human emancipation from socioeconomic subjectivity in *On the Jewish Question* (1844).

[159] Todorov, 1984

[160] Inayatullah and Blaney, 2004: 53

mutual recognition between subjects is determined by the role that each subject is meant to fill within (international) society and the (global) economy. The reproduction of colonial recognition is ideological and material. It is also a multi-scalar relation in that it operates within the context of inter-state relations and is linked dual-directionally to inter-personal relations within societies. For example, the ability of post-colonial states to govern, or the ways in which they govern, are assessed through gendered and ethnicised stereotypes which are reflected in particular societies.[161]

While Inayatullah and Blaney's is a stark binary between civilised and savage, colonial recognition can also apply to forms of essentialism which elevate the native as a being more spiritual, moral, or guileless than the coloniser. Here, the native is recognised as being *superior* to the coloniser, but only at certain roles determined by their function within a connected economy and symbolic order. The archetypal example of this is not Columbus's meeting with the Amerindians, but the turn to higher-valued African slave labour by 1720. As Eric Wolfe argues, different rationales for why Amerindians were less well-suited to slavery than Africans – proximity to free Amerindians, Amerindian military support of English colonists against French and Spanish rivals, and the use of Amerindians in retrieving African maroons – became articulated to the claim that Africans made 'better and more reliable workers.'[162] With the signs of inferior and superior reversed, the native is still denied a multidimensional humanity and an equal social existence.

This is partly why, for Frantz Fanon, a nativist embrace of traditional culture could reproduce the forms of social alienation experienced under colonisation. Fanon defined colonisation as a specific kind of war, where the arrestment – not necessarily the death – of native culture is a tool of domination. Cultural and racial chauvinism are not the primary concern of empire. Rather, it is the 'gigantic business' of 'colonial war' that makes 'the

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[161] e.g. Daiya, 2011; Mamdani, 2012
[162] Wolf, 1982: 203

enslavement… of the native population' the 'prime necessity.' Colonial enslavement required that native populations' cultural 'systems of reference' had to be 'broken.' This is not initially chauvinism for its own sake, but a 'condition' which accompanies and legitimates '[e]xpropriation, spoliation, raids, objective murder.'[163] Colonialism did not necessarily lead to the death of native culture. 'On the contrary', Fanon stated, it takes a culture 'once living and open to the future' and renders it 'closed, fixed in the colonial status, caught in the yoke of oppression'. Subverting Hegelian recognition, empire made it impossible 'for a man to evolve otherwise than within the framework of a culture that recognizes him and that he decides to assume.'[164] Because native culture had been systematically arrested by the coloniser, reclaiming it was part of a dialectic response to oppression, and a necessary stage to building a revolutionary social formation. However, this could also result in the new regime becoming stuck in a retrograde cultural inertia, and cause the momentum for social transformation to stagnate. Failing to overcome particularism would mean that newly independent nations would fail to integrate into larger, unified federations, and therefore remain susceptible to new forms of colonialism, authoritarianism, and division. In a reply to his admirer, the Iranian political thinker, Ali Shariati, Fanon wrote, 'I respect your view that in the Third World… Islam, more than any other social and ideological force, has had an anti-colonialist capacity and an anti-Western nature.' However, he concluded, 'I, for one, fear that the fact of revitalizing the spirit of sectarianism and religion may result in a setback for a nation that is engaged in the process of becoming, of distancing itself from its future and immobilizing it in its past.'[165]

Anti-imperialism was therefore never just about legislating a norm of mutual recognition between unequal societies, but about *demonstrating* shared humanity by

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[163] Fanon, 1980 [1956]: 33
[164] Fanon, 1980: 34
[165] Hudis, 2015: 134; Murray, 2019

defeating and surpassing whites and Europeans. Famously, Fanon saw violence as a means to achieve this: where the colonized subject would take the place of the European settler through armed insurgency. An earlier version of this sentiment appears in Du Bois's classic text, *the Souls of Black Folk.* Du Bois defined his own social position both in terms of 'double-consciousness' and 'the Veil': the former describing a subjectivity straddling the black and white worlds, and the latter a lived social reality created by the interdependent yet incommensurable relation between the two worlds. Du Bois expressed the wish to use his self-awareness, social insight, and talent to escape the dichotomy of the Veil – neither relegating himself to the (black) 'prison-house' within the veil, nor attempting to join the world of false white superiority outside it – but to tear it down and live 'above it in a region of blue sky and great wandering shadows.'[166] Du Bois was best able to do this, he wrote, when he could beat his white peers 'at examination-time, or beat them at a foot-race, or even beat their stringy heads.'[167] Even Gandhi, the arch resistor of modernity and advocate of non-violence, was not above this sentiment. Writing of the outcome of the Russo-Japanese of 1904-05, Ghandi wrote that the Japanese had made the Russians 'bite the dust on the battlefield.' And 'the peoples of the East will never, never again submit to insult from the insolent whites.'[168]

Claims that non-European societies were capable of outpacing Europeans at various modern practices involved forms of self-essentialism. For example, some argued that colonised populations had the potential to surpass Europeans because they had developed a higher stage of modernity through their unique social and historical experience. In an early essay, *The Case for West Indian Self-Government*, C.L.R. James wrote

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[166] Du Bois (1996[1903], 4).
[167] Ibid.
[168] M. Gandhi, *Collected Works* vol. VII (27 June 1908): 324.

The bulk of the population of these West Indian islands, over eighty per cent [sic],

consists of Negroes or persons of Negroid origin. They are the descendants of those

African slaves who were brought almost continuously to the West Indies until the slave

trade was stopped in 1807. Cut off from all contact with Africa for a century and a

quarter, they present today the extraordinary spectacle of a people who, in language and

social customs, religion, education and outlook are essentially Western and, indeed, far

more advanced in Western culture than many a European community.[169]

While more sophisticated than biological explanations of ethnic and cultural

otherness, sociohistorical development claims still attempted to code whole groups of people

according to generic attributes. Thus self-representation was essentialism – even if 'strategic

essentialism.'[170] Claims that colonised populations had/have the potential to become better

democrats, liberals, socialists, etc. because of their unique historical experience often fail to

account for the fact that such claims are *elicited* through a dialectical relationship between

hegemon and counter-hegemon. This is reproduced in the work of some contemporary

scholars who take theorists like Fanon primarily as a source of 'epistemic blackness', without

fully addressing his concerns about essentialism. For example, the philosopher Lewis R.

Gordon writes that 'Fanon's body… is a subtext of all his writings…. Anxiety over

embodiment is a dimension of Western civilization against which Fanon was in constant

battle. The body, he laments, is a denied presence, and black people are a denied people.[171]

Gordon thus associates black or colonised identity with a particular way of thinking. But for

Fanon, colonised populations were not so much universally 'denied' as relegated to certain

roles within a social hierarchy—the French empire most specifically. Natives could be

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[169] James, 1992 [1932]: 49
[170] Spivak, 1996: 214
[171] Gordon, 2015: 8

higher or lower status, but racial and cultural hierarchy were the basis for social relegation which alienated the subject from a full, dynamic social existence. Fanon the dialectician characterised every particular experience is an instantiation of the universal, and his analysis of his own experience is a demand to be recognised as a fellow human with an equal stake in humanity, not as irreconcilably other. Blackness is not a generalisable perspective from which we can derive a radically different 'non-Western knowledge' singular, but a reminder to pay attention to the social and historical specificity of dialectical relation.[172]

Other postcolonial scholars have reinscribed generic attributes in the process of theorising something called 'the postcolonial subject.' For example, Jabri argues that the postcolonial subject's definitional attribute is the drive for access to international politics, but she does not draw a clear enough distinction between different forms of international politics which different postcolonial subjects might embrace or reject at different conjunctures. The vastly different world politics of the Indian National Congress circa 1946 and the Chinese Communist Party circa 2019 are reduced to one category. As a result, the notion that non-Western imperialism might be the result of a post-colonial nation-building project is largely missing from Jabri's frame of analysis.[173]

Others have attempted to reconcile what they perceive as an 'ambivalence' in Fanon's dialectics by reinscribing ambivalence – or 'strategic ambivalence' – as an attribute of the postcolonial subject.[174] However, Fanon's strategy was not ambivalent – defined as holding more than one valid meaning simultaneously -- but dialectical. Fanon characterised essentialised self-representation as a dialectical response to colonial domination which must be surpassed. Certain conjunctures in the relationship between coloniser/colonised, white/non-white, West/non-West elicited certain representations which appeared strategically

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[172] Murray, 2019
[173] Jabri, 2013
[174] E.g. Sabaratnam, 2011; Bell, 2013; Rao, 2017

necessary. The problem with ambivalence defined as a generic attribute is that it makes it appear as if strategic essentialism can simply be selected as a free choice of a range of options, without negating the possibility of other forms of self-representation.[175]

But the meanings associated with political identity and subjectivity are determined in large part by the strategic content of a given conjuncture. To avoid transhistorical essentialism, it is necessary to account for the globally-connected social worlds which make up the modern historical field: its social formations, identities and political horizons, and how these developed in relation to other societies over time.

2.4.3. Discursive transformation and the normalisation of the nation-state

To recover anti-imperial globalism is not to reconcile or pick a side between the forces of modernity and tradition, internationalism and ethno-nationalism, statism and syndicalism, etc., but to pick up the thread of a debate, and to understand the historical trajectory of anti-imperial world politics in terms of this debate. Scholars of decolonisation usually characterise counter-imperial and anti-imperial politics in terms of either a pure rejection or pure embrace of modern liberal relationality between states.[176] Rarely if ever does this scholarship highlight the multi-sidedness of these politics—that they were practiced as dialogue over how to best address the internal contradictions and multiple exigencies presented by post-colonial independence. The modern liberal state and 'the existence and quality of sovereignty' certainly functioned as a focus of neo-colonial normalisation and disciplining.[177] However, for many anti-imperial activists and politicians attempting to build socialist polities after

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[175] Murray, 2019

[176] For example, Chatterjee, 1986 and Devji, 2012 characterise Gandhi as an almost pure opponent of the liberal state form, while other histories, such as Guha, 2018, present Gandhi's critical traditionalism as more strategic and amenable. On the opposite end, Bogues, 2003: 184 and Shilliam, 2008 characterise C.L.R. James as an almost pure adherent to the Stalinist one-party state, when James was actually an early critic of this form, and sought other state-society organisations more attuned to radical democracy. See Chapters 4 and 5.

[177] Chatterjee, 2012: 187

empire, the establishment of the state as a 'neutral arbiter' of different interests within multinational societies came to be seen as indispensable. This was not only to ward off neo-colonial retrenchment, but also the condition whereby post-colonial polities could build lasting institutional relationships with other post-colonial polities.[178] Although he does not access the transnational democratic tier, Manning Marable provides a good laundry list of the considerations held by anti-imperial politicians and intellectuals:

> Any socialist ruling party in peripheral societies must embody a creative synthesis of statism and egalitarianism, maintaining organic links with the masses, and encouraging structures of independent autonomous authority exercised by working people, which permit close accountability of the government and the ruling party. A socialist ruling party should reflect the broadest possible range of constituencies within a society, permit all democratic criticism, and allow effective channels of nonviolent opposition to exist.[179]

Certain specific challenges were unique to Africa and the Caribbean, but others resonated with nation-building projects in Europe, America, India, and elsewhere. Several colonial critics of empire were students of European history and politics, and were well aware of the exploitation of particular groups and the democratic toll paid by local societies in the name of the nation. Building a national consciousness which did not breed lasting internal conflict was framed as an ethical problem, but also a matter of stability and durability. The problem with most European and American nation-building was that it had been undertaken with a 'colonial mentality'—a belief in the cultural, racial, or class superiority of those driving the nation-building process, and therefore little respect for difference.

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[178] See Devji's analysis of Gandhi's rejection of this rationale (2012: 85-86).
[179] Marable, 1986: 270-271

In Germany, for example, state consolidation with a view to empire-building as championed by Otto van Bismarck or the economic historian, Gustav von Schmoller (1838-1917), were resisted by German radicals. From Germany's romantic anarchist tradition, which had produced *fin de siècle* intellectual activists like Gustav Landauer (1870-1919), Rudolf Rocker (1873-1958), and Erich Mühsam (1878-1934), came early arguments for gender equality, racial equality, and gay rights viewed both nationally and internationally. These arguments built on the anarchist collectivism of Mikhail Bakunin (1814-1876) by emphasising the particular forms of German pre-industrial society under threat by top-down state-building. Writing twenty years after the defeat of the socialist alliance in the German Revolution of 1918-19, and predating Harold Lasswell's formulation of 'the garrison state' by 4 years, Rocker argued that 'national unity turned Germany into an enlarged Prussia, which felt itself called to pursue world politics. The barracks became the high school of the new German mentality. Germany became great in the fields of technique and applied sciences, but narrow-minded and poor of soul.'[180] Rocker followed Landauer, who had been murdered by reactionary forces during the revolution, in the view that anarchism was not particularism. Instead it was a form of international socialism from below, which vested political power in local communities while encouraging 'free union' between them.[181] Rather than framing this in all or nothing terms, Rocker and Landauer conceived the vestment of power in community as a principled demand, the aspiration to which could be achieved in part. English political society, for example, with its history of democratic opposition and sustained municipal autonomy was singled out approvingly by Rocker as 'the freest in Europe.'[182]

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[180] Rocker, 1948: 433.

[181] Ibid.

[182] Ibid.: 434. This was a somewhat generous assessment of English politics, which, in reality, were often rife with the principle of 'equality amongst equals, inequality amongst unequals.' A good example of this is John Stuart Mill, who is now understood to be one of the preeminent colonial apologists, but who was viewed

Many African and Caribbean critiques shared this deeper commitment to liberation from the anti-democratic effects of the 'barracks state', even as they came to recognise the necessity of the state in some form. The Marxist/Bakunian tension between elite worldmaking and radical democratic decision-making was already present in the transnational ontologies of black interwar intellectuals. In 1920, Du Bois described the turn-of-the-century downgrading of black status in the world as a technique whereby white imperialism perpetrated injustices on non-white subjects. His distinction illustrates the classed character of colonial management, and indirectly, the classed character of counter-imperial problem-framing. 'Negroes of ability have been carefully gotten rid of' he wrote, 'deposed of authority, kept out of positions of influence, and discredited in their people's eyes.'[183] With regard to African labourers: 'a new slavery approaches Africa to deprive natives of their land, to force them to toil, and to reap all the profit for the white world.'[184] While already 'civilized' imperial subjects were being robbed of their jobs, and, by extension, their equal place in imperial society, African natives were being robbed of their land and livelihood, and by extension, their connection to ancestral cultures and traditions. Creating a 'self' of black self-determination therefore necessitated processes of class collaboration and inter-societal co-constitution, rather than mobilising a pre-existing national consciousness or adherence to a generic liberal state-society arrangement.[185]

Rather than a primary focus on the social and cultural differentiation of post-colonial space, the above/below framing as a transnational dynamic focuses attention on the processes and rationales behind political projects-- the strategic and collaborative aspects of institutionalising anti-imperial ideals. Anti-imperial political action thus had an 'uneven and combined' character. Resurrecting and advancing Trotsky's concept, Justin Rosenberg offers

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favourably by some anarchists for his argument that state capitalism should ultimately give way to worker-owned cooperatives.
[183] Du Bois 2016 [1920]: 33
[184] Ibid.
[185] See Mazrui, 1967: ch. 1; Edwards, 2003: 241-245

'uneven and combined development' as a constitutive process of world history, characterised by the 'international' – or inter-societal – interaction of asymmetrical social groups.[186] That the development of colonial societies had been, to paraphrase Buzan and Lawson, multilinear, variegated, and uneven, rather than linear, uniform, and smooth was precisely the challenge for anti-imperial and anti-colonial political projects.[187]

As a result, the temporal horizons of these politics were also differentiated and contested. Members of the radical diaspora and African intelligentsia sometimes adhered to different versions of 'development time'—viewing certain segments of their communities as 'backwards' and need of 'catching up' with the West.[188] However, the discourse was just as often about contesting this view of progress: it would highlight the ways in which non-white populations were ahead of the West – more modern even – or point to the circular rise, fall, and return of different civilisations and social formations.

The multi-temporality of anti-imperial world politics also suggests that we study them in terms of *discursive transformations*, rather than discrete phases. There is a tradition in postcolonial scholarship to characterise epochal phases in the antagonistic relationship between coloniser and colonised.[189] For example, Chatterjee's (1986) formulation of different Gramscian 'moments' in nationalist discourse, or Scott's (2004) account of a transition from a 'romantic revolutionary' phase to a 'tragic' phase. While such periodization might be useful if the goal is to make sharp contrasts, it is also too limiting in its narration of a linear march of time totally defined by homogenous symbolic orders. I argue instead that historical advances in anti-imperial politics operated more as *interstitial* transformations in the discourse between societies.[190] While this involved articulation to different *dominant* counter-discourses, the spread of these articulations was never even. The significance of this is that it

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[186] Rosenberg, 2006; 2013; see also, Wolf, 1982
[187] Buzan and Lawson, 2015: 21
[188] Fabian, 1983.
[189] See Lazarus, 2011: ch.1
[190] See Mann's formulation of the interstitial emergence of social change (e.g. 2012: 6, 17)

helps us to account for political pluralism within societies, and to resist reduction of political history to deterministic teleology. Old ideas and symbolic orders were never fully displaced, but were temporarily marginalised, and sometimes regained significance later.

Specific events usually served as the precipitating occurrence for discursive transformations.[191] Between 1919 and 1975, counter-hegemonic class collaborations re-articulated themselves around new key terms. 'World civilisation' became 'revolution', 'revolution' became 'development and 'liberation.' These articulations were responses to both specific conflicts -- from labour strikes to world wars – and imperial hegemony's re-articulated justifications. The term 'articulation' refers to chains of association and meaning which are constructed at different historical conjunctures. Articulation is often a form of representational practice, where phenomena which are susceptible to a range of interpretations are attached to particular meanings, which then give rise to potential courses of action.[192] As Jutta Weldes writes, specific articulations are 'socially constructed and historically contingent' rather than arising from strict structural necessities internal to a particular linguistic context.[193] This is captured in the term 'articulation' itself, which, as Stuart Hall explains,

> has a nice double meaning because "to articulate" means to utter, to speak forth, to be articulate. It carries that sense of language-ing, of expressing, etc. But we also speak of an "articulated" lorry (truck): a lorry where the front (cab) and back (trailer) can, but need not necessarily, be connected to one another. The two parts are connected to each other, but through a specific linkage, that can be broken.[194]

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[191] See Sewell, 2005: 226-227
[192] Weldes, 1996: 285; see also Sewell Jr., 2005: 339-340
[193] Weldes, 1996: 284-285
[194] Quoted in Weldes, 1996: 285

However, taking Hall's counter-hegemonic materialism seriously, articulations are not completely arbitrary either, but as a general practice, serve particular purposes with regard to felt political necessities. For example, C.L.R. James's support for federal unification was a specific articulation of his anti-imperial globalist politics, which was animated by the threat of imperial retrenchment after independence. Ultimately, his emphasis on federalism underestimated the ability of market capitalism to make new clients out of revolutionaries, to create differentiated loyalties within classes, and to deliver more democratically successful political societies than had any socialist one party state. He acknowledged these underestimations in later life, without re-articulating his anti-imperialism to any other specific political form.[195]

Anti-imperial discourse around the meaning of European hegemony was articulated to different racial, socialist, and (inter)nationalist scripts after the Great War. As Michael Adas contends, Europe's role as the world's provider of cultural and techno-scientific civilization began to be seriously challenged after WWI in what became the 'the first genuinely global intellectual exchange.' More than any other period, the inter-war context inspired ideological 'interchange between thinkers from the Americas, Europe, Africa, and Asia.' This global discourse became 'a site for the contestation of the presuppositions of the civilizing mission ideology that had undergirded the West's global hegemony.'[196] Imperial states' re-articulation to indirect rule and 'trusteeship' over the colonies stimulated anti-imperial activists' turn to the Communist International (COMINTERN) during the interwar period. However, despite the perception that the state-controlled economies which appeared after WWI might represent an alternative to free trade capitalism, fascist and communist counter- hegemons emerged as rival imperialists, not as anti-imperialists. As we will see in Chapter 4, colonial anti-imperialists sometimes looked to both fascist and communist states as alternatives to

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[195] See Chapters 4 and 5 for an analysis of James's intellectual trajectory.
[196] Adas, 2004: 61; see also Brennan, 2014

'democratic' imperialism. Rather than retreating from the world towards inert nationalisms, or fighting to reform the world according to an ideal of freedom for all people, fascist and communist states became regional hegemons, who universalised their own ideologies in order to challenge nominally democratic states.

This new world of rivalries appeared to present opportunities for colonised people, who looked to improve their positions within the colonial order, to eject colonising powers, or to remake the world according to ideals of radical democracy and egalitarianism. During and immediately after WWII, gains made by rebellions and nationalist parties suggested the possibility of imminent independence for some colonies, but also the likelihood that leadership would be handed to a native bourgeoisie with cliental ties to imperial authorities. By the 1950s, this could refer to an intellectual elite, as well as a political or economic elite. For example, starting in 1952 and 1953, native African intellectuals like J.B. Danquah, Ali Ahmed Jahadhmy, and Adeboye Bablola published articles alongside colonial administrators (Duncan Cumming) and Oxford lecturers (Albert Hourani) in the journal, *African Affairs.*

Although certainly a product of the colonial system, elite internationalism always also involved attempts to establish new political forms in creative ways which reflected cultural difference.[197] Rather than the rejection of Western culture and political forms *in principle*, the substance of anti-imperial critiques of pan-nationalist projects -- such as pan-Africanism, pan-Asianism, or pan-Arabism – was more often about failure to create or strengthen democratic pluralist institutions. In other words, to institutionalise after independence the class collaborations between political elites, educated elites, and the masses which had been hallmarks – at least rhetorically -- of the pre-independence period.

Class collaborations between labour organisations had also formed the foundations of anti-imperial institution building. The West Indies Federation, which collapsed as an elite

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[197] Zachernuk, 2000; Go, 2010

project in 1962, developed in large part from the organising of trade unionists involved with the Caribbean Labour Congress (CLC) in the mid-1930s to mid-1940s.[198] Organising labour across the islands was facilitated by the collective grievances of the impoverished West Indian working class and peasantry, as well as the relative ease of travel and contact between the islands. The CLC represented a cross-gender and multiracial organisation, which had both local and international designs. The idea that 'federation was the logical development of working class unity' was principally the reason for C.L.R. James's support of the West Indies Federation right up until its dissolution.[199]

Vertical class collaboration between the intelligentsia, the proletariat, and the subaltern also formed the basis for Frantz Fanon and Amílcar Cabral's anti-imperial globalist politics in Algeria and Guinea-Cabo Verde. Both argued that it was from the process of organised resistance against hegemonic culture – both in its imperial and native forms – that new emancipatory identities would emerge. In a 1969 seminar presentation to his revolutionary African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cabo Verde (PAIGC), Cabral remarked that 'culture is... a product of a people's economic level.'[200] This made for a diverse map of cultures, all of which contained elements which were 'useful and constructive' for resistance and liberation, but also had to be liquidated of their 'negative aspects'—i.e., those particularist beliefs, practices, or power structures which might hinder the success of the liberation movement.[201]

Overtures to radical democracy represented by the spread of decolonisation movements were quickly obstructed by the connected phenomena of post-colonial states' anti-democratic practices and liberal imperialism's self-reconfiguration as global neoliberalism. The formation of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries

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[198] See Chapters 4 and 5.
[199] Horne, 2007: 24
[200] Cabral, 2016: 117
[201] Ibid.: 117-119

(OPEC) and the proposed New International Economic Order (NIEO) in the early 1970s each represented attempts to balance Third World economies against the dominance of Western economies.[202] In the 1970s, neoliberal economists from Austria, Germany, Switzerland, and the United States – but associated with institutions in Britain and the United States -- were able to implement policies to insulate global capitalism from the democratic demands of post-colonial states.[203] New rifts emerged between oil producing countries, state-controlled manufacturing countries, and primary goods producing countries, a development which delivered a massive blow to those who hoped for Third World unity, even as it produced unprecedented wealth for a new global elite.[204]

Reframing anti-imperial world politics in terms of strategic, collaborative projects to institutionalise radically democratic and egalitarian principles thus builds on recent projects to reassess and pluralise anticolonial nationalism as worldmaking, rather than inert expressions of ethno-cultural particularism. But shifting focus to imperial unevenness and class collaboration emphasises the need to pluralise and historicise elite institutional politics. Anticolonial nationalism and anti-imperial globalism were imbricated, not mutually reducible discourses. Recovering one without the other can serve to romanticise elite nationalist projects, or re-enforce interpretations that it could not have been otherwise, thus continuing to limit the scope and continued relevance of anti-imperial critique in a new era of globalisation.

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[202] Dietrich, 2017; Getachew, 2019: ch. 5
[203] Slobodian, 2018
[204] Dietrich, 2017

Chapter Three

'World Civilisation' between the wars:

counter-hegemonic ideas of global progress, 1919-1930

3.1. Introduction

On the 11th of March, 1920, the Gold Coast Fante lawyer, politician, and newspaperman, J.E. (Joseph Ephraim) Casely Hayford, gave the inaugural address of the British West African Conference in Accra. Like the National Congress of British West Africa, its parent organization, the Conference had been convened by a self-described 'intelligentsia', or class of 'educated Africans.'[205] Casely Hayford's address reflected the main concerns of this interest group: regional unity, land rights, cultural autonomy, and greater, more secure access to employment and political representation for native leaders and professionals. Quoting a colleague who had spoken at a previous conference in Lagos, Casely Hayford presented the position of educated Africans vis-à-vis the British Empire and its aspirations for world civilization: 'This Conference is not founded as an anti-government movement but for the purpose of helping the Government in the work of civilization that they are doing in our midst.'[206]

Helping the colonial government did not mean that criticism was not permitted – particularly with regard to land expropriation[207] and the colour bar[208] -- but such criticism was to be 'pointed out in a loyal and constitutional manner.'[209] In October of the same year, delegates of the National Congress of British West Africa met with the League of Nations

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[205] Casely Hayford, 1969 [1920]: 62. See also, Eluwa, 1971.
[206] Casely Hayford, 1969 [1920]: 59
[207] Ibid. P. 65.
[208] Ibid. p. 64.
[209] Ibid. p. 59.

Union in London. At this meeting, Casely Hayford made the case for constitutional change granting a greater share of native representation in the colonial governments of West Africa: a concession which had just been granted to Ceylon. 'In this great war, we all united for the common cause in common sacrifice for common hopes', Casely Hayford said, invoking West Africans' support for the British Empire in the First World War, 'if Ceylon has been given this Constitution, why should it not be given to British West Africa?'[210] Moreover, if the British Empire hoped to lead in the work of civilization, why would it not seek to emulate the French Government which had 'no colour bar to Africans, so that an African may rise to any position, according to his ability[?]'[211]

As Michael Adas contends, discourse around the meaning of 'the Great War' for the future of European hegemony, and its legitimising scripts based in the promise of techno-scientific civilization, was perhaps 'the first genuinely global intellectual exchange.' More than any other period, the post-WWI context inspired ideological 'interchange between thinkers from the Americas, Europe, Africa, and Asia.' This global discourse became 'a site for the contestation of the presuppositions of the civilizing mission ideology that had undergirded the West's global hegemony.'[212]

Yet, as Casely Hayford's remarks at both events in 1920 show, 1918 was not a clean break from the idea of 'civilisation' as global progress within the framework of European imperial rule. Casely Hayford suggested that greater access to meritocratic social advancement for the colonised might be a way to redeem and expedite – not end -- the civilizing mission after the catastrophe of world war. Such attempts to win greater access to power for the colonised, while continuing to draw on the promise of a global *telos* of civilization, were not unique to Casely Hayford. The counter-discourses of Africans, West

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[210] Ibid.: p. 47.
[211] Ibid.: p. 55.
[212] Adas, 2004: 61.

Indians, and African Americans all drew on the concept to some extent, even if only to present an alternative global civilization to the one presented by defenders of white Western dominance.

In the previous chapter I set out a conception of global modernity as predicated on the unprecedented disparity between ethnic and cultural groups, and the attendant practice of dividing the world into hierarchical, racialised civilisations. This chapter develops the importance of 'civilisation thinking' for what it reveals about the real and potential solidarity of groups as they sought to bring a global challenge to the existing political, economic, and racial order. It does this by analysing pan-African and radical discourse between circa 1910 and 1930. Racism and imperial retrenchment after WWI created the impetus to challenge imperial 'civilisation' and to posit new meanings of the concept. World civilisation and universal cultural progress were also deployed as anti-imperial globalist concepts, to counter undemocratic visions of ethnic nationalist internationalism.

I argue that the ways in which 'civilisation(s)' was deployed in this context was critical, but also aspirational, reflecting the term's ambiguity.[213] In the context of interwar counter-imperial politics, the deployment of both 'civilisation' as representing world progress and 'civilisations' as representing a plurality of different cultures can be understood in terms of both strategic necessity in the practice of (inter)national alliance-building, as well as disagreement over who could authorise racial representation. As enmeshed with hierarchical racial and cultural signifiers as it was and is, civilisation was just as much a category of class politics for interwar counter-imperial writers. Civilisation and civilisations as counter-imperial categories were not used merely as markers of particular and distinct cultural formations, but as proxy concepts representing criticism of the imperial-colonial order. Instead of being rejected entirely, the concept of civilisation was positively repurposed to

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[213] Also see Edwards's discussion of Alain Locke's distinction between singular 'civilisation' and plural 'culture' (2003: 112-114).

argue for both ethnic nationalist internationalisms and anti-imperial globalist alternatives. The disagreements which constituted the civilisation talk of the interwar period were shaped profoundly by social forces and the world political context, and were not merely reflections of generic ethnic and cultural perspectives.

3.2. Civilisational difference – essentialist and 'post-essentialist' conceptions

Scholars writing after and against Samuel Huntington's famous *Foreign Affairs* article have tended to establish civilisation as an analytical category of separation: differentiating races, cultures, values, and meta-theoretical bases for inter-societal interaction.[214] Broadly, the debate concerns to what extent civilisations and civilisational difference can be established as 'useable analytical tools', and whether these categories can be employed without essentialism, ahistoricism, or the assumption of 'implacable opposition.'[215] These categories have a long history as demarcations of essentialised cultural formations, used by scholars like Max Weber, Oswald Spengler, Fernand Braudel, and William H. McNeill to denote distinct societal-cultural units. Spengler, in particular, writing at the end and in the aftermath of the First World War, imbued the term with a specific spatiotemporal and teleological dimension. Civilisation for Spengler was the apex of a culture's development, which had reached its apotheosis with Western Civilisation (1926: 3-4). Spengler combined the romantic pluralism of Herder, wherein cultures are autogenous and in possession of their own unique 'genius', with an imperialist imaginary of civilisational hierarchy and a Hegelian teleology. Scholars, including IR scholars, tend to return to these reified and essentialised cultural concepts as 'default' categories.[216] Even attempts to pluralise the concept, for example by arguing for

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[214] Hall and Jackson, 2007; Shilliam, 2012; see Huntington, 1993
[215] Hall and Jackson, 2007: 1
[216] Reus-Smit, 2017; 2018

'multiple modernities' which emerge from different paths of intra-cultural contestation, tend to reify, albeit as multiple rather than singular.[217]

Another valence of civilisation can be derived from the writings of postwar Realists. As Nicolas Guilhot shows, early Realists like Reinhold Niebuhr and Hans J. Morgenthau articulated a counter-Enlightenment discourse which characterised world civilisation as under threat from the radically democratic 'illlusions' of the French Revolution.[218] The conservative, often Christian founders of IR 'adopted the classical counter-revolutionary view of the Enlightenment as a de-civilizing attack on the throne and the altar that undermined the Christian foundations of the *ancient regime.*' Realism was thus invented, in part, to serve a civilisationist ideology of conservative morality counterposed against 'the diffusion of secular nationalism.' [219]

More recent critical attempts to reconceptualise civilisation as a 'process of production' rather than a 'reified thing' have revealed more helpful lines of inquiry, even if they are not quite as 'post-essentialist' as their instigators might wish. Defined as 'an ongoing process through which boundaries are continually produced and reproduced', and as 'necessarily power-laden', civilisation becomes more useful as an analytical entry point to the social forces that shape imaginaries and the possibilities of political action.[220]

Anti-Eurocentric critiques of 'Western civilisation', though they deploy the concept in its processual, power-laden sense, have tended to reinscribe civilisation within broad narratives about Western chauvinism and non-Western subordination, rather than fully address the inter-societal forces which shape political imaginaries and possibilities. As Mustapha Kamal Pasha warns, defining civilisation as a process of power is necessary, but it does not guarantee by itself a relapse into essentialism. 'Celebratory accounts of Indigeneity

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[217] see Eisenstadt, 2002
[218] Guilhot, 2017: 67
[219] Ibid.
[220] Hall and Jackson, 2007: 6-10

or Nativism' used to deflect Western civilisational chauvinism are often instances of 'anti-essentialist essentialism', which reproduce Orientalist binaries and conceal the plurality of social forces and sites internal to 'civilisations.'[221] Bowden, for example, characterises both liberalism and socialism as 'competing visions of Enlightenment utopianism' which together define 'Western civilization' against 'non-Western' civilisations rendered inferior.[222] Western civilisational chauvinism, Bowden tells us, is pointless for its 'scorekeeping', but he then suggests that we deflect this scorekeeping by pointing to – and in effect celebrating -- the 'East's influences in the realm of ideas and innovations that were introduced to the West.'[223] Just as scholars have contested the concept as an essential category of cultural difference, it has become re-essentialised as a category of flattened, transhistorical oppression.

Increased interest in civilisation and other cultural categories has yet to fully establish that 'civilisation(s)' was often deployed by counter-imperial activists and theorists after WWI as a multi-valenced and strategic concept directed towards a horizon of *global cosmopolitan democracy*. Although the root 'civilisation' was used in many contexts, there was a distinction made within the discourse of the time between 'civilisationism' as a negative, oppressive ideology, and civilisation as representative of global democratic progress. More specifically, African and diasporic cultural elites used civilisation in at least five distinct senses, both critical and aspirational: to contest claims of inherent racial inferiority through the defence of past (and future) African civilisation; to defend the right of the colonised to share in Western civilisation's perceived bounty; to argue for diaologic coexistence between cultures for the purposes of racial unity and civilisational advancement; to narrate the role of African and black contributions to universal cultural progress; and to narrate the real and potential contribution of colonised societies to the global democratic and egalitarian projects

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[221] Pasha, 2007: 71; see also Boehmer, 1998
[222] Bowden,2009: 216, 219-224
[223] Ibid.: 221; see also Hobson, 2004

which would constitute a 'World Civilisation' yet to come. These different meanings were employed singly or in combination to sometimes contradictory purposes. Sometimes versions of these different arguments were used by the same individual depending on world events or the intended audience. Though civilisation as a marker of an individual's culture is often assumed to explain the genuine perspective of that individual, analysis of the concept as strategic brings us better into contact with the multiple relationalities, epistemic repertoires, and conjunctural limits that give cultural categories like civilisation their particular relevance and power.

Analysis of the strategic content also brings into focus other social categories which complicate the picture of mutually-exclusive and counterposed cultural formations—in particular, class. As I argue below, civilisation thinking in the interwar period was rarely practiced without class thinking. How one thought and what one said about civilisation depended to some extent on positioning within the imperial sociopolitical hierarchy. Civilisation and class – as both racialised and global concepts – were modes of understanding the transnational sociopolitical field after WWI, as well as discursive anchor points to mobilise intensifying anti-imperial critique.

3.3. Saving civilisation - liberal hegemony and conflict after WWI

For the victors of WWI, the aspiration to build a post-war global order was inherently connected to the task of managing and preserving inter-imperial order in the face of a shifting Atlantic power balance.[224] The question of what to do with German and Ottoman territories captured by allied forces sparked a multilateral debate which led to the creation of the mandates system in January 1919. At the heart of this debate were questions about culture,

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[224] Tooze, 2014; Pedersen, 2015; Getachew, 2019

race, and fitness for self-rule, nested within the logic of a universal standard of civilisation. For George Beer (1870-1920), a historian and colonial policy expert who accompanied Woodrow Wilson to Europe in December 1918, the challenge presented by captured colonial territories was how to continue the 'tutelage' of 'backwards' people in a manner befitting a transformed global order. For Beer as well as Wilson, the task of making a more humanitarian inter-imperial system had to be balanced with the maintenance of the hierarchical racial order. 'The negro race,' Beer had once written, 'has hitherto shown no capacity for progressive development except under the tutelage of other peoples.'[225] The British and Wilson's delegation would agree at the Peace Conference in Versailles that both the protection of native rights and the standard of civilisation were most effectively guarded within the model of the British Empire, which should therefore be internationalised.[226] Built on Atlantic economic cooperation and the perception of shared values, the Anglo-American alliance also needed to reflect the threat of Bolshevism and the American public's enmity to imperial expansion. The League of Nations and the mandates system were thus presented as vehicles for liberal humanist improvement on the old world order, carrying a duty of guidance for backwards people on the principle 'that the well-being and development of such people form a sacred trust of civilisation.'[227] Evincing the imperial spirit of the Treaty of Versailles, a hierarchy of standards was even written into the first charter of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), with the caveat that 'differences of climate, habits and customs, of economic opportunity and industrial tradition may restrict uniformity in the conditions of labour difficult of immediate attainment' intended to heavily qualify international standards for non-Europeans.[228]

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[225] Quoted in Pederson, 2015: 18
[226] Ibid.: 18-19
[227] Ibid.: 29
[228] Cited in Sluga, 2013: 50

Although its inauguration presaged the more inclusive forms of global governance which emerged later in the 20th century, and although many different interests and opinions were represented by its delegates, the League of Nations often represented the interests of white nationalist internationalism and the geopolitics of liberal hegemony. In this, the League was particularly reflective of Wilson's own beliefs and policy perspective. Wilson once expressed the belief that internationalism represented a later stage of human development, 'from ancient and medieval times to the late nineteenth-century epoch of international congresses and internationality.'[229] His record of support for racial segregation in the South and opposition to international organisations based on racial equality reflected his belief that the white race was meant to lead in the mission of human development.[230] Wilson's principle of national self-determination was multivalent, suggesting both a human right and a particular achievement of the Anglo-Saxon race. He conceived of American empire as a white man's burden, and of colonies as accidents of fate, which had fallen into the United States' lap. He wrote of the Phillipines that it had 'fallen to us by the wilful fortune of war', and that it was 'our duty to administer the territory, not for ourselves, but for the people living in it.'[231]

Wilson's support for national self-determination also had a geopolitical basis, rather than a purely ideological one.[232] In one aspect, Wilson used calls for anticolonial nationalism and liberal internationalism as a counter-revolutionary strategy against the Bolshevik sentiment which threatened to spread throughout imperial dependencies. After the Bolsheviks published treaties which suggested that the allies planned to divide up East European territories amongst themselves, Wilson produced his Fourteen Points, playing 'the nationalist card against Lenin's international appeal.' While it sounded to many like a universal call for national freedom, the desired effect was to create independent East European nation-states to

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[229] Sluga, 2013: 5
[230] Lake and Reynolds, 2008: 293; Mazower, 2009: 42-45; Sluga, 2013: 5
[231] Quoted in Getachew, 2019: 44
[232] Lynch, 2002

act 'as a quarantine belt against the Red virus.'[233] This policy would eventually lead to

sustained backlash against liberal internationalism in the global South after Wilson's rhetoric

proved both ideologically hollow and practically unsustainable.[234] Meeting in March 1919,

the COMINTERN excoriated the League of Nations as an 'international association of sham

democracies', and its version of national self-determination as a project 'meant only to

change the commercial label of colonial slavery.'[235] The following year, Lenin wrote his

'Draft Theses on National and Colonial Questions' (1920), which laid out a theoretical

differentiation between bourgeois nationalism and revolutionary nationalism. Bourgeois

nationalism included both state sovereignty and international federalism when they were used

to concretise the rule of elites, with revolutionary nationalism a necessary step to establish

proletarian control for the ultimate purpose of building an international unity of workers.

If 1918 was the end of WWI for the Great Powers, 1919 marked a continuation, and

even an intensification, of conflict for the colonial world. The role of the League to

internationalise a mixture of British and American imperialism effectively internationalised

indirect rule, in that it further established – to paraphrase Timothy Mitchell -- 'forms of local

despotism through which imperial control would continue to operate.'[236] Post-war racial

abuse for returning soldiers and economic precarity in the colonies led to renewed labour

upheavals in Africa and the Caribbean. In Trinidad, impoverished stevedores, railway

workers, and tramcar operators carried out work stoppages in 1919. Working men's

associations were augmented by returning soldiers of the British West Indies Regiment, who

had begun to organise around the indignities and exclusion they suffered by whites during the

war and on arriving home. These strikes were given ideological oxygen by the labour

publication *Argos* and Marcus Garvey's newspaper *Negro World,* and turned violent in

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[233] Hobsbawm, 1994: 67
[234] Lynch, 2002; Manela, 2007
[235] In *The Communist International: 1919-1943 Documents* 1, 1971 [1919]: 35, 43
[236] Mitchell, 2011: 80

December of 1919.[237] A series of strike actions also related to post-war instability occurred in

Jamaica, British Honduras, St. Lucia, St. Kitts, Anguilla, and Tortola until 1924. Similar

upheavals occurred in Sierra Leone and southern Rhodesia.[238] Even the metropole was not

immune, with attacks by white crowds on non-white communities provoking violent race

riots in London, Liverpool, Newport, Bristol, Cardiff, Barry, Hull, Glasgow, South Shields,

and Salford between January and August, 1919.[239]

Colonial unrest and racial animosity coincided with unprecedented growth in the

surveillance and intelligence apparatuses of the British and French empires. France and

Britain operated as 'intelligence states' which required the endless collection of data to

function.[240] While most of this data collection involved prosaic monitoring of bureaucracy,

population, weather, and infrastructure, surveillance of persons suspected of political dissent

or otherwise opposed to the goals of the French state increased after WWI. In North and West

Africa, surveillance of anti-imperial suspects grew and peaked in the late 1920s and early

1930s.[241] Keller identifies a 'culture of suspicion' which 'exposes an imperial administration

that was anxious [and] fearful' in French West Africa and Paris.[242] French police divisions

and the political affairs bureau kept collections of files on 'Suspects', 'Suspicious persons',

'surveillance of foreigners', 'suspected propagandists', 'communism', 'pan-Africanism', and

'Garveyism' amongst others.[243] British intelligence and surveillance also ballooned after

WWI. MI5 expanded from a small number of staff to 844 in 1918. Its central registry grew

from '17, 500 card indexes in 1914 to over 250, 000 cards and 27, 000 personal files in

1918.'[244] The primary reason for MI5's growth was the management of the empire, which

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[237] Martin, 1973
[238] Yoshikuni, 1989; Abdullah, 1994
[239] Umoren, 2018: 13; Ransby, 2013: 28
[240] Thomas, 2007: 2
[241] Keller, 2018: 3
[242] Ibid.: 5
[243] Ibid.: 14
[244] Walton, 2013: 8

comprised its largest expanse of colonies, protectorates, 'protected states and trust territories' by 1918.[245] In the United States, the rapid expansion of Marcus Garvey's global movement was met with an FBI investigation with input from British Military Intelligence.[246] J. Edgar Hoover (1895-1972) helped lead an investigation into whether Garvey should be deported. Hoover scanned UNIA documents for 'anarchist utterances', while black special agents infiltrated UNIA meetings and black-run establishments.[247] A black FBI special agent named William A. Bailey, codenamed WW, submitted reports on black radical movements in Nashville and New York in 1919 and 1920. After reading a copy of *Negro World* at a barber shop in Nashville, Bailey concluded that the newspaper was '[a] menace' in that it reflected 'a dream of world dominion based on selfishness' and that its 'doctrine will cause riots, revolutions, rebellions and finally chaos.' Bailey warned that 'if unchecked' the UNIA would 'offer a greater menace than that of the Russians, for it will be a growing black peril.'[248]

Ironically, this hysterical response from imperial authorities took place at a time when many colonial elites were expressing conciliatory views with respect to empire. Though not uncritical, most African and diasporic elite opinion was along the same lines as Casely Hayford's 'loyal and constitutional' opposition. Few African leaders and leaders of African descent expressed the position that colonisation was *necessarily* destructive or regressive, at least not until 1935. For these leaders, 'civilisation' as global progress remained a cause worth fighting for, and WWI had provided reason for 'non-European civilisations' to be granted greater access to 'the work of civilisation' within an imperial organisation.

3.4. Civilisation as an articulation of counter-imperial discourse

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[245] Ibid.: 2)
[246] Hill, 1983
[247] Ibid.: 171
[248] Ibid.: 169-170

3.4.1. The construction of African difference

As an articulation of counter-imperial discourse, civilisation represented critical and aspirational aims, but the term would have been empty if it had not corresponded to the sociopolitical reality of different opportunities and projects which emerged during the war. Without this strategic content, the analytical category of civilisation readily becomes a label of reified and essentialised cultural difference. As a term of strategic discourse, it is revelatory of the different social, economic, and political fault lines produced by liberal hegemony and imperial hierarchy.

In a global context where black soldiers had helped the allies win the war, social conflict and labour unrest intensified, and the spectres of communism and nationalism inspired the growth of the intelligence state, counter-imperial elites sought to reform the empire. According to the logic of indirect rule in Britain and *association* in France, a major cause of imperial conflict in the past had been the impetus to assimilation based on disrespect for cultural difference. The orientalist notion that Africans and people of African descent were fundamentally different from Europeans was promoted on both sides of the colour line and was not necessarily inimical to empire. Amongst other organisations formed, revived, or expanded in the same period, Du Bois's Pan-African Congress and Garvey's UNIA enjoyed transnational membership largely because they offered institutional support and world political recognition for racial and cultural grievances across the black world.

However, culturalist claims also had economic and territorial bases. The pattern of indirect rule on the African continent was similar to that of elsewhere in the empire, where elite clients and more remote rural societies constituted a pluralist empire based on territorial nativist claims which were often under threat. By the end of WWI, Africans and people of African descent were already long-versed in juridical European politics through a history of

grievances with extra-territorial and settler land seizures. Indigenous Africans had pursued these claims through the courts since at least the late-19th century. Founded in 1897 by Casely Hayford, the Gold Coast's Aborigines Rights Protection Society (ARPS) mounted a successful case against the colonial government's plan to take possession of all unused land on behalf of the Crown. Neither was this course only pursued by 'Westernised' elites. In the same period, the rural Kenyan Maasai tried to resist settler land seizures with the aid of British lawyers.[249] Support for pan-African organisations was also driven by post-war economic concerns. Deflation had led to burst commodity bubbles, which hit primary commodity economies in the colonised world particularly hard. As Adam Tooze writes, the drop in commodity prices led West African businessmen 'into the ranks of the Pan African Congress.'[250]

Yet, the language of reform was often communicated in ethno-culturalist terms, a practice which had roots in the last decades of the 19th century. In the social imaginary of mid-19th century Victorians, Africans were not essentially different from Europeans as they were 'subject to redemption and liable to civilisation.' The uncivilised customs of Africans were held in diametric opposition to the Victorian ideal of European civilisation, but the gap could be bridged with the dual treatment of 'commerce and Christianity.'[251] That the Africa and Europe of this imaginary were discursive fictions did not diminish their ability to construct an inter-societal symbolic order, on which economic and political relations were built. In this context, cultural and religious converts – 'black Victorians' as they would later be described – acted as middlemen between Europeans and natives, but also understood themselves to be the future leaders of a renewed, independent African civilisation to come. Generally this class viewed the civilising mission as a force for improvement on the

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[249] Parsons, 2014: 43, 48-49
[250] Tooze, 2014: 375
[251] Zachernuk, 2000: 44

continent. As Philip Zachernuk writes, 'the early Nigerian intelligentsia were more preoccupied with promoting the civilizing mission than questioning it, and it is not clear that the meaning of being "African" was deeply probed.'[252]

This had begun to change by the 1880s, when empire was refashioned as a more permanent 'guide' of backwards races. While the idea that humanity was divisible into races was not new, racism took on a new valence which disavowed Western-educated Africans as, 'at the very best', to quote the British historian William Winwood Reade (1838-1875), imitators 'with an utter barrenness of creative power.'[253] This new understanding marked Africans as radically different, and therefore able to attain civilisation only gradually, if at all. As we saw in Chapter 2, this was the period which saw a cull in Africans from government and bureaucratic roles. Reclassified as inauthentic imitators, they were reduced from the status of future leaders of a new African civilisation to indefinite imperial functionaries.

The response from counter-imperial critics was to appropriate and invert claims of fundamental difference. A new wave of intellectual and cultural elites thus embraced essential African difference and applied it to spheres of religion, law, politics, and culture. John Mensah Sarbah (1864-1910), was a Cape Coast native who studied law in England, became a barrister in 1887, and returned to West Africa in the late 1880s. He published a book in 1897 on Fante customary law, which gives a sense of this new wave. Favourably quoting the Scottish judge, Sir James Marshall (1829-1889), Sarbah argued that African legal custom was to be rooted in 'ancient' cultural tradition, with Europeans meant only to impel acquiescence: 'The Gold Coast must remain the country of the natives, but with a handful of Europeans among them who have the power by which they rule these people and enforce obedience.'[254]

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[252] Zachernuk, 2000: 45
[253] Reade, 1864: 30, 33
[254] Sarbah, 1968 [1897]: 31

Thus Sarbah, along with others like Nigerian Christian minister Mohola Agbebi (1860-1917), Casely Hayford, and the West Indian politician, Edward Wilmot Blyden (1832-1912) espoused the underlying rationale of indirect rule. This included an emphasis on the fundamental cultural difference of Africans, their ill-suitedness for European custom, while at the same time not presenting a challenge – at least publicly – to European rule itself. Blyden became an influence on later anti-imperial leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah and George Padmore for his radical criticism of Africans who 'imitated' Europeans in works such as *African Life and Customs* (1908). In this book, Blyden levelled a class conscious critique of civilisation 'as it exists in practice', which was comparable to European socialism. Blyden wrote that civilisation's 'modern tendency is to beget classes and masses—to emphasise the *I*, and suppress the *We*, to create the capitalist and the proletariat; and is a constant struggle between the "top and the bottom dog."' Blyden's message to Europe was if it sincerely wished to help Africa, it should do so 'by assisting her in the maintenance and development of her own social system.'[255] Blyden and Sarbah were welcomed on both sides of the colour line. Their ideas received a warm reception in British and American lecture halls.[256] The assertion of a unique African social model -- which was not connected to racial biology and therefore a rebuttal of racial inferiority -- coincided with the Boasian turn in American anthropology, which substituted historical development rather than race as explanation for cultural difference and hierarchy.[257] It also resonated with the genteel socialism and amateur anthropology of British figures such as Mary Kingsley (1862-1900) and E.D. Morel (1873-1924), who defended African societies on behalf of their different historical trajectories.

However, African difference did not serve as an atomising politics of indirect rule *exclusively.* For example, Adelaide Casely Hayford (1868-1960, born, Smith), the first wife

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[255] Blyden, 1908: 34-35
[256] Zachernuk, 2000: 66
[257] see Vitalis, 2015: ch. 2

of Joseph Ephraim, articulated African difference as part of an egalitarian pluralist vision for imperial African society. The unique intersection she occupied is well-expressed by the title of Adelaide Cromwell's biography, *An African Victorian Feminist* (1986). Adelaide was also an early pan-Africanist and a cultural nationalist.[258] Born into a Sierra Leonean elite family, and later a lawyer and an activist, she opened a Girls' Vocational and Industrial Training School in Freetown in 1923. Her vision for the school, which she described in a 1954 issue of the *West Africa Review*, demonstrated an egalitarian pluralist conception of African and European difference, in which the world political resides within domestic activity:

> In my mind's eye I could see a school in which girls, instead of blindly copying European fashions, would be dressed in attractive native garments which would enhance their personal charms. I could see them sitting in homes which combined European order, method and cleanliness with the beauty of native basket furniture, art work and draperies. I could see the young mothers teaching the little children on their knees that to be Black was not a curse nor a disgrace, that the color scheme of the races was part of God's divine plan, and that just as it was impossible to make a world without the primary colors, so it was impossible to make a world without the Negro. I could head the young mothers teaching their sons the glory of Black citizenship, rather than encouraging them to bewail the fact that they are not white. I could hear the native musical instruments, developed on scientific European lines discoursing sweet music in the place of wheezy harmoniums. I could imagine the artistic youth of the hereafter painting pictures depicting Black faces rather than white ones. I could visualize the listless, lethargic, educated town girl of today, through the medium of equipped gymnasiums and trained physical cultures enjoying the energy and vitality of her

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[258] Bair, 1994

grandmother who thought nothing of spending days hoeing fields or of carrying a load

as weighty as any man's. And then I could picture the sons and daughters of Africa's

race 'looking the whole world in the face' without any apology whatsoever for the

color of their skins, and with such self-respect as to command the respect of all

nations.[259]

While African difference was not fabricated out of whole cloth, it was heavily

exaggerated and reinterpreted through an imperial context which elicited nativist claims.

Post-WWII histories of African societies have cast doubt on accounts of 'ancient custom' and

pure African difference, and have instead emphasised the inter-societal interchange,

syncretism, and transculturation which constructed modern African identities. While there is

no question that the patrilineal 'households' of pre-colonial Africa persist in some version

today, these societies were heavily modified by colonial and imperial encounters.[260] The

Fante-Akan group – to which Casely Hayford, Sekyi, and Sarbah belonged -- is one of the

clearest examples. Coastal merchant communities in West Africa had developed distinct

societies and identities by the 17th century. New social forms were shaped by the transatlantic

slave trade. Akan, Fante, and Yoruba ethnic identities were direct products of the shared

experiences of disparate coastal communities as they navigated relations with foreign

merchants and local rulers.[261] Gold Coast trade in slaves, 81 percent of which was sponsored

by the British, and two-thirds of which was destined for the British Caribbean, produced

fortified port towns which required home grown authorities and militias to manage escalating

cases of warfare and banditry.[262] The slave trade and internal political violence were

mutually-reinforcing. Most of the enslaved Africans in the Bight of Benin, Bight of Biafra,

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[259] A. Casely Hayford, "American Journey", *West Africa Review* (February 1954): 153.
[260] Hopkins, 1973; Davidson, 1978; Ranger, 1986
[261] Shumway, 2011
[262] Ibid.: 55-59

and the Niger Delta were war captives, in addition to victims of kidnap and subjects of criminal convictions.[263] The Kingdoms of Ouidah and Allada expanded to rival the Kingdom of Dahomey, which subsequently defeated and absorbed them.[264] By 1730, warfare in the competition for trade and gold-mining had stripped several coastal polities of their traditional royal families.[265]

At the beginning of the 17th century, an alliance between the Dutch West Indies Company and Asante came under threat from the Borbor Fante, a group that had migrated from Akan hinterland to the coast prior to 1471.[266] Fante *asafo* (literally, 'war-people') companies won a string of victories along the coast, eventually establishing a decentralised and networked power rivalling Asante in the region. In 1868, as the British Empire was consolidating itself in Africa, the Fante Confederation was established with the British in order for both to challenge the rival Ashanti Confederacy and the Dutch. *Asafo* flags -- Fante military banners -- displayed Union Jacks in the upper left corners and depicted a variety of scenes. Some depicted scenes of white and black cooperation; later they depicted planes and trains to signify British technological prowess—symbols of Fante pride as part of the British Empire.

Some Africans, such as the Fante intellectual, Kobina Sekyi (1892-1956), embraced cultural nationalism after the shock of discovering to what extent they were considered racially inferior in the metropole. Before travelling to London, Sekyi accepted the belief that '"anglicization"… was the passport to "civilization" and "progress"' and he even appeared in a school photograph in an Edwardian collar and woollen suit.[267] Bad experiences with English women, and racial abuse, including from destitute men begging in the street, helped

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[263] Lovejoy, 1983: ch. 4
[264] Law, 1991: 225-260; Law, 2004: 50-70
[265] Shumway, 2011: 93
[266] Ibid.: 26
[267] Langley, 1974: 3

to sour him on European culture.[268] Returning to the Gold Coast in 1915 after studying

philosophy at University College London (UCL), Sekyi became involved in the ARPS with

Casely Hayford, and contributed editorials to various colonial peoples' newspapers and

journals. Sekyi also wrote a play, published in 1915, called *the Blinkards*. The play is a satire

of Africans who try and fail to adopt Christianity, the English language, and English customs.

Through satire, Sekyi critiqued Fante incorporation of English language and customs, and

linked this to the social divisions which had emerged in colonial Africa.[269] *The Blinkards* of

the title crave status, and thus become eager adopters of English ways. Sekyi negatively

compared them to those who are proficient in the imperialist's language, such as himself, but

who embrace their culture and resist assimilation.

Between 1917 and 1923, Sekyi published articles in *West Africa*, *the African Times*

and Orient Review, and *Gold Coast Leader.* Many of these ideas continued on from those he

had written in an essay, 'Morality and Nature', and his UCL thesis, *The Relation Between the*

State and the Individual Considered in the Light of its Bearing on the Conception of Duty, but

applied to the particular political problems of the British Gold Coast. Sekyi had argued in his

thesis that 'the development of statute law and the rise of the modern state and bureaucracy

had nothing to with morality and progress, but were merely the manifestations of increasing

artificiality and decadence.'[270] Sekyi subscribed to a stadial conception of political

development, and saw history as composed of the rise and fall of nations, which was due in

part to the rise of the modern nation-state. Capitalism, industrialisation, and imperialism,

engendered decay which ate away at the nation.[271] Sekyi, however, rejected all elements of

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[268] Ibid.
[269] Utudjian, 1997: 23-31
[270] Quoted in Langley, 1974: 8
[271] Langley, 1997: 251

stadial developmental theory based on the imperial mission driven by 'civilised' men and the ascendancy of scientific reason.[272]

In the first part of a three-part serial, entitled 'the Future of Subject Peoples', and published in *African Times and Orient Review* in 1917, Sekyi took a particularly dim view of subject peoples adopting any of Europe's social and political attributes. The European civilisation Africans and others hoped to mimic, Sekyi argued, represented 'a diseased state of society', which made a habit of 'denationalising peoples" through the disruptive logics of Empire.[273] Europe, he argued, 'knows no such thing as Nationality; she knows only Empire, which means the exaltation of one nation and the debasement of all other nations that are unable to resist aggression.'[274] Europe had evolved and is evolving, but only through and towards imperialism, and not its alternative, which, Sekyi called, "the Brotherhood of Nations."[275]

Rather than rule by state administration over a territory, and its domination of a national populace, Fante and other African conceptions of the state, society, and sovereignty were based on authority vested in 'the people as a whole.'[276] Sekyi drew a comparison to the African state as an organic entity working in concert, or the state as interwoven with the family.[277] In his serial for *Gold Coast Leader*, 'Our White Friends', Sekyi also endorsed the idea of a return to a confederation of Fante states within the British Empire.[278] Although he argued that British imperialism has hindered African political development, and that its rule by force also made it a threat to itself, Sekyi dide not express the idea that European rule should be forcibly overthrown, or the Europeans should adopt African culture for the sake of their own development. Rather,

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[272] *Ibid*. p. 254.
[273] *ATOR* (October, 1917), p. 78.
[274] *Ibid.*
[275] *Ibid.*
[276] Langley, 1997: 260
[277] Sekyi, "Our White Friends", in *Gold Coast Leader*, (January 14, 1922), p. 5.
[278] Sekyi, "Our White Friends", in *Gold Coast Leader* (0ctober 29, 1922), p. 5.

Africans, Asiatics, Europeans, Americans, each… has its natural and normal environment, and within each large group there are smaller groups with distinct characteristics, and therefore different mode of life. Let each social group develop along the line marked out for them by their unwesternised and therefore undemoralised ancestors, accepting from the West only such institutions as can be adapted to, and not such as cannot but alter, their national life.[279]

Demonstrating the politics of direct rule, Sekyi's general tone in 'Our White Friends' is conciliatory to British rule, even dismissive of formalised self-government:

I would submit, in short, that what is wanted is not municipal self-government, which will simply emphasise the local feeling, which, we are all agreed, will not do in these days. We want training in thinking and feeling for a wider administrative area than that of each of the native states.[280]

The construction of African difference was shaped in part by the changing social contract between empire and African societies. This was a response to more hostile race ideology which accommodated a new phase in imperial legitimation, and was facilitated by new academic trends and self-regarding white supremacy. As they turned towards more acute nation building projects in the interwar period, African and diasporic elites drew on different aspects of this transformed contract to build movements around alternative global visions.

3.3.2. Nation-building and elite global visions

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[279] Sekyi, 'Subject Peoples', *ATOR* (December, 1917) p. 110.
[280] "Our White Friends", *Gold Coast Leader* (October 29, 1922), p. 6.

The trajectory of debates about international black unity was not only determined by white supremacy, but by the hierarchy of class interests and perspectives within black political societies. Debates about international black unity developed alongside questions of African/black difference, and the place of Africans and people of African descent within larger white-dominated polities. Elites on both sides of the Atlantic connected their visions of imperial reform to the prospect of federalism and international integration. They expressed the idea that federation was a means to unify and strengthen black national projects, and a way to advance black contributions to world civilisation. However, this conversation was always characterised by intra-elite disagreement and conflict. Intra-elite conflict was not purely a matter of personal dislike or petty personal ambition, but a result of counter-imperial and anti-racist politics taking place within different social, political, and economic contexts.[281] White patronage and wider, inter-racial discourses played various roles in each of these contexts.

The success and influence of African-American and Afro-Caribbean leaders and international organisations, though they helped inspire solidarity across the black world, were met with both admiration and concern by continental African elites. Throughout the early interwar period, Garveyism was a powerful force to which contemporaneous and subsequent anticolonial movements were compelled to position themselves in relation. Between 1916 and 1921, Garvey built a mass movement around the idea of black uplift and self-determination in the face of white supremacy. Though his entrepreneurial enterprises like the Negro Factories Corporation and the Black Star Line eventually collapsed under mismanagement, Garvey reached millions through *Negro World* and local branches of the UNIA in Africa, the Caribbean, and the Americas. A gifted propagandist, Garvey's global

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[281] cf. Kelley, 1999: 1046

vision extended from the conference halls of Harlem to rural East Africa, where his politics of 'unity, preparation, and self-help' inspired the Kikuyu nationalist movement amongst others.[282] During the period of interwar West Indian strike actions, the Barbadian working men's association was ostensibly a wing of the UNIA.[283]

While West African elites like Casely Hayford approved of Garvey's ethno-nationalism and support for black economic cooperation, they also worried that Garveyism would bring a host of extra-continental interlopers to Africa to endanger African leadership and further undermine African culture.[284] If Garvey's Back to Africa project had been more viable, Casely Hayford's concerns would have been well-founded. Though he routinely praised ancient African civilisations and the resistance of black groups against European conquest, Garvey also expressed the opinion that blacks had 'done nothing praiseworthy on their own initiative in the last five hundred years…. They have made no political, educational, industrial, independent contribution to civilisation for which they can be respected by other races.'[285] Garvey's solution to the deficit of black contributions to world civilisation was to re-colonise and 'redeem' Africa through the guidance of Western-educated, new world blacks. In the January 19, 1924 issue of *Negro World*, Garvey wrote that as part of his plan to re-colonise Africa, 'all thoughtful Negroes of American and the West Indies' 'should convey to Africa all that we have imbibed by the way of education and culture from the contact of three hundred years with western civilisation.'[286]

Key to the cultural nationalism of a Casely Hayford was mistrust of the inauthenticity of new world leadership, as part of a deeper concern about Africa's diaspora returning to the continent en masse. However much the British Empire enforced a colour bar, or threatened to deterritorialise native Africans, the imperial republicanism of Marcus Garvey threatened the

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[282] Ewing, 2014: 219; Younis, 2018: ch. 1
[283] Horne, 2007: 18
[284] Ewing, 2014: 194
[285] in Hill, 1983(b): 59-60 (Garvey Papers 4)
[286] *Negro World*, 1924(a): 1

'balance' of indirect rule which had been worked out over decades. As early as 1913, Casely Hayford had advocated a federation of West African colonies.[287] However, the 'one policy' which should be implemented to 'guide all the Governments of the West African Dependencies' was to be administered with 'a clear conception' of West Africa's 'place within the British Empire.'[288] As we saw in the introduction, Casely Hayford placed West African federation within a pluralist British Empire which had just been made the model for a new inter-imperial order based on the mandates system. Through the logic of indirect rule, embrace of African culture – not Atlantic unity – was Africa's inroad to the international. Casely Hayford advocated this through the ideology of 'Ethiopianism.' This meant a rejection of the cultural tropes of Western civilisation which would 'destroy African nationality'; resistance to black republicanism, but acceptance of its principles of racial pride and transatlantic economic cooperation; and acceptance of British rule.[289] '[I]t is not so much *Afro-Americans* that we want', Casely Hayford stated bluntly, 'as *Africans* or *Ethiopians*.' This included the opinion that Africans needed to represent cultural authenticity to white rulers:

> Without servile imitation of our teachers in their get-up and manner of life, it stands to
> reason that the average white man would regard the average black man far more
> seriously than he does at present. The adoption of a distinctive dress for the cultured
> African, therefore, would be a distinct step forward, and a gain to the cause of
> Ethiopian progress and advancement.[290]

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[287] Casely Hayford 1971 [1913]: 99-103
[288] In Langley, 1979
[289] Ibid.
[290] Ibid.: 206-207

Casely Hayford's assertion of African culture and loyal opposition was in part a response to the perception that new world blacks were emerging as global race leaders. Over a decade earlier, Casely Hayford had expressed a suspicion of African-American's right to speak for the race. In an introduction to a collection of Blyden's speeches in London, Casely Hayford opined that the 'work of men like Booker T. Washington and W.E. Burghart Du Bois' was 'exclusive and provincial in a sense', while Blyden's work was 'universal, covering the entire race and the entire race problem.'[291] Although born in the Dutch West Indies, Blyden was of Ewe descent, spent much of his professional life in Liberia, and shared many of Casely Hayford's cultural nationalist views. The idea that Du Bois and Washington did not share these authentic African credentials would have been enough reason for the unfavourable comparison.

By at least 1911, Du Bois was an influential international race representative. In that year he had acted as secretary for the U.S. delegation to the Universal Race Congress in London. The event was attended by delegations from 50 countries, a group which also included parliamentary presidents and delegates to the Second Hague Peace Conference.[292] As the editor of the NAACP newspaper, *the Crisis*, Du Bois was able to promote these events – and his participation at them – to a wide audience. In the pages of *the Crisis* and *Atlantic*, Du Bois had also published widely read diagnoses of the Great War. Du Bois argued that global racial hierarchy was a fundamental aspect of war for commercial and industrial dominance. The roots of world war were not just national jealousy nor competition for profits, but in theories of non-white inferiority and the belief that whites could 'confiscate' the land of 'black, brown, and yellow peoples… work the natives at low wages, make large profits and open wide markets for cheap European manufactures.'[293] Du Bois offered a

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[291] Casely Hayford, 1905: i
[292] Sluga, 2013: 28
[293] Du Bois, 'World War and the Color Line,' *Crisis* 9 (November 1914): 29

radical defence against 'the imperial movement' on behalf of Africa, and argued that white supremacy was the greatest hurdle to those 'who desire peace and the civilisation of all men.'[294] Du Bois's Pan-African Congress, reconvened during the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, became 'a harbinger of a new consciousness that eventually percolated through the African diaspora.'[295]

Usually invoked as a theorist of the 'colour line', Du Bois's universalism and his espousal of a global telos of World Civilisation are under-acknowledged aspects of his thought. Du Bois's anti-imperialism stemmed in part from a Fabian belief in gradual progress towards universal socialism. Du Bois recognised important differences between civilisations, but these different civilisations should ultimately aspire to one global modern culture defined by a set of higher order values. WWI, which was caused by racist imperial rivalry, was a 'terrible overturning of civilization.' Racial subjugation and war for territory had to end, but it was also necessary to 'train native races in modern civilisation.'[296] In an NAACP volume published in 1919, and titled *Africa in the World Democracy*, Du Bois laid out 'a platform' for 'the future of Africa.' In it, he advocated that the former German colonies in Africa be 'internationalised', and reorganised 'under the guidance of organized civilization.'[297] The Governing International Commission should represent, not simply governments, but 'modern culture—sciences, commerce, social reform and religious philanthropy.'[298] Favourably quoting the words of journalist, Simeon Strunsky, in 1920's *Darkwater*, Du Bois asks

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[294] Du Bois, 1970 [1915]: 366, 367
[295] Wolters, 2002: 126
[296] Du Bois, 1970 [1915]: 369
[297] However, the Second Pan-African Congress led by Du Bois later petitioned in 1921 to have a black member take part in the administration of former German colonies. Garvey petitioned against Du Bois's petition, protesting the Pan-African Congresses right to representation of African colonies and not the UNIA (Pedersen, 2015: 90).
[298] Du Bois, [1919] 'The Future of Africa- a platform', in *Du Bois Speaks 1890-1919*, ed. Foner, 1970: 274.

Just as the common ownership of the northwest territory helped to weld the colonies into the United States, so could not joint and benevolent domination of Africa and of other backward parts of the world be a cornerstone upon which the future federation of the world could be built?[299]

Du Bois did believe that Africa was to be governed by Africans – not African-Americans or Afro-Caribbeans -- at some stage.[300] However, he took for granted top-down nation building as the approach for future international unification of Africa:

If Africa unites, it will be because of each part, each nation, each tribe, gives up a part of its heritage for the good of the whole. That is what union means; that is what Pan-Africa mean…. When the tribe becomes a union of tribes, the individual tribe surrenders some part of its freedom to the paramount tribe….

When the nation arises, the constituent tribes, clans must each yield power and some freedom to the demands of the nation or the nation dies before it is born. Your local tribal, much-loved languages must yield to the few world tongues which serve the largest number of people and promote understanding and world literature.[301]

White hegemony undermined its own potential to lead in the work of civilisation because of its aggressive expansion of capital, preferential dispensation of democratic rights, and enforcement of a global colour line.[302] Likewise, the United States' treatment of its black citizens compromised that nation's ability to claim its participation in the war as for the good

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[299] Du Bois, 2016 [1920]: 39. The prospect of colonised African territory and labour playing an important role in building pan-European and pan-Western institutions was part of a broader discursive formation over the same period. See Hansen & Jonsson, 2014.

[300] Makalani, 2011: 72

[301] Quoted in Reed Jr., 1997: 81

[302] Du Bois, 'World of Color', *Foreign Affairs* III April 1925: 423

of world civilisation. In a 1917 speech to the Ninth Annual Convention of the Intercollegiate

Socialist Society, Du Bois stated that he would condone world war if it were legitimately for

the good of world civilization:

> If at the cost of this World War, the death of millions and the sorrow and degradation of
> many millions more, if at that horrible cost we can put down anarchy among the
> nations, reduce them to some system of law and order, curb the bullying of the
> highwayman by armed international police and make the freedom of nation a freedom
> under law, as we have done partially with the individual, then the fight is worth every
> drop of blood that it costs…. But when the [United States] enters, can it enter and fight
> for such a stake? Are its hand reasonably clean and its soul sincere? I maintain that the
> one tremendous handicap which makes it almost impossible for this nation to fight with
> clear conscience or with untrammelled limbs is today, as yesterday, her attitude toward
> twelve million Americans of Negro descent.[303]

The turn-of-the-century discourse and set of policies characterised by essential

African/black difference was transnational, and, as in the African context, determined how

new world blacks argued in their own societies.[304] While Du Bois advocated the guided

civilisation of 'native races' on the one hand, his subject position within imperial hierarchy

also obliged him to defend his race and its contributions to world culture. In 1924's *the Gift*

of Black Folk, Du Bois devoted each chapter to a different contribution made by the black

race to the United States and to the democratic forces of the world. He narrated black

contributions with reference to the cultural development of the race in relation to its

geographical setting: '[t]he Negro is primarily an artist…. [th]e only race which had held at

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[303] Du Bois, [1917]. 'The Problem of Problems' in *Du Bois Speaks 1890-1919*, ed. Foner, 1970: 262-263.
[304] see Zimmerman, 2010

bay the life destroying forces of the tropics, has gained therefrom in some slight compensation a sense of beauty, particularly for sound and color, which characterizes the race.'[305] Against the imperial ideology that Africa was savage and had no culture of its own, he deployed the counter-narrative that Africa was once the site of powerful civilisations and complex, autogenous cultures.[306] In the United States, the colour *bar* – exclusion of certain races from the upper echelons of modern society – was as important as the colour line. Du Bois's view that blacks should be educated for leadership, cultural, and intellectual work was the ideological basis for his rivalry with Booker T. Washington, who argued that blacks should be trained in trades and form an organic society with white middle and upper classes. Du Bois's controversial article which argued that blacks should 'close ranks' – i.e. set aside grievances -- with whites during WWI was, in part, a gambit to demonstrate black loyalty in the hope of greater social equality after the war.[307] However, there is also strong evidence that the article was written to advance Du Bois's own career, during a period when he was being considered for a captaincy-adjutant position at the U.S. War Department.[308]

Civilisation thus reflected the different worldmaking aspirations of different white and black leaders. While there were ideological bases for these visions of world civilisation, the concept was just as much a reflection of strategy and politics vis-à-vis rival leadership. For Wilson and the liberal imperialism of the League, civilisation represented global progress led by civilised nations, institutionalised by the mandates system. For African elites like Casely Hayford, civilisation represented global progress with more African integration and input, an aspiration most fully realised by indirect rule in the British Empire and the policy of *association* in the French Empire. For certain diasporic elites like W.E.B. Du Bois, civilisation represented Fabian global progress: advancements in democratic right and

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[305] Du Bois 2014 [1924]: 104
[306] Du Bois, 1970 [1925] 'What is Civilization?' Africa's Answer' in W.E.B. Du Bois: a Reader, ed. Weinberg, Harper and Row.
[307] Du Bois, *Crisis* 16, July, 1918: 111.
[308] Wolters, 2002: 121-122

economic justice guided by the most talented members of a social group. For others like Marcus Garvey, civilisation required the establishment of a black nation, economic and racial autonomy, the redemption of Africa, and the consolidation of leadership in the hands of black nation-builders. All of these projects were met with criticism from those who conceptualised world civilisation as desirable, but more importantly the prerogative of radical democratic control of the global order after 1918.

3.5. 'Civilisation(s)' and the emergence of anti-imperial globalist critique

Despite their relatively large influence, black leaders like Du Bois, Garvey, and Casely Hayford were not universally accepted spokesmen for the black race. The respective nationalisms of these three leaders were criticised from an alternative political position, which I defined in previous chapters as anti-imperial globalism. Du Bois's, Garvey's, and Casely Hayford's criticism of anti-black racism and white supremacy, and the alternative globalisms they suggested, are of course helpful for giving a fuller picture of the political imaginaries, social forces, and economic rationales which shaped the post-war order. However, 'white versus black' was only one axis of a debate which was just as much about radical democratic control and egalitarianism. While the recovery and reinstatement of these figures to the social sciences in the last few years is certainly important, a singular focus on influential black representatives within white world order can bury the dissenting voices and animating questions which included but went beyond race ontologies. Sole emphasis on black – or non-white -- versus white plays into nationalist historiographies and romantic narratives which characterise emancipation as always self-generated. These narratives are difficult to square with historical analysis that does not take race as the only important factor. The fact is black leaders were held to question by black critics – not just for capitulating with whites --

but for claiming to speak for the entire race, and for failing to consistently support radical democratic control as a universal principle.

3.5.1. Rival leaders and the progress debate

As was argued in the previous chapter, the representation of different particularisms within a globalising liberal universalism was a problem central to anti-imperial globalist critique. The problem emerged as a result of the deep disparities which defined global modernity, and the association of these disparities with definable traits which belonged to particular societies. While few articulated the more radical anti-imperial globalism which defined the post-1935 period, and which included the need to go beyond 'uplift' or inclusion to revolutionise subjectivities, anti-imperial globalism is evident in the challenges to the democratic deficits implied by Du Bois's and Garvey's interwar worldmaking programmes. These democratic deficits served as fusillade for two important critics who will be discussed further below: Hubert Harrison and Cyril Briggs. However, they also served as the basis for Du Bois's and Garvey's criticisms of one another.

This is important because it speaks to the central contradiction of the twentieth century nation-building of colonised peoples. With the need to centralise and institutionalise representations of a nation – racially defined or otherwise – came the simultaneous need to deflect or undermine the oppressive, imperialist logics of such centralisation and institutionalisation. Minority leaders were obliged to assert counter-hegemonic movements which were effective at building support amongst internal and external groups; which needed to reflect some degree of national or cultural authenticity; and which were also obliged to offer a challenge to the deeper disparities of social inequality within their own communities and the larger world. Rather than produce a continuum of nationalism/internationalism which

flowed into one another as part of a coherent ideology, these multiple exigencies often produced inconsistency and confusion. Thus, a Du Bois could critique a Garvey for his imperialism, while at the same time suggesting a different imperialism of his own. These differences were social as well as ideological. Du Bois and Garvey disliked one another not just because of their leadership rivalry, but because each to the other represented an inferior social standing in relation to its ability to represent the race.

Criticism of Du Bois and Garvey was precipitated by specific decisions that both leaders made, but these decisions were consistent with their broader worldmaking strategies. Du Bois's crime was to pursue the captaincy at the War Department and to advocate that African-Americans 'close ranks' with whites during wartime. Garvey's was to cooperate with white nativist organisations like the Ku Klux Klan, and to investigate the potential of an autonomous enclave for UNIA governance in Liberia. Du Bois's critique of empire was complemented by loyal opposition to the United States, and this meant, ultimately, the United States government. Thus, Du Bois's black nationalism was not about keeping the races separate, but about pushing the United States to better reflect its democratic pluralist promise to the world. '[P]olitical power for the Negro citizens of the United States' was a foundational issue on which global democracy rested, because, Du Bois argued, the United States was ultimately the best leader for the improvement of the rest of the world. '[I]f democracy fails in the United States', Du Bois said at the Interracial Conference in Washington, D.C., December, 1928, 'and fails because of our attitude toward a darker people, what about democracy in the world, and particularly in India, China, in Japan and in Egypt? We have got a chance today, and an unrivalled chance, again to rescue and guide the world, as we did at the end of the eighteenth century.'[309]

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[309] Du Bois, 1971 [1928]: 41

The assumption on which Garvey's worldmaking rested was that 'the Negro… must build a civilization of his own or forever remain the white man's victim.'[310] This led Garvey to welcome anti-black white nativism, because he believed it would better emphasise the crisis conditions of black and white relations than any appeal to social equality. In one instance he suggested that 'lynchings and race riots… work to our advantage.'[311] In 1922 he met and 'conferred amicably' with KKK Imperial Wizard Edward Young Clarke, corresponded with Earnest Sevier Cox of the White America Society, with John Powell of the Anglo Saxon Clubs of America, and also accepted financial donations from white nativist groups to 'repatriate' blacks to Africa.[312] Comparing the KKK to Du Bois's NAACP, Garvey said, 'give me the Klan for their honesty of purpose towards the Negro. They are better friends of my race, for telling us what they are, and what they mean.'[313]

Garvey did not hold that racial hierarchy was unavoidable, but race was a fundamental and timeless category of social existence, and races needed to be kept separate and pure in order for the black race to attain parity with the white.[314] Garvey's worldview was underpinned by race realism, but also a Christian universalism which deferred more radical social improvement to some eschatological future. In February, 1924, Garvey published a tribute to the recently deceased Woodrow Wilson as a 'great loss' to the 'white world.' In the tribute, Garvey wrote that Wilson had made a 'blunder' by promoting global democracy on behalf of minority nations. This was because the achievement of 'the liberation of weaker peoples' would have 'resulted in a terrible compromise between the dominant white races and the darker peoples of the world who were being kept down by the former.'

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[310] Quoted in Cronon, 1955: 190
[311] Ibid.: 189
[312] Wolters, 2002: 163
[313] Jacques-Garvey, 2006: 71
[314] Garvey's race ontology and politics were not actually a great deal different to those of Du Bois, as presented in Du Bois's 1897 essay 'the Conservation of Races.' Du Bois also opposed miscegenation in an article of 1920, until blacks had 'built a great black race tradition of which the Negro and the world will be as proud in the future as it has been in the ancient world' (cited in Wolters, 2002: 158).

Proclaiming a standard of 'larger democracy and freedom' for darker races was 'against the interest of the scattered and separate dominant white groups.' The League of Nations was thus a unity of white races which resulted from the scaling back of this promise. 'Materialism' and racial competition were unavoidable realities of the twentieth century, and peace would only be achieved through 'the return of Christ or some one [sic] greater than Christ.'[315]

As part of black self-help, Garvey announced plans to force Europe out of Liberia to set up an autonomous enclave for the UNIA. C.D.B. King (1875-1961), Liberia's president, ejected Garvey and the UNIA when colonial powers began to make inquiries about Garvey's plans.[316] Despite praising Garvey's charisma and success in establishing the feasibility of a return to Africa, Du Bois lambasted Garvey for his mismanagement of finances and his imperialist disposition towards Liberia. 'He proposes to settle his headquarters in Liberia', Du Bois stated, 'but has he asked permission of the Liberian government? Does he presume to usurp authority in a land which has successfully withstood England, France and the United States—but is expected tamely to submit to Marcus Garvey?'[317] During their more heated rivalry in the mid-1920s, Du Bois's remarks about Garvey dispensed with niceties, and displayed barely coded attacks on his lower status, boorishness, and sloppy management of the UNIA's affairs.[318]

Garvey criticised Du Bois for his espousal of social equality, which Garvey argued only served to 'subjugate the Negro race', and Du Bois's appeals to a larger humanity and world civilisation as a distraction from the particular victimhood of blacks and the mission of

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[315] *Negro World*, 1924(b): 1
[316] Wolters, 2002: 167
[317] in Foner, 1971 [1920]: 19
[318] Wolters, 2002: 168. After Garvey's death, Du Bois expressed a re-assessed opinion of the man, in which Du Bois stated that Garvey was 'a sincere and hard-working idealist' with 'a great and worthy dream' (quoted in Wolters, 2002: 169).

building a black nation.[319] Garvey accused Du Bois of hating his 'black blood', and building unity between white liberals and middle class blacks to lead blacks into an eternity of subjugation. 'The question is no longer between the white man and the Negro', Garvey wrote in a characteristic front page editorial, 'but gradually it is becoming one between Negroes themselves.'[320] Garvey's comments on Du Bois reflect a consistent mistrust of mixed race people, and he would frequently associate mixed race with inauthenticity, race betrayal, and chauvinist attitudes towards poorer blacks. There is a high likelihood that this suspicion was inculcated in Garvey during his Jamaican upbringing, where admixture of 'white blood' was often a badge of higher social rank.[321] Class resentment might have been present in Garvey's first meeting with Du Bois, where the former took an immediate dislike to the latter based on 'his color, his formal education, his expensive clothes, his cultural tastes, his imported cigarettes.'[322] These class differences became symbolic of Du Bois's and Garvey's organisations. As one of Garvey's associates wrote, '[t]he NAACP appeals to the Beau Brummel, Lord Chesterfield, kid-gloved, silk stocking, creased-trousered, patent leather shoe… element, while the UNIA appeals to the… hard-working man… [Du Bois] appeals to the 'talented tenth' while Garvey appeals to the Hoi Polloi.'[323]

The rivalry between Du Bois and Garvey is indicative of the social fault lines which served to divide black (inter)nationalist movements. Despite their differences, the two leaders had a lot in common ideologically. Both espoused the redemption of the black race, the common enemy of white supremacy and imperialism, and a return to Africa. Both were also in thrall to white patrons and the 'civilising' ideology which set the parameters for attitudes towards racial uplift on a global scale. These ideologies came under scrutiny from radicals who began to annunciate a more radical attack on 'civilisationism.'

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[319] e.g. *Negro World,* 1923(a): 1; 1923(b): 1
[320] *Negro World,* 1923(c): 1
[321] Wolters, 2002: 156-157
[322] Ibid.: 159
[323] Quoted in ibid.

3.5.2. 'Civilisationism' and its discontents

An early form of anti-imperial globalism is present in the criticism of black imperialism from black radicals during the interwar period. Although these criticisms were relatively marginal and fell short of demands for revolution, they invoked an image of global progress which was not built on the prospect of blacks building imperial hierarchies to reproduce the logics of white imperialists. Within these debates grew the tension between white and European hegemony on one side, and hierarchy within black societies on the other.

The hierarchical structure of a white world order created the need to lure white patronage. Whether it was liberals, racist white supremacy groups, or international communists, whites held the majority of the political power and finances. Yet, because of this dependency, and because of the need to mobilise around racial identity, black leaders and movements have often been obliged to deny the importance of white patronage.[324] This dynamic became particularly evident in the discourse about 'the Negro Renaissance' in the United States during Jim Crow and the Age of Booker T. Washington. As Adolph Reed Jr. writes in a passage worth quoting at length,

> For all its advocacy of black primacy over black affairs, the Negro Renaissance was
> dependent upon and reflected its clientage to white patronage. Hence Du Bois often
> was ambivalent in identification of his audiences, alternately and sometimes in a given
> text simultaneously addressing the black elite, which he exhorted to be independent and
> to meet its historic duties, and liberal whites. In the Renaissance case the material

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[324] The classic analysis of this dynamic is Harold Cruse's *the Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* (2005 [1967]: 11-63). Although for ideological reasons, Cruse's focus is largely on the United States, much of his analysis is relevant to transnational black and white relations. See Chapter 6.

condition underlying the ambivalence was ironic because of the assertiveness that characterises his praise of the racial spirit.

The pursuit of white patronage had been a central feature of Afro-American political and intellectual activity at least since the Age of Washington. Washington directed his appeal definitively to indigenous white advocates of the New South and their eastern capitalist affiliations, and Du Bois's criticism seems largely directed at that same constituency—as, for example, when he exhorted the "Men of America" to make the Talented Tenth the leaders of the race. Those "Men" were white elites—philanthropists and other opinion makers. Notwithstanding its literary merits and other substantive accomplishment, herein lies much of the historical significance of *the Souls of Black Folk*: in that volume Du Bois raised more coherently the demand for expanded access to the white elite agencies that were or could have been involved in disposition of the place of the Afro-American population in the developing order of corporate capitalism.[325]

Du Bois's practice of both defending the potential of blacks to be civilised, as well as defending traditional African folkways and particularities, stemmed in part from the contradictions in engaging these different audiences. Civilisation was to take place with respect to inherent group traits – a sentiment which appealed to dominant ideas about African difference and autonomy – but 'postulation of an exotic black particularity' also demonstrated the need for a cultured, educated black elite as 'spokespersons', 'keepers and translators of the culture' with respect to a white constituency. The representation of African

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[325] Reed Jr., 1997: 59

exoticism would have also appealed to middle and upper class white audiences during a moment when concern with 'overcivilisation' was in vogue with affluent urban whites.[326]

Thus, radicals viewed aspiring race leaders with an eye that was sometimes constructively critical, and sometimes simply suspicious. More severe claims of race betrayal were not always entirely unfounded, but were also somewhat insensitive to the realities of attempting to build effective mass movements without white patronage. Hegemony and hierarchy created structural effects which could not simply be circumvented with the 'right' policy. These difficulties were mirrored when radicals attempted to build anti-imperial movements with and without the support of organised international communism.[327]

Two important contrapuntal figures to Du Bois and Garvey were the intellectual activists Hubert Harrison and Cyril Briggs. Harrison was born in the U.S. Virgin Islands, settled in Harlem in his late teens, and went on to become the central figure in the 'New Negro' movement as founder of the Liberty League and its newspaper *the Voice*.[328] Harrison was an important influence on Garvey, who, before meeting Harrison, espoused an ideology more in line with his previous mentor, Dusé Mohamed Ali (1866-1945), the London-based publisher of *Africa Times and Orient Review*. Both Mohamed and Harrison advocated the advancement of non-white people, but for the former, this advancement was to take place within the contours of a more inclusive and benevolent British Empire. Until meeting Harrison in 1916, as part of Garvey's involvement with the Liberty League, Garvey had also pledged the UNIA's patriotic support to the British Empire and its opposition to German imperial ambitions in Africa.[329] Harrison was a member of the Socialist Party until 1912, when he left over its compromises with racist groups and the white establishment, as well as

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[326] Ibid.: 58

[327] The relationship between black radical anti-imperialists and international communism is analysed in depth in the next chapter.

[328] For more on Harrison's life and thought see, James (1998) and Perry (2009).

[329] Ewing, 2014: 71

its purge of its own left wing in the early 1910s.[330] He consistently expressed anti-imperialist views, and was a proponent of a 'Colored International' which would present a united front against global white supremacy. This was to be an organisation of 'the downtrodden section of the human population of the globe' based on 'business, industrial and commercial relations.'[331] Harrison was also a diligent critic of black leadership. In 1910, he submitted letters to the *New York Sun* branding Booker T. Washington an accomodationist. Washington saw the letters and used his connections to get Harrison fired.[332]

Cyril Briggs was born in Nevis, immigrated to the United States sometime in the early 1900s, and became an editor for the *Amsterdam News* in 1912. Briggs had already formed anti-imperialist views before WWI, and his criticism of the United States' entry into the war brought him into conflict with the publisher of the *Amsterdam News*.[333] He founded his own paper, *the Crusader*, in 1918, and an associated society, the African Blood Brotherhood in 1919.[334] Like Harrison, Briggs saw the struggles of non-white groups as connected, and consistently advocated black (inter)nationalism as a necessary stage to the construction of a greater amelioration of class and racial hierarchy. Also like Harrison, he supported black leaders to a point – especially Garvey – but became critical when they revealed authoritarian, imperialist, or accomodationist tendencies.

As critic of both white hegemony and black leadership, Harrison articulated one of the more potent early condemnations of civilisation ideology in the black Atlantic context. Harrison used the concept of civilisation in three senses. First, as a cultural standard, or the transferable cultural practices of a more advanced society. He used this meaning, similar to Du Bois and Garvey, in the context of black Africa's past as an important conveyor of civilisation. In an October 1919 issue of *New Negro*, Harrison published a column which

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[330] Heideman, 2018: 103-104
[331] Harrison [1920] in Perry, 2001: 219
[332] Heideman, 2018: 103
[333] Ibid.: 235
[334] For more biographical details on Briggs see James (1998), Zumoff (2007), Makalani (2011).

advocated the reprint of Herodotus's histories to be sold at low prices for the benefit of black youth. Harrison wrote that Herodotus 'points out… that many of the Egyptians were black and all of them were dark; that the Greeks derived their art and science and religion from them; that the black Ethiopians gave civilisation to Egypt and often reigned and ruled over them.'[335]

The second sense was deployed as a critique of Western imperialist logics. 'Civilisationism' was a way to justify white material supremacy, conquest, and despotism: 'The white race rests its claim to superiority on the frankly materialistic ground that it has the guns, soldiers, the money and resources to keep it in the position of the top-dog and to make its will go. This is what white men mean by civilisation, disguise it how they may.'[336] In this sense civilisation was connected to white imperialists' espousal of 'democracy', which had nothing to do with the dispensation of political power to the greatest number of people: '"democracy"… is more valuable as a battle-cry than as a real belief to be practised by those who profess it.'[337] In December 1918, just before the Paris Peace Conference was held, Harrison wrote

> the Allied governments are making it known that "freedom of the seas" means a benevolent naval despotism maintained by them, and that "democracy" means simply the transfer of Germany's African land to England and the others. Africa at the peace table constitutes the real stakes which the winners will rake in. We may read in headlines the startling item "Negroes Ask For German Colonies," but Negros of sense should not be deluded. They will not get them because they have no battleships, no guns, no force, military or financial. They are not a Power.'[338]

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[335] in Perry, 2001: 106-107
[336] Harrison [1917] in Perry, 2001: 203
[337] Harrison [1918(a)] in Perry, 2001: 205
[338] Harrison [1918(a)] in Perry, 2001: 211

Harrison agreed with Du Bois's assessment of the war as a European fight over Africa, but Harrison's comments here can be read as an acidic rejoinder to anyone who believed, like Du Bois, that international administration over German colonies by 'civilised democracies' was anything but a land grab backed by superior military power. Harrison had earlier launched a direct critique of Du Bois, reiterating suspicion about Du Bois's connection to the War Department and his overly friendly relationship with government and military officials.[339] Later he condemned Du Bois for 'his belated discovery of Wilsonian hypocrisy' which would render him unable 'to climb back into the saddle of race leadership.'[340]

Harrison's third meaning of civilisation was used as a defence of contemporaneous African societies, both against white imperialism and the chauvinism of new world blacks. In an article entitled 'On "Civilising" Africa', published in 1920 in *Negro World*, Harrison argued that white people did not understand what civilisation meant if they suggested that Africa was uncivilised. '[I]t is clear to the instructed', Harrison wrote, 'that various "civilisations" not only have existed in Africa, but do exist there today, independently of that particular brand which white people are taking there in exchange for the untold millions of dollars which they take from there.' Harrison redefined civilisation from a set of particular cultural beliefs and practices which could be assessed as superior or inferior to others, to simply meaning 'a stable society which supports itself and maintains a system of government and laws, industry and commerce.'[341] In what can be read as a response to Garvey's assertion that new world blacks should re-colonise Africa and give them the benefit of their contact with Western civilisation, Harrison wrote, 'let us American Negroes go to Africa, live among the natives and LEARN WHAT THEY HAVE TO TEACH US (for they have much to teach

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[339] Harrison [1918(b)] in Perry, 2001: 170-172
[340] Harrison [1920a] in Perry, 2001: 174
[341] Harrison [1920b] in Perry, 2001: 220

us).'[342] From 1920 to 1924, during which Garvey was under investigation and later convicted

for mail fraud, Harrison became more directly critical of Garvey, his person and his

programme for African redemption. Harrison wrote that Garvey was small of spirituality and

intellect, petty and self-aggrandising, and 'knew next to nothing of Africa.'[343]

Compared to Harrison, Du Bois, and Garvey, Briggs employed 'civilisation'

infrequently, although other contributors to *the Crusader* did. In an October 1919 issue of *the

Crusader,* Briggs approvingly reprinted a passage from the *Wisconsin Weekly Blade* which

stated, 'Radicalism is the herald of progress, the handmaiden of reform, a guide to

civilization.'[344] Briggs also occasionally used civilisation in the racial vindicationist sense. In

a February 1920 issue, he accused whites of misrepresenting the black race as 'inherently

inferior to the white race and producing in all its existence no civilisation higher than that of

the cannibalistic age.' He added '[a]bsolutely ignored is the fact… that the Black man gave

birth to civilization in Meroe, on the Upper Nile, and later gave the impetus to human

progress which has resulted in the splendid material achievements of the present day.'[345]

For Briggs, global progress was more clearly articulated to the idea of world

democracy. Unlike Du Bois's vision of world democracy, Briggs more firmly stated the

principle that it was to be driven by labour movements, and that, if not necessary, it was to be

achieved by the colonised taking up arms and using force. As with Harrison, Briggs's

anticolonial nationalist and anti-imperial globalist views were sharpened in the case of white

administration of the formerly German African colonies after WWI. Briggs challenged the

allied nations' professed support for democracy in an article published in January 1919

entitled 'Africa and World Democracy.' Briggs wrote 'Whether there really exists… a

genuine attachment to democratic principles will be shown by the manner in which these

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[342] Harrison [1918(a)] in Perry, 2001: 212, capitals in original
[343] in Perry, 2001: 195-197
[344] *the Crusader*, 1919(a), Vol. 2, No. 2: 7
[345] *the Crusader*, 1920(a), Vol. 2, No. 6: 11

principles… are applied to African and the African peoples'; and, '[i]s the world about to witness the long-prophesized universal reign of justice that shall assure universal peace? Or must Negroes prepare to use force to realize their just aspirations? Will the end of this war see Asia and Africa united against a race of Kaisers?'[346] Predictably, Briggs criticised Du Bois as 'one of the leaders who are counselling patience and a surrender, during war time, of Negro rights.'[347] Brigg's African Blood Brotherhood would attempt to work with the Pan-African Congress over the next few years; however, ideological disagreements between the groups over whether blacks should join with other anticolonial movements in India and the rest of the world led to conflict. Finding the Pan-African Congress too accommodating to empire – particularly its Francophone African contingent – the African Blood Brotherhood increasingly sought alliances with international communism.[348]

By contrast with Harrison, Du Bois, and Garvey, Briggs's belief in the importance of a popular working class front also led him to not give up on the prospect of black labour forming strategic alliances with white labour. Furthermore, his belief in full racial equality meant that he did not share Garvey's, and sometimes Du Bois's, conservative views on preserving racial purity. Briggs argued that the

> class-conscious white workers who have spoken out in favor of African liberation and have shown a willingness to back with action their expressed sentiments must also be considered as actual allies and their friendship further cultivated. The non-class conscious white workers who have not yet realized that all workers regardless of race or color, have a common interest, must be considered as potential allies at present and

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[346] *the Crusader*, 1919(b), Vol. 1 No. 5: 3, 4
[347] *the Crusader*, 1918, Vol. 1 No. 1, September, 1918: 13
[348] Makalani, 2011: 72

everything possible done to awaken their class-consciousness toward the end of obtaining their co-operation in our struggle.[349]

Once a supporter of Garvey, Briggs switched his position when he learned that Garvey's belief in the separation of races led him to cooperate with the KKK. For Briggs, black nationalism and anti-imperialism could not mean the separation of black and white people, and the preservation of race over racial equality. In one of many rebukes of Garvey in later issues of *the Crusader*, Briggs wrote

> Next he [Garvey] speaks of Negroes settling down in communities of white as if there's any "settling down" to be done to put Negroes in communities of whites! Negroes are already in such communities, and the need for full racial equality, including social equality, etc. would exist even if Negroes were all to go back to Africa. An independent Africa would have to have diplomats and commercial agents in white and other communities…. Nobody can accuse the Japanese of trying to "settle down in communities of whites and by social contact and miscegenation bring about a new type." Yet it is a well-known fact that the Japanese are scrupulous guardians of their right to live where they please and to marry whom they choose.[350]

At the same time, Briggs was an ardent racial nationalist, and like the others, saw the political and economic integration of black societies as the logical fulfilment of a nationalist internationalism which could eventually confront hegemonic white world order. Briggs stated that black '[l]abor organizations' should be united and a pan-African army formed. In the same way as Sinn Fein 'built up the Irish Republican Army under the very nose of England',

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[349] *the Crusader,* 1921, Vol. V, No. 2, October, 1921: 17
[350] Ibid.: 10

Briggs advocated that 'modern arms be smuggled into Africa. Men sent into Africa in the guise of missionaries, etc. to establish a relations with the Senussi, the various tribes of the interior, and to study the topography of the country.'[351] This was to be undertaken in parallel with the amalgamation of 'all Negro organizations' on 'a Federation basis, thus creating a united, centralized Movement.'[352]

Harrison and Briggs disagreed on certain issues, yet, if we take their positions together, we can see an early form of the critical problematique and global telos which I define as anti-imperial globalism. Without uncritically embracing the logics of Western civilisationism, nor rejecting the idea of world civilisation in principle, Harrison and Briggs give insight into the value of the concept in strategic worldmaking discourse after WWI. Although Harrison's call to learn from Africa displayed little acknowledgement of class and hierarchy within continental African societies, his criticism of new world black chauvinism, support for class-consciousness and radical democracy displayed an alternative global vision to others who aspired to lead the race. Likewise, Briggs displayed some new world chauvinism in his espousal of the right of American blacks to lead the race on a global scale,[353] yet his belief in world democracy led by labour, and opinion that full racial equality was the ultimate aim, demonstrated an early form of anti-imperial world politics which would be further developed by intellectual activists in the post-1945 context.

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[351] Ibid.: 16
[352] Ibid.: 17
[353] Ibid.: 17-18

Chapter 4

To unite the many against the few:

'Revolution' in the black Atlantic, 1930-1956

4.1. Introduction

In 1937, a young Nigerian journalist and politician, Benjamin Nnamdi "Zik" Azikiwe wrote and published his first book, *Renascent Africa*. Born in Northern British Nigeria, Azikiwe had studied at Howard University and the University of Pennsylvania before travelling back to Africa where he founded the *African Morning Post* in Accra, and later the *West African Pilot* in Lagos. The latter newspaper was to become an important forum for anticolonial and pan-African discourse up until Nigeria's independence, when Azikiwe became Nigeria's first president. In *Renascent Africa*, Azikiwe surveyed the political spectrum of African opinion on empire and colonialism. In his view, 'rightists', 'centrists', and 'leftists' disagreed fundamentally on the question of the track record of 'European civilization' in Africa. The rightist believed that 'European influences have improved the African people, materially and intellectually'; the centrist that Africans should work with Europe but 'eschew the worst phases of European civilization and emulate the best ones'; and the leftist that 'European influences have impaired rather than improved the African.'[354]

 Azikiwe's characterisation of the African political spectrum on the colonial issue serves as a reminder of the range of interests and opinions which would eventually be diminished by dominant historiographies of the post-colonial nation-state. The hierarchical structure of imperial society had created classes of loyal clients, critical moderates, and revolutionaries. Revolutionaries were rarely subaltern peasants, but a class of educated

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[354] Azikiwe, 1937: 177-178

intellectuals who objected to the injustices of the colonial order, and who drew upon the failures of white world order and working class and subaltern unrest to mobilise anticolonial sentiment. Some, such as the Trinidadian George Padmore (born Malcolm Nurse) helped to establish a broad transcontinental network of revolutionaries and more moderate nationalists. Thus, between 1930 and 1960, revolution became a new articulation of anti-imperial world politics—not the only, but a new dominant form of counter-hegemonic response to European empire.

This chapter argues that, instead of being purely for the goal of national sovereignty, revolution in this context was about creating lasting egalitarian relations between transnational societies and social groups.[355] A major challenge and limit for anti-imperial revolution was the race, class, and gender divisions already established by imperial society. In articulating revolutionary aims, anti-imperial globalists implied a tension between the local and the global: between segregation and integration, nationalism and internationalism, the demands of a revolutionary multitude and the demands of inter-governmental world politics.

Rather than representing a widespread and already existing national consciousness, the articulation to revolutionary discourse in the West Indian, North American, and African contexts was the product of a particular network of actors, who built revolutionary momentum over a relatively brief period of time.[356] This discursive transformation was brought about partly by the continuance of strike actions and revolts in the colonies, but these events were reread and narrated through a new lens of global economic collapse, Gandhism and the partition of India, the rise of Fascism in Europe, the Stalinisation of international Communism, and the failure of liberal democratic hegemons to intervene on behalf of Ethiopia when it was invaded by Mussolini in 1935. Even in the years immediately after 1935

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[355] Cf. Philpott, 2001

[356] My analytical privileging of cosmopolitan social formations and subcultures, over supposedly pre-existing national imaginaries, is inspired by Gandhi, 2005 and Barkawi, 2017. Also, compare this with the more radical claim of Maingot (2015: ch. 7), who argues that Padmore and James largely fabricated the image of the Caribbean and Africa as revolutionary societies.

and the transnational outcry of racial grievance it elicited, relatively few British and French colonial subjects called for a revolution against European empire, fewer still an end to imperialism in the abstract. Yet, a small network of theorist activists was able to draw on the wider perception of world crisis to mobilise a faster retreat from empire than almost anyone had expected.

A key component of anti-imperial revolution in this context was the connection of white hegemony's global crisis to imperial social hierarchy. As we saw in the last chapter, theorist activists such as Du Bois had previously linked world war to racial hierarchy. But the new generation framed crisis as a *recurrent* feature of an essentially unstable and destructive global economy, for which, time and time again, 'the darker nations' would be forced to shoulder the greatest burden. Revolution as an anti-imperial discourse shared political space with more moderate politics with respect to empire. It was with regard to this larger problem-space that anticolonial nationalists and anti-imperial globalists looked to revolution as a means to achieve 'independence now' – to reference the slogan of Nkrumah's Gold Coast revolution – but also, and often conflictingly, to more fundamentally transform relations between and within different social groups.

While the class and racial alliances forged through imperial networks expedited West African and West Indian independence, they were always fragile, and eventually fell victim to the same social, political, and economic fissures which existed before they were assembled. Because of the range of potentially divergent interests within the anti-imperial movement, Padmore, Azikiwe, and others such as Claude Mckay, Frantz Fanon, and Padmore's boyhood friend, C.L.R. James, continued to push the critique of imperial society to the point where it implied a remade state-society relationship, which would not be reducible to territorial or racial sovereignty.

This chapter traces an outline of the pan-African histories leading to West Indian and West African independence, but more directly it aims to historicise the relationship between the concept of revolution and 'non-Western thought.' As with civilisation in the previous chapter, I am interested in revolution as an 'actor's category': what was implied by the people who used the term. In other words, 'revolution' is analysed here in terms of its articulation as an anti-imperial counter-discourse, which mobilised a sociohistorically specific public. While Eurocentric scholarly memory has largely reduced anticolonial revolution to a rational-modern pursuit of sovereignty – especially within IR – anti-imperial discourse from 1930 to 1960 is better characterised by the tension between the dual demand for *revolution for sovereignty* and *world revolution*. Revolution for sovereignty represented the need to build autonomous institutions, which reflected grassroots democratic control, or black leaders and black institutions for black constituencies. World revolution represented the interdependence of black movements with multi-racial societies, and the interdependence of local struggles with transnational struggles, international institutions and international moral opinion. For thinkers like Padmore, James, Du Bois, and Fanon, the African and West Indian revolutions became metonymic symbols for world revolution: parts representing a whole, which, in terms of their ideological scope, encompassed the transformation of world order, states, and even individual subjectivities.

Against some anti-Eurocentric scholarship, I argue that the range of ideas expressed in this period are not reducible to wholesale acceptance of Western universalisms. While there was an eventual acceptance of certain premises of rational political authority, power taking, and liberal nation-building, there were also conscious efforts to sustain critique and work beyond narrow ethno-nationalism and economic reductionism in favour of principles of non-conformity and cultural self-determination. Not all anti-imperialists of the interwar period accepted that progress could be reduced to nation-building or worldmaking in the form

of self-governance. Self-governance was a necessary aspect of self-determination, but the definition of the 'self' or what constituted 'self-determination' were always also expressed in terms of social relations and culture. For some, cultural self-determination and social equality within the relations of empire mattered more than self-governance. For others, self-governance either mattered more than cultural self-determination and social equality, or was a necessary stage to attain them. Anti-imperial movements were products of the structure of imperial social relations, especially of metropolitan contact zones and transnational print media, and were thus comprised of plural cultures and interests. The desire for sustained solidarity between groups was sometimes expressed as a need to institutionalise cultural particularism as a universal principle. This was often articulated as a federal structure with democratic authority vested in different culturally-defined groups.

The debates which took on particular racial or civilisational characteristics during this period continue in the form of critiques of imperial hierarchy. For example, between liberal cosmopolitanism and 'communitarian' resistance; diasporic outlooks vs. nationalist sentiment; or deterministic vs. non-deterministic progress.[357] This chapter not only argues that earlier versions of these fissures were there before decolonisation, but they help explain why a pan-African political consciousness did not survive in a more radically integrative institutional form after the early 1960s. This is not a reading based purely on South-South relations, because nationalist self-understandings and self-representations were always tied to strategic necessity vis-à-vis the imperial powers. This is especially the case with regards to the changing sets of relations brought on by the Cold War.

4.2. 'Revolution' as an articulation of anti-imperial world politics

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[357] Rao, 2010

4.2.1. Colonial Communism assembles and unravels

The initial world political process which made possible the emergence of a transnational *revolutionary* public was the spread of Leninist anti-imperialism to the colonies, and, after Lenin's death, the reeling in of the COMINTERN under Stalin. Despite the fragility of the revolutionary movement in Russia, Lenin's COMINTERN was a robust franchise, which was seen to some as a force for social, economic, and political revolution across the colonised world. The COMINTERN was eventually reduced to a shadow of its world revolutionary promise due to the failure of the revolution in Western Europe, Stalin's purges, and détente with the Allies. According to George Padmore and C.L.R. James, Stalin had reworked the Soviet Union into an autocratic empire with little to offer the colonised apart from a leftist alternative to the existing white world order. For some in the diaspora this was nothing to scoff at. The actor and activist Paul Robeson (1898-1976) refused to criticise Stalin for this reason.[358] For others, the anti-imperial promise of international communism would need to shift entirely to the colonised themselves.

Born in Arouca, Trinidad in 1903, George Padmore's trajectory is emblematic of the convergences and divergences in international communist, diaspora, and colonial nationalist organisation which emerged in the late 1920s. In many ways a keystone of Atlantic anti-imperial activism between 1932 and 1957, and now claimed by both Marxist and postcolonial/decolonial scholars, it is difficult to distil Padmore down to a single political ideology.[359] As a prolific journalist, propagandist, and organiser, he relentlessly opposed the British Empire and racial hierarchy, and applied himself and his thought to different individuals, organisations, and leftist ideologies, increasingly in the direction of African

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[358] Duberman, 2014: 354

[359] The first political biography of Padmore was undertaken by Padmore's boyhood friend and sometime collaborator C.L.R. James (1960). For later, more fully-realised biographies see Hooker (1967) and James (2015). For more general works in which Padmore is a central figure see Wallerstein (2005), Edwards (2003), Pennybacker (2009), Polsgrove (2009); Makalani (2011), and Getachew (2019).

independence. Until 1933, he was a dedicated agent of the COMINTERN, and he helped leverage imperial injustice and the apparent fragility of global capitalism to build international support against liberal democratic empires. After he left the party, he continued to draw inspiration from Lenin's colonial policy, but with his own added emphasis on race and the revolutionary potential of the colonies.

For Padmore this was more a matter of political horizons than partisanship. The ends – a sovereign polity which would strengthen and protect democratic pluralism, at least politically and racially, if not culturally -- mattered more than ideological partisanship. Writing on the eve of the Gold Coast's independence, an event which he had been an important player in expediting, Padmore testified to Lenin's vision of a pluralist Russian polity which would ensure the interests of the peasantry and 'racial minorities.' Lenin's party was 'alone among the anti-autocracy organizations' in taking 'a firm, uncompromising position on the question of national freedom and self-determination', but it also organised internationally to build a united front against imperialism.[360] In a letter written twelve years earlier to his publisher, Padmore wished that his own government, the British Empire, could be converted into a 'British Socialist Common Wealth Federation – white and coloured.'[361] Lenin's policy of offering non-Russian minorities self-determination 'had a tremendous psychological effect upon the backward peoples not only in Asiatic Russian [sic] but throughout the Orient.' In Padmore's reading, the inclusion of 'millions of… newly-emancipated coloured peoples of the Asiatic borderlands' was crucial in delivering victory for the 'Soviet Government' against the 'White Guard aristocrats.'[362] In a passage which could just as well be read as a characterisation of Padmore himself, Padmore characterised Lenin as a 'faithful disciple of Marx' who nevertheless 'disavowed dogmatism.' Lenin 'was a

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[360] Padmore, 1956: 291

[361] Hooker, 1967. Padmore expanded this position in *How Russia Transformed her Colonial Empire. A Challenge to the Imperial Powers* (1946), co-authored with Dorothy Pizer.

[362] Padmore, 1956: 292

realist who refused to follow blindly his master's theories', which was why Lenin turned away from Western Europe after the revolution was routed in those countries after WWI, and towards 'the coloured peoples of Asia, in particular, the hundreds of millions of China.'[363]

The spread of left anti-imperialism in colonial and diaspora circles before the death of Lenin meant that the vision of a global anti-imperial vanguard managed to survive and spread despite the retreat of Bolshevism into Stalinist authoritarianism. Asian members like M.N. Roy, Sen Katayama (1859-1933), and Qu Quibai (1899-1935) had helped open the COMINTERN to new world black radicals like Claude McKay and Otto Huiswoud (1893-1961).[364] Roy in particular sought to open the organisation ideologically as well as racially by stressing the revolutionary potential of Indian peasant cultures.[365] Some left anti-imperialists from the colonies found themselves in high levels of government. Although not a member of the Communist Party, Padmore's 'distinguished countryman', the Chinese-Trinidadian Eugene Chen (1878-1944), was made Foreign Minister of Sun Yat-sen's government, where he pushed for anti-imperial policies and negotiated the British concession of Hankou.[366]

With the Wall Street Crash, 1929 should have been a shot in the arm for the COMINTERN's activities among colonised populations. By 1921, the revolution had stagnated in Europe, resulting mostly in the creation of minority opposition parties. After initial success, the Chinese communist vanguard was destroyed after Chiang Kai-shek's (1887-1975) purge of Communists from the Kuomintang-Communist alliance in 1927. Similarly disastrous armed insurrections occurred in Bulgaria (1923), Germany (1923), and Indonesia (1926).[367] The Great Crash had quickly developed into a global depression by 1931. A fall in US industrial production, which hit one third of the total between 1929 and 1931, spread to Germany where it did similar damage. From there came a drop in the price of

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[363] Ibid.: 293
[364] Makalani, 2011: ch. 3
[365] Ibid.: 80; see Manjapra, 2010
[366] Padmore, 1956: 295
[367] Hobsbawm, 1994: 70-71

primary goods, which hit several markets throughout the colonised world. This included the Gold Coast, the nation that Padmore would eventually help attain formal independence, where two thirds of foodstuff imports fell and the peasant-based cocoa market was decimated.[368]

By 1931, Padmore was still a member of the party and he used party publications to raise the alarm about what the Great Crash and subsequent Great Slump meant for the colonised. In the pages of the International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers' (ITUCNW) journal, *Negro Worker*, and his first book entitled *the Life and Struggles of Negro Toilers*, Padmore put the problem thusly,

> Since the present crisis of world capitalism begun [sic] the economic, political and social status of the Negro toilers are becoming ever worse and worse. The reason for this is obvious: the imperialists, whether American, English, French, Belgian, etc., etc., are frantically trying to find a way out of their difficulties. In order to do so, they are not only intensifying the exploitation of the white workers in the various imperialist countries by launching an offensive through mean of rationalisation, wage cuts, abolition of social insurance, unemployment, etc., but they are turning their attention more and more towards Africa and other black semi-colonies (Haiti, Liberia), which represent the last stronghold of world imperialism. In this way the bourgeoisie hope to unload the major burden of the crisis on the shoulders of the black colonial and semi-colonial masses.[369]

Ideological coherence within existing membership, as well the potential for the COMINTERN to branch out to non-communist colonial nationalists, was severely challenged

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[368] Ibid.: 92
[369] Padmore, 1931: 5-6

by the Stalinisation of the COMINTERN. A salient example of the new tension which emerged between the party line and colonial nationalism can be seen in the trajectory of the League Against Imperialism (LAI), which lasted from 1927 until it was abandoned by the Communists in 1936. Vijay Prashad suggests that the first meeting of the LAI in Brussels in 1927 was where the earliest incarnation of the Third World idea was formed.[370] Brussels was chosen deliberately as the venue for the conference following the U.S. and Britain's tepid condemnation of Belgium's predatory reign in the Congo. The name of the organisation was itself a repudiation of the imperialism of the League of Nations. The event was funded by the COMINTERN, probably with assistance from the Kuomintang and the Mexican government. It was largely organised by the Berlin-based communists Willi Münzenberg (1889-1940) and Virendranath Chattopadhyaya (1880-1937), the latter of whom was a friend and early political influence of Jawaharlal Nehru.[371] The LAI congress in Brussels was attended by both communists and radical nationalists without formal links to the Soviet government, including future national leaders like Sukarno and Nehru. Somewhat slow on the uptake, British Intelligence only became convinced that the LAI was a challenge to British imperial rule by 1930. This concern was placed on the white, German Münzenberg, who, according to British Intelligence was the spider at the centre of the web, and who was prohibited from entering Britain in March of 1930.[372]

However, cracks in the LAI were already beginning to show by 1929.[373] Despite the presence of some Communist Party members from South Africa, as well as a memorable critique of French empire from the Senegalese communist and nationalist, Lamine Senghor

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[370] Prashad, 2007: 16

[371] Ibid.: 19-20; see Barooah, 2004

[372] Weiss, 2014: 164

[373] My reading runs somewhat contrary to earlier analysis by Young (2003) and Prashad (2007) who draw the conclusion that the LAI represented a convergence between Communist and anticolonial nationalist politics. Prashad in particular seems to suggest that the LAI was an important catalyst in the development of pan-African movements (2007: 23-24). This interpretation exaggerates unity between actually existing Communist and nationalist strategy by glossing over the differences within pan-African identities and political horizons. For more in-depth analysis of this history see Makalani (2011: 160-164) and Weiss (2014: 151-176).

(1889-1927), Brussels had been under-attended by black Africans. To address this, the Negro Bureau of the COMINTERN's Red International of Labour Unions (RILU), sought to put 'the struggle for emancipation of the Negroes in African and America' as a standalone point of order for the upcoming LAI congress in Frankfurt.[374] Yet, the invitation to Frankfurt was ultimately not extended past the already existing South African connections, and the French Sudanese Tiemoko Garan Kouyaté (1902-1942) was the only West African attendee.[375] Part of the reason for this was the lack and weakness of communication channels between the COMINTERN and black Africans, but the party's hostility to bourgeois nationalists should not be understated. James W. Ford (1893-1957), an African-American communist who went on to run for Vice President of the United States in 1932, was one of the key organisers of the Negro Bureau in Moscow in the late 1920s. Ford launched a critique of the LAI at its Executive Committee meeting in Cologne, 1929. Ford's critique reflected the new 'Class-Against-Class' policy of Stalin's COMINTERN. Ford believed that the LAI needed to do more to encompass and fuel the anti-imperial struggles of Chinese, Indonesian, Arabian, and black workers, and in part this meant an openly hostile position on 'reformists' who did not want to take a militant, vanguardist stance again European empire.[376] As Weiss suggests, 'reformist' was actually a way to label all anticolonial movements outside the formal organisation of the COMINTERN as the enemy, regardless of shared interests. Ford argued that 'the League [Against Imperialism] is dominated by the reformists. In the future if we are to purse and carry out *our new line*, especially at the World Congress of the League we must begin immediately to mobilise our forces and bring large masses of workers and peasants, especially of the colonies, who are under our influence, into this congress.'[377] In 1931, Padmore shared the COMINTERN's official rhetoric against 'Garveyism' and

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[374] Weiss, 2014: 160
[375] Ibid.: 162-164
[376] Ibid.: 154-155
[377] Quoted in Weiss, 2014: 155, italics added

'Gandhism.'[378] After leaving the party his views became much more nuanced, directed towards strategic alliance with middle class and elite leadership, white and non-white.

It should be acknowledged that the fissures between international communism and colonial nationalism were not entirely due to Stalinisation, but the unreliable interest in proletarian revolution from bourgeois Africans. Münzenberg and a Hungarian COMINTERN agent named Louis Gibarti (1896-1967, born, Lazlo Dobos) wrote to Casely Hayford in 1926 in order to establish a relationship between the LAI (then, the League Against Colonial Oppression), the ARPS, and the Gold Coast Farmers' Association (GCFA).[379] With his links to Garvey, Du Bois, and the British government, Casely Hayford was a perhaps the most highly positioned West African nationalist at the time, and his leadership of the ARPS saw that organisation moving in a more progressive direction as of 1927. With regard to the GCFA, Münzenberg and Gibarti likely believed that they were opening channels to a labourers' association, rather than an organisation of middle class merchants and cocoa farm owners, which is what it was.[380] Casely Hayford appeared to show some initial interest in the LAI, but did not attend the 1927 congress in Brussels. It is probable that Casely Hayford saw the LAI as a potential forum to find support for an existing conflict in the Gold Coast between the British executive and judicial authority and the governing autonomy of local chiefs. ARPS intellectuals like Casely Hayford opposed the British jurisdiction which granted autonomy to the chiefs. However, Casely Hayford likely lost interest in the LAI when the conflict was resolved between 1927 and 1928.[381] Thus, the union between Communism and colonial nationalism was sometimes only as strong as local, short-term political strategy necessitated.

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[378] Padmore, 1931: 126
[379] They also tried to establish a relationship with Kobina Sekyi.
[380] Weiss, 2014: 91
[381] Ibid.: 92

Padmore's disentanglement from the COMINTERN is usually put down to Stalin's capitulation with Western European empires against rising Fascism. This, for Padmore, symbolised an over willingness of white leftist leadership to abandon non-white races when it seemed convenient. In 1933, Padmore was ordered to tone down calls for revolution in Africa, but he refused Stalin's *realpolitik* and published a proposal to stoke revolutionary activity in Liberia. The French party objected, and Padmore was expelled from the French, American, and British parties.[382] Fearing Stalin's reprisals, Padmore resisted lures to return to Moscow. Some analysts take this moment as emblematic of a radical black rejection of white involvement, in favour of non-white autonomy over non-white affairs.[383] This interpretation overplays the narrative of self-emancipation, and overlooks the strategic importance activists like Padmore placed on white middle class support. At this moment, the 'self' of self-emancipation and self-determination was in flux. Padmore continued to work closely with white socialists after 1933, and he tailored his books and newspaper articles to appeal to the British middle classes. He wrote of that group, 'when all is said and done, they are the ones really responsible for all that goes on in Africa, for as voters they control Parliament and therefore Whitehall and its officials.'[384] Likewise, Padmore's later collaborations with Du Bois and reassessment of Garvey can be read, not as realisations that race is always more important than class, but as necessary strategic shifts. Organisation around the idea of an international black movement would gain further momentum in 1935, following the failures of liberal hegemony to stand up for Ethiopia against Mussolini.

4.2.2. The Italo-Abyssinian War and the politics of intercontinental unity

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[382] Polsgrove, 2009: 4
[383] E.g. Makalani, 2011: chs. 6 and 7
[384] Quoted in Polsgrove, 2009: 9

The second world political process which is now widely recognised by historians as generative of a black revolutionary public is Mussolini's invasion of Ethiopia in 1935, and the subsequent failure of Wilsonian multilateral governance to protect Ethiopian sovereignty.[385] As Robert Hill writes, the Italo-Abyssinian war 'marked the turning-point of nineteenth-century and post-war Black nationalism and paved the way for the emergence of an explicitly political Pan-Africanism.'[386] Along with Haiti, which was occupied by the United States from 1915 to 1934, and Liberia, which was investigated by the League and threatened with occupation from 1929 to 1936, some scholars frame the Italo-Ethiopian War as part of a triad of conflicts which threatened the only outposts of black sovereignty, and thus gave rise to a black nationalist consciousness.[387] One of the earliest groups to frame Haiti, Liberia, and Ethiopia this way was the Pan-African Congress itself. Revived by Padmore and his London network, and with Du Bois presiding, the 5th Pan-African Congress held in Manchester resolved to 'inform the Imperial powers that we look with jealous pride upon these nations [Haiti, Liberia, and Ethiopia] and regard them as symbols of the realisation of the political hopes and aspirations of African peoples still under Imperialist domination.'[388] Following the defeat of Italy in WWII, and in a direct parallel to international planning over the future of Germany's African colonies after WWI, Padmore's iteration of the Pan-African Congress was faced with the possibility that parts of Ethiopia would be placed under international administration and subject to 'conditions of Trusteeship.'[389]

However, the PAC's 1945 critique of inter-war global order was not a repudiation of internationalism or multilateral governance in principle, but a call for greater democratic inclusion of racial representatives in burgeoning global governance institutions. Reprinting a memorandum written by Du Bois to the United Nations Organisation (UNO), the 5th Pan-

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[385] E.g. Von Eschen, 1997: 7, 11; see Pedersen, 2015: ch. 10
[386] Hill, 1986: 69
[387] E.g. Younis, 2018; Getachew, 2019; ch. 2
[388] Adi, Sherwood, and Padmore, 1995 [1945]: 109-110
[389] Ibid.: 110

African Congress called for greater inclusion of black representatives, with an appeal to 'democratic methods of government', and 'so that the grievances and demands of the Africans can be freely expressed.'[390] Although they did not entirely reject earlier articulations of world civilisation as global cosmopolitan democracy, these calls for a remaking of global governance were products of a new revolutionary rejection of colonial rule and the civilising mission, spurred in part by the Italo-Abyssinian war, incubated in small groups of metropole-based radicals, and, when anti-imperial newspapers and books were not successfully banned by colonial authorities, disseminated in print.

By 'failure of Wilsonian multilateral governace' I do not mean a discrepancy between principles and practice, which would suggest that the international norms underlying the League upheld equal protection of a universal right to sovereignty, but could not be enacted in the instance of Ethiopia. Instead I contend, with Getachew, that 'the invasion appears continuous with the unequal integration and racial hierarchy that had structured the league since its founding.'[391] The resolutions of the 5th Pan-African Congress attest to the fact that Padmore, Du Bois, and members of their networks read the Ethiopian situation in this way, as internal to the 'civilising' logics of European, American, and, to a lesser extent, Japanese, imperialism which had shaped the post-WWI context. Mussolini, probably pre-empting the League's objection to the invasion, characterised it as 'a war of civilization and liberation.'[392] Considering that Churchill had in 1927 stated his admiration for Mussolini, and the broader opinion amongst Tories and the British upper-classes about the civilising mission in Africa, Mussolini's words would have been taken by many at the time as in good faith.[393] Such support from British circles, tacit or otherwise, backfired two years later when Mussolini

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[390] Ibid.: 57-58
[391] Getachew, 2019: 64
[392] Quoted in Høgsbjerg, 2014: 89
[393] Ibid.: 90

announced his plan to train 3 million black troops in Africa to supposedly aid in the 'liberation' of British and French colonies.[394]

Du Bois, for his part, retained a belief in world civilisation as global progress, but coupled it with a new enthusiasm for international Communism. Du Bois had long taken an interest in international Communism, but also rejected the terms whereby black struggles – particularly African-American struggles -- would be subsumed under a white-led, white-focussed movement. The new perception that international Communism represented a global struggle led by non-white constituencies as well as white, particularly Mao's revolution in China, helped bring Du Bois around.[395] The shift helped to marginalise Du Bois from the mainstream of the American Civil Rights movement, as well as get him into trouble with the United States government. By the time he made his farewell speech to the NAACP in 1947, Du Bois had assimilated his acceptance of Communism into his earlier views about world civilisation as global progress. In the address, he championed the United Nations as representing 'the united wisdom and effort of the people of the world… to uplift civilization'[396] and as 'the greatest hope of abolishing colonialism and thus abolishing poverty.'[397] He characterised the airing of 'grievances of American Negroes' as 'a beginning of methods by which we can help this parliament of man and federation of the world.'[398] He also stated that world unity required greater economic literacy, a better understanding of 'industrial profit', and overcoming the 'fear of being called Communist.'[399]

The International African Friends of Abyssinia (IAFA), an organisation formed in 1935 in London by Padmore, Amy Ashwood Garvey (Marcus's second wife), and James represented a new, more absolute dismissal of the League and the liberal civilising mission

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[394] *West African Pilot*, 1937, Vol. 1, No. 4. November, 23: 1
[395] Horne, 1986; Gao, 2013; Frazier, 2015
[396] Du Bois, 'We Must Know the Truth', *Du Bois Speaks 1920-1963*: 226
[397] Ibid. p. 225.
[398] Ibid. p. 227.
[399] Ibid.

rhetoric. This was in part a direct response to Mussolini's invasion, but also a reflection of the Leninist anti-imperialism which had emerged in the previous decade. This new attitude towards white world order is captured in a column by Kingsley Martin, editor of the *New Statesman and Nation*, after he had attended an IAFA meeting in London:

> The meeting was not a big affair -- a couple of hundred coloured people, and perhaps fifty white. But I have never seen an Albert Hall meeting which impressed me as so significant an omen as this little gathering in Farringdon Street, called to enlist support for the Emperor of Abyssinia. Mussolini has appealed to the war spirit and declared a white crusade against Black barbarism. Naturally, the response is Black defiance of white Barbarism.
>
> The speakers came from the West Indies, the Gold Coast, Kenya, Somaliland and Abyssinia itself. When they expressed a hope that the League of Nations or the British Government would see justice done, the audience was silent or ironical. When they declared that coloured people everything would fight and die free men rather than submit to the subjugation of the last independent native kingdom, the meeting yelled with enthusiasm…. You only had to say the word "civilization" to get this meeting jeering. Soon it was persuading itself that Abyssinia was the centre of the civilization, and Europe of barbarism.[400]

In imperial metropoles like London and Paris, and amongst the new generation of black radicals influenced by both Leninism and their felt marginalisation within white-led movements, the Italo-Abyssinian conflict became an important symbol to rally African, diaspora, and anti-imperial colleagues throughout the transatlantic social world. Imperial

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[400] Quoted in Høgsbjerg, 2014: 9

metropoles served as hubs for people who might have held different political interests back home to work together. Metropolitan life also created the perspective amongst colonial subjects that there were two Europes – that of the metropole and that of the colony -- separated by class and racial hierarchy. Anti-imperialism and colonial nationalism appeared in different forms in Paris and London compared to Africa and the West Indies. As Padmore's Guyanese IAFA colleague, Ras Makonnen, remembered in 1973, travel between colony and metropole 'allowed… blacks to feel the contrast between freedom in the metropolis and slavery in the colonies.'[401] Both capitals were cauldrons of political activity and ideas during the interwar period, and each was a site of what the civil rights activist, Roger Nash Baldwin (1884-1981), called 'comradeship in exile': spaces of interaction in which colonial subjects could build opposition to their respective imperial states.[402] This coincided with what Makonnen called 'the pressures of the times', which forced blacks to make 'alliances across boundaries that would have been unthinkable back home.'[403] In short, the revolutionary politics of black unity were facilitated by the imperial social world itself.

However, different interests and loyalties could still determine what greater freedom might actually mean. As well as left internationalists like Ho Chi Minh or Padmore, London and Paris were also temporary homes to future national elites, studying in the metropole to enter middle class jobs back home. For the latter, criticism of empire had little to do with uniting the workers of the world, but instead negotiating native elites' greater control of the levers of power. In the British context, this dynamic sometimes reflected latent divides which would re-emerge after independence, such as between African pan-Africanists and West Indian pan-Africanists. However, the structure of imperial civilising discourse meant that this dynamic was sometimes reversed. Within French communist circles, the view that Antilleans

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[401] Makonnen, 1973: 155
[402] Quoted in Goebel, 2015: 3
[403] Makonnen, 1973: 155

were 'more educated' led to claims of elitism and exclusion from continental Africans.[404]

Antillean and African communists resisted a split into separate subgroups by the French

Communist Party because, as Goebel writes,

> Antilleans' claim to blackness would have been undermined by a complete breakaway
>
> from African activists, whereas the latter often relied on Antilleans as mediators with
>
> French authorities. Since Antilleans were citizens and had a larger share of liberal
>
> professionals, they had better contacts with the French elite as well as representation in
>
> the National Assembly. All of this helped to win lawsuits, to prevent expulsions, or to
>
> attract French support.[405]

As well as across nationalities, Caribbean and African anti-imperialists formed

strategic solidarities with colonial reformers, many of whom were Africans who wanted

French citizenship to extend to them. Some, such as Kouyaté, veered between a radical anti-

colonial position which would maintain alliances with colonial reformers, to a position which

sought the endogenous transformation of empire through extended citizenship rights and the

semi-autonomy of federated colonies. Despite a poor aptitude for each other's language,

Kouyaté collaborated with Padmore before and after both men had severed ties with the

COMINTERN.[406] Like Padmore, Kouyaté was a former COMINTERN affiliate who had

grown disillusioned with the new party line. At one point Kouyaté had collaborated with

Maurice Satineau (1891-1960), the Guadeloupean editor of the moderate culture journal *La

Dépêche Africaine*. By 1927, Kouyaté had split with Satineau and formed the *Ligue de

défense de la race nègre* (LDRN) and its newspaper, *La race nègre,* with the help of

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[404] Goebel, 2015: p. 76-77.
[405] Ibid. P.77.
[406] Their relationship is chronicled by Edwards, 2003: ch. 5.

Senegalese Lamine Senghor (1889-1927) and the French Communist Party.[407] Although broadly anti-capitalist, *La race nègre* once published the Garvey-esque view that 'the end of racial prejudice will arrive when a great black state will be constituted on a modern foundation: African Zionism.'[408] Following the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935, Kouyaté was a member of the *Agence Metromer*, a non-communist news service edited by the moderate nationalist author René Maran (1887-1960), and also patronised by the Senegalese patriot of France and nationalist Léopold Sédar Senghor (1906-2001).

Cultural elites rubbed elbows with communists, anarchists, and nationalists. During the late 1920s and early 1930s, Maran and Senghor regularly attended Sunday afternoon salons in Montmarte along with a host of African Americans, West Indians, and French Africans including Alain Locke, Mercer Cook, Ralph Bunche, Aimé Césaire, Léon Damas, and Claude McKay. These salons were hosted by the Martiniquan feminist and journalist, Paulette Nardal.[409] Nardal and Kouyaté were both organisers of the *Institut Negre de Paris,* a black students union which shared members with Kouyaté's LDRN. Although the two organisations did not share a political orientation in terms of their extremes, both were monitored by colonial authorities and attacked in the right wing press.[410] In 1929, Kouyaté sent a letter to W.E.B. Du Bois stating his position that the 'national independence of black people [*peuples nègres*]' was linked to 'the very human ideal of fraternal understanding and collaboration between races' within a framework of international equality.'[411] In 1935, Kouyaté argued the case for a 'Franco-overseas alliance' which imagined the transformation of empire into a 'federal regime with France as its guide-nation.' Within this new polity, all

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[407] Edwards, 2003: 251; Wilder, 2005: 180
[408] Quoted in Wilder, 2005: 181.
[409] Umoren, 2018: p. 17.
[410] Wilder, 2005: 182.
[411] Ibid.: 181. It was not his only letter seeking concord with Du Bois, see Edwards, p. 295-296.

colonial subjects would be made the citizens of French dominions, each of which would 'define its own civil code corresponding to the traditions and customs of its inhabitants.'[412]

Similar to Paris, and even prior to Padmore's settling there, London was a home to organisations of colonial subjects and black nationalists, journals, and student unions with different attitudes and interest regarding the future of empire. As one example, the League of Coloured Peoples (LCP) and its journal, *the Keys* – named to symbolise interracial integration, à la piano keys -- collaborated, shared members, and rivalled the more nationalist West African Students' Union and its journal, *WASU*. The LCP counted prominent West Indians amongst its members, like C.L.R. James, the later development economist of the Caribbean and Africa, W. Arthur Lewis, and the women's labour organiser, Audrey Layne Jeffers (1898-1968). WASU projected a unified West African identity, and was an early forum for the ideas of elite West African national leaders such as Ladipo Solanke, and J.B. Danquah, the latter of whom later became a liberal rival of Padmore and Kwame Nkrumah's 'Pan-African Socialism.' Leaders like Solanke and Danquah did not share the anti-imperial globalist vision of nationalism as representing a transformation of global capitalism. Yet, in a context where a unified black national identity emerged in response to the League's capitulation with Mussolini, Paul Robeson became a patron of WASU. Neither were the editors of WASU inimical to Fascism in principle, and in one issue gave a 'Hats off to Hitler' for his 'self-assertion' and 'determination to win' for his people.[413] For the national elites of WASU, ideological partisanship in this context mattered less than the assertion of a black (inter)national identity which would serve instrumentally in countering Wilsonian imperialism.

Italy-Abyssinia also helped further dissolve Garvey's dominance, in that it represented a deeper pathology of the imperial-colonial order than could be addressed with

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[412] Wilder, 2005: 194.

[413] *WASU*, Vol. IV, No. I, July, 1935: 2-3

Garvey's programme based on racial pride and African redemption. According to Makonnen, Garvey's experiences with upper class Ethiopians had made him hostile to the new perception of Emperor Hailie Selassie as race leader. Selassie did not consider himself black, and when members of his administration visited the United States they refused to associate with African-American organisations. Padmore and Makonnen fought Garvey on the resulting public bitterness he showed to Selassie, because, as Makonnen put it 'Selassie symbolized our unity in Europe.'[414] This support for Selassie against critics like Garvey was not because Padmore and his circle sincerely believed that Selassie and Ethiopia were sterling examples of their own anti-imperial values, but because they enabled a politics of transnational unity against white world order in both its Fascist and liberal hegemonic varieties. For James, to whom Selassie was 'a feudal reactionary' and Ethiopia a backwards agrarian despotism, critiques of actually existing African polities had to be put to one side for the benefit of the larger struggle.[415] Addressing an audience of middle class leftists in *the New Statesman*, James characterised the defence of Ethiopia as a stage in the fight for world socialism:

> There are some amongst our Society [the IAFA], including myself, who believe that the only final guarantee for Africa, as for the rest of the world, is the international socialist order. There are others who believe that Ethiopia must be supported because God said so in the Bible. But whatever our views, we are in this struggle as one, in that we stand by Ethiopia, and that we will do all that we can to help her.[416]

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[414] Makonnen, 1973: 73-74
[415] Makalani, 2011: 210
[416] Quoted in Høgsbjerg, 2014: 94

James's pragmatic forgiveness of authoritarian tendencies in Ethiopia did not come naturally, but as a result of his colleague's insistence that criticism of Selassie's failings as a leader be deferred to a more convenient occasion.[417] This was only one example of the ideological differences internal to, and temporarily appeased by, the group dynamics of the IAFA/IASB. As another example, Makonnen objected to Padmore's over-familiarity with the Independent Labour Party (ILP) and Fenner Brockway. Recounting in 1973 how he 'took some pride in knowing that Brockway probably did not even know my face' and how he felt that 'the more… George Padmore wrote for this ILP paper, the more I felt we were damaging our case to speak for ourselves.'[418] Also, Padmore knew that his IASB ally, future Kenyan president, Jomo Kenyatta, did not sympathise with his vision of a 'modern' Africa without tribal culture. Padmore and James tried a number of times to win Kenyatta to the idea of a transformed African culture which would takes its place in an international socialist order, but Kenyatta was never convinced.[419] These divergences over different futures would become more pronounced during the Cold War and after formal independence, but they mattered less given the world political and social context after 1935.

Italy-Abyssinia can thus be read as an example of how the political content of a historical conjuncture can enable a certain collective identity, and make it appear more salient than other potentially competing identities. The conflict galvanised anti-imperial organisations and networks, strengthened the feeling that black struggles throughout the world were connected, and temporarily ironed out some ideological differences between black societies, which shared the same geographical and political space. However, the Italo-Abyssinian war attests more to the role that perceived necessity plays in the construction of collective identity than it does to a lasting and unified black (inter)nationalism. This

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[417] Makalani, 2011: 210
[418] Makonnen, 1973: 179
[419] Polsgrove, 2009: 41

distinction is important, because those who take the transhistorical black nationalist position are obliged to address Robert Vitalis's question – pertaining in Vitalis's case to the Bandung conference of 1955 -- what has become of this unity since?[420] A more tenable analytical position is that ethnic nationalist internationalism arises in opposition to specific perceived threats from incumbent global order-keepers; coexists with other potential forms of collective identity which perhaps offer different strategic opportunities; and is cultivated in anti-status quo groups which are not necessarily representative of more widespread feeling, and which reflect historically specific social formations not analytically reducible to territorial or ethno-cultural forms of collective identity. This does not mean that transnational forms of collective identity are not significant—only that strategic necessity determines how significant they are.

4.3. Intersections of anti-imperial revolution – race, gender, class, and culture

4.3.1. Racial sovereignty and interracial unity

While International Communism spoke to the deep injustices at the heart of imperial-colonial order, many black and Asian anti-imperialists grew dissatisfied with its white leadership, its capitulation with nominally democratic empires, and its reduction of the imperial problem to class. While the Italo-Abyssinian War was seen by many in Africa and the diaspora as an assault on the idea of black sovereignty itself, and was therefore significant in the construction of a black transnational consciousness, it did not sweep away other forms of political identity completely. Africans and people of African descent throughout the world resided in multinational, multi-racial societies. The ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic composition of these societies reflected the hierarchical imperial-colonial order, but they

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[420] Vitalis, 2013

were also sites of community feeling, aspiration, historical legacy and destiny. As was stated in the introduction to this chapter, the articulation to anti-imperial revolution implied a tension between the local and the global: between segregation and integration, nationalism and internationalism, social relations and governmental institutions. This tension was not simply an intellectual puzzle, but a practical political bind created by a dual exigency. On one hand, there was a need to perpetually promote the unification of the many against the few: an impetus which required the invocation of a transnational public and/or a universal demand for freedom and equal inclusion. On the other hand, the movement needed to remain representative of, and strategically relevant to, a specific *demos* situated in a specific society.

A key site of this tension in anti-imperial imaginaries was race relations.[421] Different institutional improvements to racial inequality were posed: imperial federalism, greater attention to racial inequality in burgeoning international institutions, the eradication of the colour line in Communist and other workers movements, national independence and self-government. Some intimated a scepticism that blacks and Africans could ever be truly suited to these modern institutional forms, and would instead have to cultivate organisations and political communities in the interstices. Others argued almost the opposite: that blacks and Africans were uniquely suited to lead a world revolution.

Although it appeared in different forms, the notion of an essential, exceptional relation between black societies and modernity – either positive or negative – ran underneath many debates around institutional reform and transformation. The premise that blacks were essentially different, not because of traditional African social models, but because of their particular relationship with modernity, formed the basis for different claims to the possibility of equal inclusion within a federated empire. This had been a feature of imperial discourse

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[421] Although, race was not the only site of such tension. See, for example, the multiple divergences between territorial and religious nationalisms in the context of Ottoman and Arab relations with liberal order: e.g. Hourani, 1983; Barkey, 2008 Anscombe, 2014.

even before WWI. In the 1912 inaugural issue of the London-based journal *African Times and Orient Review,* its Egyptian founder and editor, Dusé Mohamed Ali, published a symposium between various acquaintances, leaders, and public intellectuals. Dusé Mohamed expressed his desire to see a racially egalitarian British Empire in the journal's opening pages:

> We feel that lack of understanding the African and Oriental has produced non-appreciation, and non-appreciation has unleashed the hydro-headed monster of derision, contempt, and repression. We, as natives and loyal subjects of the British Empire, hold too high an opinion of Anglo-Saxon chivalry to believe other than that African and Oriental wrongs have but to be made manifest in order that they may be righted. Laudable ambitions have but to be voiced to be appreciated, and that touch of nature which makes the whole world kin has only to be brought into operation to establish that bond of universal brotherhood between White, Yellow, Brown, and Black under the protecting folds of the Grand Old Flag, which will make the name British Citizen immeasurably greater than the name of King![422]

Annie Besant (1847-1933), the English theosophist who founded the Home Rule League in India, and later became the Indian National Congress's first female president in 1917, responded to the symposium by stating her belief that equal inclusion in the British political community would only be possible once a race had reached a certain aptitude for modern institutions:

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[422] *ATOR* 1, no. 1 (July 1912).

English liberty is now in danger, in consequence of too sudden and too large introductions of masses of ignorant people into the sphere of government, and a similar policy in hitherto non-self-governing people would have similar results. The partial measure of self-government given lately to India will make possible, ere long, the inclusion of all her educated classes in the governing class; but India is capable of exceptionally rapid progress, because she already possesses an ancient and splendid civilisation, and has merely to adapt herself to new methods. This is a comparatively swift and easy task. "Coloured men" is a wide term, and includes very different types, and no one system can be applied to all. Some coloured races are the equals of white races, while others are far more childish. The best heads and hearts in both races should guide, while the more childish follow.[423]

Note that Besant was not speaking directly in terms of development in modern know-how for the purposes of national independence, but also seemed to weigh the potential of colonial subjects to share in English governance. Arguments like Besant's suggested that races should only be included in modern institutions once they could produce an intellectual and cultural elite. Ironically, this was not very different from Du Bois's 'Talented Tenth' argument, which he had published nine years earlier. For his part, Du Bois also contributed a dismissive reply to Dusé Mohamed's symposium.

While these attitudes speak to the often chauvinist belief in the universality of Western institutions and elite leadership held by many early-20th century thinkers,[424] there were others who argued at the same time that it was 'black difference' which would bring about transformation to the capitalist world system. The Fabian social servant and colonial administrator, Lord Sydney Olivier (1859-1943), offered a defence of the black race in his

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[423] *ATOR* 1, no. 1 (July 1912), p. 17.
[424] See Hobson, 2012 for an in-depth discussion.

1906 book *White Capital and Coloured Labour*, expanded and reprinted in 1910 and 1929. Not only was the African labourer mischaracterised as being lazy and savage, but Olivier suggested, possessed cultural aversion to the modes of modern capitalism which might help bring about the end of capitalism itself. 'The African', he wrote

> is an unskilled labourer, but he is strong, and when he is pleased to work he is highly efficient within the limits of his capacities. He works best in gangs under social impulse: he works with extreme industry on his own small holding, up to the limit of his limited wants. There are no bounds to the trouble he will take in service in which his goodwill or his affection is engages. The capitalist system of industry has not disciplined him into a wage-slave, and I do not believe that it ever will. I think it more probable that that system in its attempt to incorporate the African in its wage proletariat will, after all, be defeated.[425]

As Brent Hayes Edwards shows, another conception of black revolutionary potential in terms of ill-suitability for modern institutions can be found in *Banjo*, a 1929 novel of the Jamaican-born Harlem Renaissance writer, Claude Mckay. Edwards writes that *Banjo* is characterised by 'radical, "doubt", to use Mckay's word, that blacks can fit into the logics of modern civilization."[426] Mckay had been an early black recruit of the COMINTERN, travelling to Moscow in 1922 to speak on 'the Negro Question.'[427] While initially a believer that the Negro Communist's duty was to 'spread revolutionary ideas among the ignorant masses of his own race', Mckay ultimately turned away from organised communism.[428]

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[425] Olivier, 1929: 110-111
[426] Edwards, 2003: 198
[427] For analysis of Mckay's life and politics see, Cruse, 1967; Foley, 2003; Holcomb, 2008; Makalani, 2011, and the author's autobiographical *A long way from home* (1937) and semi-autobiographical history *Harlem: Negro Metropolis* (1940).
[428] These words of the historian Winston James are quoted in Edwards, 2003: 199

While a contributor and co-editor to the New York socialist magazine *Liberator*, along with the Jewish socialist Max Eastman, Mckay had largely promoted the interracial, class-based message of local and international Communist organisations.[429] In his *Harlem: Negro Metropolis*, published in 1940, Mckay explained his defection from Communism and his colleagues at *Liberator* in terms of the repeated failure of Communist organisers to make room for the specific troubles of black labourers in white-dominated societies. The Communists' crimes went beyond non-acknowledgement to political attacks on organisations working for black-specific labour struggles:

> The Communists were savage in their opposition. At that time they had been waging a national and international campaign for the recognition of the Negro's right to life. The Scottsboro and Angelo Herndon cases were the flaming star around which their campaign revolved. The Communists fixed their eyes on the stars and refused to look down upon the common ground of community life, where the Negroes were carrying on a practical struggle for bread and shelter. Their primary aim has been radically to exploit the Negro's grievances. Therefore they use their influence to destroy any movement which might make for a practical amelioration of the Negro's problems.[430]

But rather than turn away from interracial Communism towards black nationalism, Edwards shows that Mckay developed something in *Banjo* more akin to a kind of spontaneous cosmopolitan anarchism, what Edwards calls 'vagabond internationalism.' Influenced by Mckay's time spent sojourning in Marseilles, vagabond internationalism is characterised by both a rejection of civilisation's top-down racial othering in the form of

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[429] For the complexities of the relationship between the white and black left in post-WWI New York, see Foley, 2003: ch.2.
[430] Mckay, 1940: 196

European colonial policy, and civilisation's creation of a racist proletariat. Ray, Mckay's avatar in *Banjo*, says of the 'proletarian spawn of civilization' that, 'as a black man I have always been up against them, and I became a revolutionist because I have not only suffered with them, but have been victimized by them.'[431] Vagabond internationalism, like the 17th and 18th century communities of outsiders described by Linebaugh and Rediker, represented for Mckay an alternative space of cultural and political expression to civilisation's disciplining structures.[432] Expressed through his writing, and informed by music and the heated differences of opinion within non-white outsider communities, Mckay characterised the vagabond outlook as a non-conformist subjectivity, created as the by-product of 'the civilizing machine', which, because of its insolubility, might present a challenge to civilisation itself.[433] As Edwards argues, Mckay posed the vagabond's 'primitivism' as a positive term to represent 'another ethical system, one *exterior* to the crushing logic of "civilization."'[434] However, Mckay could not entirely resist attributing this vagabond non-conformity to something experienced by a black subject especially, and a black subject attuned to some primal essence: 'a black man, even though educated, was in closer biological kinship to the swell of primitive earth life. And maybe his apparent failing under the organization of the modern world was the real strength that preserved him from becoming the thing that was the common white creature of it.'[435]

Mckay's aversion to 'the civilising machine' and assertion of a dialectically opposed black 'primitive' subjectivity was partly a reflection of his experiences with the COMINTERN and the betrayals of white socialists in Harlem. However, it extended to a more constructive political imaginary based on the escape from institutionalised nationhood and capitalist modernity through the backdoors of literary imagination and the spontaneous

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[431] Quoted in Edwards, 2003: 204
[432] Linebaugh and Rediker, 2000
[433] Edwards, 2003: 205-207
[434] Ibid. 223
[435] Quoted in ibid. 224

communal feeling fostered by his travels. I raise this example in order to, on one hand, present a limit to the extent that alternatives to modern civilisation could be articulated in revolutionary counter-discourse, and, on the other, to compare the anarchistic outlook in *Banjo* to the degree that proponents of modern institutions like Padmore, James, and Du Bois began to emphasise the importance of actually existing social relations in different colonial economies. For Padmore, James, or Du Bois, the looming potentiality of anticolonial revolution and sovereignty meant that escape from these debates was not an option. For example, developing from the French Empire's policy of *association*, the prospect that colonial subjects might shun independence to be made formally equal members of the French government had become more than a hypothetical debate by the end of WWII. The Senegalese poet and politician, Léopold Sédar Senghor, proposed African culture as 'the most powerful means of revolutionary action', but he sought to renegotiate the terms of African membership in the French government along more egalitarian principles rather than end them.[436] In this way, Senghor sought to extend the terms of indirect rule to involve the possibility of equal citizenship, rights, and voice within the French Empire beyond semi-autonomous clientage.[437] Senghor believed that Africans had distinct cultural virtues and intellectual traits, which were complementary rather than antagonistic with those of Europeans.[438] In a critique resonant with Mckay's earlier aversion to the 'the civilising machine', Senghor based his critique of 20th century Marxism on its privileging of institution-building over street-level culture. He 'blamed the failure of the Second International on its desiccated rationalism' contrasted with the 'popular culture', the 'élan vital of a people.'[439] This stress on an ethnically-defined cultural expression was a tenet of the political and literary movement, *Négritude,* which Senghor had helped establish. During the Franco-

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[436] Cited in Wilder, 2015: 215
[437] Wilder, 2015; Cooper, 2015
[438] See Howe, 1999: 26
[439] Wilder, 2015: 215

Algerian war, Frantz Fanon took aim at Senghor and the 'bards of *Négritude*', who, construct an 'inventory of particularisms' out of 'reified' 'custom' and 'tradition', and who argued for appeasement with the French Empire when others in Africa were fighting and dying to attain their political independence.[440] One rationale for unity with Europe over sovereignty was the avoidance of Africa's 'Balkanization': its potential separation into isolated, weak states. However, the other proposition was pan-African unity: the independence of Africa from Europe and the integration of African countries into a federated socialist government. This disagreement over sovereignty and federation eventually developed into two 'groups' during the period of pan-African negotiation in the early 1960s: the Casablanca Group and the Monrovia Group.

In a passage in *Dusk of Dawn* (1940)*, Du Bois seemed to explicitly reject the notion that the role of black subjectivity was to embody a limit, and an anarchic opposition, to modern civilisation. In a chapter entitled 'Revolution,' Du Bois characterised his 'nearest white friend', Joel Springarn's position as

> skeptical of democracy either in industry, politics or art. He was the natural anarchist of the spirit. He interest was aroused in the Negro because of discrimination, and not in the interest of ideal methods of conducting the state…. He wanted for me and my people freedom to live and act; but he did not believe that voting or revolution in industry was going to bring the millennium.[441]

By contrast, Du Bois characterised revolution as the transformation of state and economic institutions. Despite its radical trappings, the anarchic opposition to civilisation led in practice to a form of quietism. Revolution defined as intellectual and cultural escape worked for those

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[440] Ibid.: 134
[441] Du Bois, 2007 [1940]: 145

in a position to enjoy the benefits of culture and education, but it did little to negate imperial and colonial oppression.

The problem in eradicating the structures of oppression was not due to uncritical black acceptance of the logics of modernity, but because some blacks consistently accepted the scraps from the master's table. The white working class, on the other hand, accepted their own oppression because racial identity with the ruling class served as a consolation prize. As Du Bois wrote in *Black Reconstruction* (1935):

> It must be remembered that the white group of laborers, while they received a low wage, were compensated in part by a sort of public and psychological wage. They were given public deference and titles of courtesy because they were white. They were admitted freely with all classes of white people to public functions, public parks, and the best schools. The police were drawn from their ranks, and the courts, dependent upon their votes, treated them with such leniency as to encourage lawlessness. Their vote selected public officials, and while this had small effect upon the economic situation, it had great effect upon their personal treatment and the deference shown them.[442]

This situation resulted, for Du Bois, in an inescapable limit to the interracial cooperation of the American working class. Du Bois argued that this could only be ameliorated through sustained efforts on behalf of African-American communities to self-segregate: to build racially autonomous political, economic, and cultural institutions. Segregation, for Du Bois, was not 'the final solution of the race problem.'[443] On the contrary, the eventual goal was 'a

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[442] Du Bois, 1935: 573-574
[443] Du Bois, 2007 [1940]: 152

united humanity and the abolition of all racial distinctions.'[444] However, the already existing

segregation of communities along racial lines in the United States meant that a short term

policy of segregated institution-building was the only way to achieve long term integration.

Du Bois's diagnostic here is not merely a problem of 'domestic pluralism', but

directly connected to his belief in world revolution, that 'we black folk are the salvation of

mankind.' For Du Bois there was a gap between the *potential* of non-white populations for

global revolution and the concrete historical reality of their 'inferiority':

> [T]here remains the fact that the mass of the colored peoples in Asia and Africa, in
>
> North America and the West Indies and in South America and in the South Sea Islands
>
> are in the mass ignorant, diseased, and inefficient; that the governments which they
>
> have evolved, even allowing for the interested interference of the white world, have
>
> seldom reached the degree of efficiency of modern European Governments. [Du Bois,
>
> 2014 [1940]: 88]

The gap between potential and reality was not a problem to be solved with racial

development as an end in itself, but had to come from a challenge to the existing economic

order and the strengthening of global democracy. This could not be confronted with appeals

to ethnic recognition alone, but was primarily a matter for political strategy, of building new

political and economic organisations fit to represent multiracial societies on more egalitarian

terms. Revising his earlier 'panacea' that racial development should come from a 'Talented

Tenth' of cultural and intellectual elites, Du Bois argued that 'the whole economic trend of

the world has changed' and that 'mass and class must unite for the world's salvation' (Du

Bois, 2014 [1940]: 109). In this historical moment Du Bois saw the potential for unity in

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[444] Ibid.: 159

developing institutions, 'consumers' groups' and other organisations where coalitions could build advocacy for 'industrial and cultural democracy' on a global scale (Du Bois, 2014 [1940]: 110).

National sovereignty as necessary, but insufficient, when it came to the problems of multinational, multi-racial societies was also expressed by Padmore and Azikiwe in the same period. Azikiwe and Padmore were friends, and worked together on African independence initiatives from as early as 1927.[445] Neither Padmore nor Azikiwe initially saw the promise of 'nation' in purely negative or 'communitarian' terms, as in the gaining of territorial sovereignty for self-identifying groups to protect themselves from 'the outside.' Instead, the problem of domination and subjugation was rooted in a transnational conception of nation – African and European for Azikiwe, black and white intersecting with labour and capital for Padmore. The primary corrective was to achieve a conception of political community which creates social and political equality without fragmentation into the cultural nationalisms which enable imperialistic chauvinism. But despite shared goals, Padmore was a Marxist-Leninist whose ambition did not end with the attainment of African political independence. In Padmore's writing throughout the 1930s and 1940s, the desire for liberation does not appear as the desire for Africa to join in the world system of national states, but rather to address the international structures, rationales, and sentiments which enabled national states to embark on imperialistic programmes. Chiefly, those which enable capitalist expansion, inequality, and national-racial identity politics.

During the 1930s, Azikiwe and Padmore also differed in their political affiliations. By contrast with Padmore, Azikiwe was friendly with members of the Colonial Office (CO), in conversations with whom he would denounce 'Bolshies' and any movement which sought to take power by force. Though he also denounced imperialism's tendencies to expand and

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[445] Hooker, 1967: 6

exploit without limits, and he would occasionally publish radical opinions in his *West African Morning Post* and *West African Pilot* that would make colonial authorities nervous, he was more often considered a moderate and a gradual reformer who would help the British Empire's colonial representatives 'manage nationalism.'[446] However, the critique at the heart of both Azikiwe and Padmore's writing is that ethnic and cultural chauvinism, when aligned with the state, and combined with a rationalised need to clear blockages to the flows of global production and trade, were the main sources of imperialism and war.

In August, 1941, colonial subjects were dealt a fresh blow when Winston Churchill announced that the Atlantic Charter, which he had just produced with President Roosevelt, did not represent a principle of sovereignty or self-determination for the colonised world. This had the effect of threatening to radicalise new segments of the colonised masses, including moderate nationalists like Azikiwe.[447] In a 1945 pamphlet published by Padmore with his friend, the white British socialite and activist, Nancy Cunard (1896-1965), Padmore quoted Churchill as saying,

> At the Atlantic meeting we had in mind, primarily, the restoration of the sovereignty, self-government and national life of the states and nations of Europe now under the Nazi yoke… so that it is quite a separate problem from the progressive evolution of self-governing institutions in the regions and among the peoples which owe allegiance to the British Crown.

This, despite Clement Atlee having spoken previously at a meeting of the West African Students' Union in London, where he declared that the Atlantic Charter represented the Western commitment to the 'freedom and social security' of 'mankind.' Following

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[446] Flint, 1999
[447] See Zachernuk, 2000: 149-152

Churchill's caveat, as Padmore put it, 'all the Africans and Indians and Cingalese and Burmans and West Indians, and all the rest of the Colonial peoples whose hopes had been raised by the announcement of the Atlantic Charter and the explicitness of Mr. Atlee's statement, were dumbfounded.'[448]

Despite the new grievance represented by Churchill's interpretation of the Atlantic Charter, Padmore did not make an absolute demand for sovereign independence from the British Empire immediately after WWII. In fact his 1946 book, co-authored with his life partner, Dorothy Pizer (c. 1906-1964), *How Russia Transformed Her Colonial Empire: a Challenge to the Imperialist Powers,* reads almost as a frustrated plea to the British to extend the framework of egalitarian commonwealth to the subject peoples of Africa and Asia. However, Padmore was not read this way by the British Foreign and Colonial Office. Padmore's praise for the Soviet Union was read as a threat to 'Britishness', and an inconvenient spotlight on the racism of British colonial policy at a time when the Soviet Union challenged the British Empire's colonialism at the United Nations. After years of limiting the distribution of Padmore's work to the colonies, along with others tagged as communists and colonial agitators, this culminated in the British government banning Padmore's next book *Africa: Britain's Third Empire* (1949). The banning was subsequently protested by Padmore's friend, Fenner Brockway, and others affiliated with the anticolonial movement in Britain.[449]

By contrast with the British Empire, Padmore posed the Soviet Union as a federation of diverse nationalities, races, cultures, and religions, which had the right to secede at any time, but were unwilling to do so because of the equality and share in industry which they all enjoyed. The Soviet Union under Stalin had committed "blunders", Padmore argued -- most importantly, its invasion of Finland in 1940 – but this was not an argument against its

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[448] Cunard and Padmore, 1945: 9
[449] L. James, 2015b

principles.[450] Padmore's promotion of the multi-ethnic Soviet model was complemented by

his opposition to independence in the form of Wilsonian national sovereignty:

> The Wilsonian conception was based upon the capitalistic economic system and
> conflicting class relations. It is the same conception as that embodied in the Atlantic
> Charter. Thus it merely fed national exclusiveness. The sovereign States [*sic*] which
> came into existence at the end of the last World War became an end in themselves. The
> victorious Allied Powers, Britain and France, exploited Wilson's political conception of
> Self-Determination to create in Europe a number of small States [*sic*] carved out of the
> old Austro-Hungarian and Russian Empires. These States very soon became vassals of
> France and Britain and were employed as pawns in Imperialist power politics against
> the Soviet Union.
>
>   The tendency to exclusiveness inherent in bourgeois nationalism has become the
> greatest obstacle to any solution of the burning economic and social problems of
> Europe, and this in turn has enabled the Great Powers to intervene and so aggravate
> between themselves the nascent Imperialist [*sic*] rivalries over markets and colonies in
> Africa, Asia, and the Pacific.[451]

Padmore saw nationalism as "ineradicable from human nature"; therefore, it was not a

question of rejecting nationalism, but promoting non-exclusive, non-chauvinistic forms of

nationalism which could also engender multiracial, multi-national union.[452] With the creation

of a world socialist federation of nations not yet feasible, Padmore championed what he saw

as movement in this direction at the regional level, while describing national separation as

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[450] Padmore, 1946: 62-63
[451] Ibid.: 77-78
[452] Ibid.: 79

failure. In a front-page story published in Azikiwe's *West African Pilot*, Padmore celebrated Burma's independence as the creation of a new 'sovereign republic within which all the different religious communities and races… are all united under one centralised federation, each enjoying full local self-government and cultural autonomy.' The situation was different in India, 'where the British succeeded in dividing the country into two Dominions, leaving a legacy of hatred and bitterness between Hindu and Moslem.' [453]

Aside from any specific colonial policy, Padmore saw the more diffuse problem of white dominance in colonised societies as an obstruction to the formation of egalitarian multi-racial unions in Africa and the West Indies. Comparing the South African situation unfavourably to the American, Padmore wrote in *How Britain Rules Africa* (1936) that 'the fundamental barrier which stands in the way of realizing the united front between black and white workers in South Africa' was white workers' fear of blacks gaining a right to collective bargaining. While the United States had labour movements which would admit blacks, it was 'easier for the proverbial camel to pass through the eye of needle, than for an African to enter a European trade union.'[454] In the same year, Padmore argued in a pamphlet produced for the IASB that the dominant class of whites in the West Indies stood in the way of the islands becoming a post-racial society. Despite a general 'cordiality' in the relations of all races in the West Indies, the 'overlordship of white men' gave 'rise to considerable racial feeling.' This was smoothed, however, through 'long association' and 'the fact that children of all races go (in most places) to the same schools.' Moreover, 'the recent labour disturbances which have struck the islands have been a tremendous factor in drawing the coloured races together in the common struggle for improved conditions', and 'if whites did not rule' it is quite safe to say that race would not play much part in West Indian affairs.'[455]

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[453] Padmore, *West African Pilot*, January 20, 1948: 1
[454] Padmore, 1936: 327
[455] Padmore, 1936b: 6

The labour disturbances Padmore mentioned referred to the extended strike actions –
or 'Butler riots' -- carried out by the oil workers' union in Trinidad throughout the second
half of the 1930s.[456] These strike actions were a major precipitating factor in the movement
towards the West Indies Federation. Different versions of a unified West Indies were
eventually articulated by several different groups: labour organizations, pan-Africanists,
Indo-Caribbean groups, and colonial administrators. Although the idea of West Indies
federation had been 'in the air since 1867',[457] the multiracial federalism from below,
represented by the Caribbean Labour Congress (CLC), was born out of the organising of
trade unionists, like the Afro-Guyanian Hubert Nathaniel Critchlow (1884-1958), from the
mid-1920 to the mid-1940s. After attending the First British Commonwealth Labour
Conference in London, where he was the only delegate from the Caribbean, Critchlow
returned to host the First British Guiana and West Indies Labour Conference in 1926, which
provided an early initiative for regional workers' unity. [458] Organising labour across the
different islands was facilitated by the collective grievances of the impoverished West Indian
working class and peasantry, as well as the relative ease of travel and contact between the
islands. The idea that 'federation was the logical development of working class unity' was
also expressed by Indo-Caribbeans, such as the labour organiser Adrian Cola Rienzi (1905-
1972, born Krishna Denarine), and later, the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) leader, Stephen
Maharaj.[459] In 1927, *the Crisis*, urged 'the peoples of the West Indies to begin an earnest
movement for the federation of these islands.'[460] Five years later, provoked by clashes over
the empire's exploitation of Trinidadian oil, the labour organiser A.A. Cipriani (1875-1945)

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[456] Named for the labour organiser and national hero, Tubal Uriah Butler (1897-1977).
[457] Horne, 2007: 204.
[458] ibid.: 15-16.
[459] Ibid. p. 24.
[460] *Crisis*, 34 (No. 8, October 1927): p. 264.

argued that the 'movement towards Federation… like the incoming tide, has gathered strength at every turn. It may now be regarded as inevitable.'[461]

British colonial administrators of the West Indies and Africa sometimes planned federation for similar reasons, but for different purposes. Federation would help streamline bureaucracy and better orchestrate the dispensation of labour and inputs across a region. This enabled some to denounce federation as an imperialist ploy. A 1953 editorial in the Trinidad and Tobago labour newspaper, *The People*, credited to 'Rip van Winkle' expressed a distrust in federation as motivated by empire's racist social engineering:

> The latest imperialist claptrap, Federation of the British Caribbean Islands plus Continental British Guiana and British Honduras, lands wherein "natives" have no right because acquired by conquest has become the sport of professional hirelings whose knowledge and experience of federation came into their lips from imperialist mechanical inspiration. Federation, they quacked, would solve the problem of overpopulation and cure all economic ills. They have never been told that certain proposed areas to be federated are thinly populated; but the overpopulation spoken of comprises "niggers" and "coolies" not wanted in the vacant domains.[462]

In 1954, only four years before the West Indies Federation was established, Trinidad's Home Rule Party (HRP), which had grown out of the oil workers' strikes of the 1930s, voted against the proposed 'London Plan' for federation because it did not guarantee eventual independence from the empire, an aim which by then had become associated with the protection of local labour and economic interests.[463]

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[461] Citied in Horne, 2007: 25.
[462] *The People* (March 7, 1953: 3)
[463] *The People* (No. 118, December 18, 1954: p. 1, 3)

Even after it had ended in 1962, the WIF remained an important symbol in pan-African circles – not, I argue, simply because colonised black subjects believed they needed their own large nation-state to engage in liberal world politics – but because a post-racial, radically democratic state was seen as the next stage in a world revolutionary struggle for democratic control of the global economy. This next stage was envisaged as something which only colonised societies could deliver. The WIF was not needed for liberal recognition, but for transformation of the international social, political, and economic order. As early as 1933, C.L.R. James wrote in favour of the Colonial Office Commission's plan to unite the islands, but this was only with a view to imminent self-government.[464] As we will see in the next chapter, James became a stalwart supporter of the WIF, urging the leaders of newly independent Caribbean nations to promote the federation in the face of a referendum to rip it apart. Congruent with Du Bois and Padmore, the WIF represented for James a colonised people's ability to serve as the 'vanguard of the progressive forces of modern society.'[465] This is a clear through-line in his thought between 1938, when he published *the Black Jacobins*, and his promotion of Black Power in the 1960s. James had grown uneasy with organised Communism – both Trotskyist and Stalinist -- by 1950, and completely denounced it by 1956, when the Soviet Union sent tanks to crush the democratic revolution in Hungary.[466] The same year, any slim hope of salvaging an egalitarian, multiracial British Empire had been eradicated by the brutal and highly public response to the 'Mau Mau' crisis in Kenya. For James, this was all part and parcel of 'the breakdown of the system of capitalism and the national bourgeois state.'[467]

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[464] James, 'the Case for West Indian Self-Government', in Grimshaw, 1992: 49.
[465] James, 2013: 95
[466] James's turn from organised Communism and search for a new model of post-capitalist political organisation is a regular theme in his work from 1950. See, e.g. James, Boggs, and Dunayevskaya, 2013 [1950]; James and Lee, 2006 [1958]; and James, 1980. See Leslie James's discussion of Padmore's and James's agreements and disagreements on the subject: L. James, 2015: 148, 159
[467] Ibid.

However, for James, the breakdown was global, and did not belong to any particular race. James argued that just as colonised populations would lead a global vanguard, European standing armies were no longer fighting in imperial wars. This was evidenced by the war in Indo-China, which had not been fought by the French Army, but by 'volunteers and the French Foreign Legion, including many of Hitler's soldiers who had nothing to do in Germany and were prepared to go fighting and see what they could get out of it.'[468]

The idea that colonial independence was a global revolution, not limited to the received benefit of any particular race or nation, was also reflected in the rhetoric of higher profile world politics. Despite its frequent characterisation as a union of Asian and African races against white supremacy, several speakers at the Bandung Conference of 1955 emphasised that any prospective cooperation would be based on political and economic interests, and not race.[469] This was reflected in Sukarno's opening addressing on 18 April:

 We are of many different nations, we are of many different social backgrounds and cultural patterns. Our ways of life are different. Our national characters, or colours or motifs - call it what you will - are different. Our racial stock is different, and even the colour of our skin is different. But what does that matter? Mankind is united or divided by considerations other than these. Conflict comes not from variety of skins, nor from variety of religion, but from variety of desires.[470]

As his promotion of strategic segregation grew in the US context, Du Bois's pronouncements on world affairs began to take on a post-racial character by the 1940s. In *Dusk of Dawn* Du

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[468] James, 2013: 95

[469] See Vitalis, 2013. Certain accounts such as Richard Wright's *The Color Curtain: A Report on the Bandung Conference* (19995 [1956]) are likely to have played an outsized role in establishing the predominantly racial interpretation of the event in the Western academy. See also, Lee, 2010; Pham and Shilliam, 2016.

[470] Sukarno's opening address to the Bandung Conference, available at: https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/2001/9/5/88d3f71c-c9f9-415a-b397-b27b8581a4f5/publishable_en.pdf. Accessed 26/09/19.

Bois wrote that 'physical' kinship is 'least' significant, and 'the badge of color relatively unimportant save as a badge.' 'The real essence' of racial kinship, he wrote, 'is its social heritage of slavery; the discrimination and insult; and this heritage binds together not simply the children of Africa, but extends through yellow Asia and into the South Seas.'[471]

However, 'the social heritage of slavery' was not an invitation to promote an exclusively black or non-white revolution. Following Japan's defeat in the Second World War, Du Bois pointed to Japan's imperialism in Asia as the cause of its downfall. He stressed the 'structural limitations of racialist and nationalist opinion' as giving oxygen to Japan's imperialism.[472] His advocacy of transnational and interracial solidarity based on anti-imperial democracy deepened following a visit to communist China in 1959. In his preface to the Chinese translation of the Souls of Black Folk in 1959, Du Bois intimated that 'the color line was now less important than class consciousness.'[473] This was not exclusively a clarion call to non-white multitudes, but promotion of a strategic alliance of anti-imperial forces. During his visit, Du Bois also called on China to align itself with the United States and Russia: states he saw as being forces for anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism in world politics. That a closer or more detached assessment might have proved the United States and Russia unworthy of Du Bois's endorsement is beside the point: political goals, at least in the current conjuncture, mattered more than racial identity.[474]

The need to build multi-racial egalitarian polities out of unequal multi-racial colonial societies was also expressed by leaders on the African continent. Again, this was not only for the purpose of state building or liberal institution building, but to demonstrate colonial people's ability to lead a world revolution based on democratic principles. This is not entirely surprising considering that many of the most influential of Africa's new leaders – including

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[471] Du Bois, 2007: 59
[472] Gao, 2013: 63
[473] Ibid.
[474] Murray, 2019: 15

Nkrumah, Kenyatta, and Azikiwe – were all part of Padmore's circle.[475] Nkrumah's early

vision for a United States of Africa drew a direct link between the union of African polities

and the end of race prejudice. Speaking just after Ghana's independence at a Conference of

Independent African States in 1958, Nkrumah argued

> We, the Independent States of Africa, seek to eliminate Racialism [sic] by our own
>
> example of a tolerant, multi-racial community reflecting the freely expressed will of the
>
> people based upon universal adult suffrage…. In this way, we who in the past have had
>
> unhappy experiences with Racialism, will be in a position to make a new positive
>
> contribution to the elimination of Racialism based on tolerance and goodwill, which
>
> can serve as an example to other parts of Africa and of the world.[476]

Even Fanon, sometimes characterised as an indiscriminate enemy of whites in Africa, stated

at the 1958 All-Africa People's Conference in Ghana, 'the concept of Africa for the Africans

does not mean that other races are excluded…. We struggle for the future of humanity and it

is a most important struggle.'[477]

4.3.2. Gender emancipation and anti-imperial revolution

The revolutionary transformation of the modern state into a hub of global egalitarian

democracy was also promoted in the name of gender emancipation. As in the case of racial

equality or global progress, distinctions within black anti-imperial discourse on gender and

sex can be characterised along a continuum, in terms of different counter-hegemonic

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[475] Posgrove, 2009; L. James, 2015
[476] PRAAD. Folder 'Conference of Independent African States.' SC/BAA/136 (KN/131)
[477] Fanon, 2018: 656

arguments with respect to difference, autonomy, inclusion, and transformation. This included views which were resonant with materialist diagnoses of gendered work in a capitalist nation-state, as well as views arguing for an essentially African or black conception of men's and women's respective roles in society.[478] Anti-imperial globalist critiques which helped bring about formal decolonisation took intersectionality as a matter of course. This was because the form that post-colonial polities and international institutions should take was a conversation which presumed promotion of social equality *in general*.

As with race and class, gender roles were often products of imperial ordering, or exaggerated forms of pre-colonial social formations, rather than totally endogenous to pre-colonial culture. Justification for the British civilising mission was often premised on the notion that Asian and African women needed protection from their 'degraded' civilisation's promotion of 'child marriage and prostitution, polygamy, female infanticide, and genital mutilation.'[479] Of course, the policies of Victorian and Edwardian empire lobbies around women's salvation were rarely about emancipation and equality. Instead they reflected Victorian and Edwardian social imaginaries based on the image of women as idealised domestic creatures, who needed protection from the harsh realities of toil and male predation. This project was often the province of Christian missionaries. In both Africa and Asia, gender norms based on the proper husband and protected woman, consigned to 'the domestic sphere', were promoted by colonial dioceses in collaboration with 'secular allies in the imperial administration.'[480]

However, discourses of civilised African and Asian gender norms were often totally at odds with the imperial economic order. The imperial economic system necessitated the

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[478] Engels's classic text (1884) argued that capitalism reproduced a separation between household and reproductive work, and the productive work of the factory. Capital required women's relegation to unpaid household and reproductive labour, thus denying them social equality. Elaborations and departures from Engels can be found, amongst other places, in Brown (1970) and Agassi (1989).
[479] Parson's, 2014: 8
[480] Ibid.: 46

work – often unpaid -- of most colonial women. In the Edwardian era, high taxes in Southern and Eastern Africa drove men out of their communities in search of work, leaving women at home to take care of agricultural and domestic duties. Other African men were driven out of pre-colonial economic arrangements based on the acquisition of land and livestock – a system nearly eradicated by settler land seizures – towards waged labour in mining and farming. Colonial capital kept these wages low partly on the premise that African women supplied unpaid labour at home. In fewer cases, some African women, especially cocoa growers in West Africa, ascended to wealthy entrepreneur status if they were able to transition from food production to cash crops.[481]

Also at odds with civilising rhetoric based on the promise of modern gender norms, subject women were frequently placed in positions of social subordination through the imperial economy of sex. African chiefs and elders would reinterpret tribal law in order to marry multiple wives and raise the price of bridewealth. This was to monopolize 'access to fertile women', partly as a way to assert dominance over younger men in the tribe. British district officers would support these practices in order to bolster the authority of their 'chiefly partners.' African tribal women were therefore caught in the politics of indirect rule. In the towns and cities of the Edwardian empire, a 'two-tiered system of brothels to ensure that perceptibly "white" women would only have commercial sex with European men' was established.[482] However, this system, meant to protect imperial racial hierarchy, was rarely honoured by European men stationed in the colonies. Relatively high profile cases of British officials caught in sex scandals with subject women and children led to the Colonial Office issuing a ban in 1909 on 'sexual contact with non-Westerners' because it 'diminished European prestige and status.'[483]

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[481] Ibid.: 47
[482] Levine, 2000: 13-14
[483] Parsons, 2014: 48

While the image of the civilised *qua* Westernised colonial woman was often a mirage in Asia and Africa, it was a subject of fascination for counter-imperial and anti-imperial writers of the diaspora and metropole during the interwar period. As it was for elites of the earlier period, such as Adelaide Casely Hayford, the intersection of gender and race relations in revolutionary discourse reflected anxiety over how deeper social inequality and alienation might actually be addressed by attaining national autonomy from European dominance. Claude McKay's novel of 1933, *Banana Bottom*, speaks to this question of what is required for emancipation through the journey of cultural rediscovery for a young black woman in Jamaica. Unlike the black female protagonist of Zora Neale Hurston's more famous, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937), Mckay's protagonist, Bita Plant, can be read as both a product and eventual fugitive – metaphorically -- of colonial race and gender hierarchy.[484] Born to well-to-do farmers in the Jamaican village of Banana Bottom, Bita has a scandalous sexual experience with a young musician while still a girl, and then is adopted by an English missionary family to be given a Western education in Britain. Bita later returns to Jamaica where she is expected to make a decent life for herself. Through her attraction to the folk and culture of her homeland, Bita comes to reject the expectation of her English guardians to grow into 'a good Christian—like a little heathen to be brought up in the doctrine of salvation'.[485] Bita becomes further alienated from her European education via conflict with her guardian, Mrs. Craig, who is revealed to harbour terror and revulsion for 'black culture.' Thus, Mckay places imperial gender norms directly at the heart of the anti-imperial project: characterising these norms as products of 'the civilising machine', and women's emancipation as achievable through a revolutionary embrace of ethnic folk culture, defined in opposition to a racist, patriarchal civilising mission.

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[484] Hurston explicitly rejected interpretations of her novel as a 'race novel.'
[485] Mckay, 1986 [1933]: 125-126

By at least the 1930s, black women were also at the centre of the revolutionary anti-imperial project, as organisers and writers living in imperial metropoles, as well as colonial peripheries. Reminiscent of Du Bois's earlier auto-ethnographic 'double consciousness' concept, but decades ahead of Frantz Fanon or George Lamming's accounts of racial alienation in the city, Paulette Nardal, published an article entitled '*Eveil de la conscience de race*' ('Awakening of Race Consciousness') in 1932. Along with her sister, Jane, and other Franco-Caribbean and Franco-African writers in Paris, Paulette edited the political and cultural journal *La Revue du monde noir/The Review of the Black World*, which promoted 'black internationalism, race consciousness, solidarity, and pride.'[486] As well as a meeting ground for anti-imperial nationalists, and new social networks based on the crossings of subjects from different colonies, interwar imperial metropoles, such as Paris, offered colonial migrant women 'unprecedented access' to social and cultural freedom.[487] The insights Nardal expressed in 'Awakening of Race Consciousness' grew out of her analysis of colonial gender and race relations in the metropole. Nardal argued that black women had a unique insight into these relations, because of the relative ease of black men to assimilate into city life through their relationships with white women.[488] Meanwhile, 'coloured women living alone in the metropolis' could not form similar relationships with white men, and thus turned to the 'racial solidarity' offered by black social networks. This 'feeling of uprooting' inspired a race consciousness, which engendered an international black solidarity.[489] As Imaobong Umoren argues, Nardal's analysis of black women's relationships with white men is missing, probably because they were 'less prevalent or perhaps too taboo to address.'[490] Like her colleague, Léopold Senghor, Nardal's solution to the problem of racial hierarchy was not segregation. However, more so than Senghor, she suggested a conscious merger based on the synthesis of

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[486] Umoren, 2018: 18
[487] Boittin, 2010
[488] Umoren, 2018: 19
[489] Quoted in ibid.
[490] Ibid.: 20

black and white cultural elements. Nardal argued for recognition of 'our debts to the Latin

culture, but also 'to go beyond this culture, in order to give to our brethren, with the help of

the white scientists and friends of the Negroes, the pride of being the members of a race

which is perhaps the oldest in the world.'[491]

Nardal's analysis, if not her politics, held true in London. In the British capital, Amy

Ashwood Garvey served as a hostess and organiser for anti-imperial activists who met in

nightclubs after days protesting at Speaker's Corner in Hyde Park. As Ras Makonnen

recounted, 'One of the most famous [clubs] was the Florence Mill Club, manned by Amy

Ashwood Garvey (Garvey's second wife); you could go there after you'd been slugging it out

for two or three hours at Hyde Park or some other meeting, and get a lovely meal, dance and

enjoy yourself.'[492] Makonnen sold Ashwood Garvey somewhat short here, as she was not

only the patron of the club where the IASB relaxed, but also one of the anti-imperial

organisation's founders and key organisers. Ashwood Garvey had also previously been an

associate of the anti-imperial activist, Sylvia Pankhurst (1882-1960), and had helped found

London's Nigerian Progress Union in 1924.[493]

The analytical and political contributions of individual women reflected a greater

overture to women's participation and leadership in counter-hegemonic struggles more

broadly, at least in the 'new world.' Before WWII, Garveyism and Pan-Africanist movements

largely reproduced the Victorian gender norms of the imperial-colonial order.[494] Female

leadership of critical and radical political movements was facilitated by 'both the greater

space that opened for women during WWII and the broad conception of rights that dominated

the liberal and left politics of the 1930 and 1940s.'[495] Leaders like the African-American,

Charlotta Bass (1874-1969), rose to prominence in this period. Straddling three black

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[491] Quoted in Ibid.
[492] Makonnen, 1973: 130
[493] Reddock, 1990: 76
[494] Bair, 1970; Von Eschen, 1997: 78-79; Ewing, 2014: 150
[495] Von Eschen, 1997: 79

internationalist movements, Bass served as a co-president of the Los Angeles chapter of Garvey's UNIA, director of the Youth Movement of the NAACP, and was later nominated for American Vice President as a member of the Progressive Party. Challenges to patriarchy in burgeoning nationalist organisations also took place in the Caribbean. In Trinidad, Audrey Layne Jeffers, an alumnus of the League of Coloured Peoples in London, drew on the broader rights discourse to build political power for working women's organisations throughout the 1930s.[496] Her contemporary, Beatrice Greig (1869-?), was the daughter of Scottish-Canadian missionaries, and fought for the political rights of Indo-Caribbean women and girls, helping to establish the Trinidad Association of Girls' Clubs.

As we will see in the concluding chapter, the legacy of women's rights in anticolonial nationalist projects was to become ambivalent. Revolutionary anti-imperial discourse placed gender norms and women's rights as central to the aims of nationalism and global democracy. This culminated in the thought and politics of later figures, like Claudia Jones, who saw the creation of large federalist states as linked to, if not requisite for, full gender emancipation. After the dissolution of federalism in Africa and the Caribbean, nationalism became characterised as a masculinist project: as authoritarian nation-building, which buried the experiences and aims of women and women's movements. However, this interpretation is too limiting. The critique of masculinist nationalism speaks to the reduction of revolution to sovereignty, not to some inherent failure of revolution as a wider discourse and set of worldmaking aims. Without organised movements towards remade states and state-society relations – perhaps favouring instead Mckay's artist's anarchism – it is difficult to imagine the progress that was made, or even to imagine the end of formal empire.

4.3.3. Building unity and cultural pluralism

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[496] See Reddock, 1990

Anti-imperial globalist critique also implied an aversion to reduction of revolution to sovereignty when it came to cultural pluralism *within* transatlantic black internationalist politics. The challenges in holding together the plural cultural interests of black internationalism were to become particularly salient after the independence of African and Caribbean nations after 1957; thus, this topic will be addressed in greater detail in the next chapter. However, for now it is worth briefly outlining how these challenges were foreseen in the lead-up to independence. In the sense that I mean it here, cultural pluralist debates concerned the issues of tribalism and ethnic particularism in the practical construction of a multinational state.[497] A tension and fundamental disagreement underpinned these debates: were tribe and ethnicity foundational aspects of African and Caribbean society, or were they constructed devices of imperial divide and rule?

In terms of a historical analysis of this problem, there is now little question that, whatever aspects of patrilineal society and indigenous religion might have survived into the 20th century, 'traditional' African social, political, and cultural models were modified, transformed, and reinterpreted through social intercourse with other societies. Interpretations of tribal culture were deployed both by tribal elites and colonial administrators to serve colonial regimes of power. For example, 'detribalization' was a term used by colonial authorities to negatively explain the strike actions of African and Caribbean labourers. Miners striking in Rhodesia in 1935 had been 'detribalized' according to colonial administrators. Likewise, the West Indies Moyne Commission Report, meant to account for the oil workers riots throughout the 1930s, put the unrest down to 'detribalized' and 'de-

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[497] In my use of the term 'tribe' and its variants, I am sensitive to the critiques of scholars like Nivi Manchanda (2018), who correctly locate the term as part of colonial regimes of power. However, there is no getting away from the fact that 'tribes' were understood as a political reality by anti-imperial leaders, both for and against tribal politics and their role in burgeoning nations.

cultured' West Indians, who had lost their traditional thought systems in an embrace of modernity.[498]

However, the question of fundamental vs. constructed culture was neither academic nor easily dismissed. Its salience had far more to do with the actually existing institutional infrastructure of cultural pluralism: the role of cultural pluralism as a political and social 'fact.' Different answers to this question shaped the proposed paths of revolutionary anti-imperial projects. Could tribe and ethnicity act as handmaidens of revolution, or were they aspects of political and social division which revolution needed to overcome?

The extent to which cultural pluralism should be a constitutive part of the administrative structure of African colonies was a debate which predated the momentum towards independence in the 1940s and 1950s. An early 1937 issue of Azikiwe's *West African Pilot*, reported the events of a conference wherein it was debated whether 'Native Adminstration' and indirect rule should be incorporated into the national constitution of Nigeria. Doctor Henry Carr (1863-1944), a Nigerian administrator and former member of the legislative council argued in favour: citing, in particular, the desire for vernacular education and the use of vernacular in the transcripts of 'Native Court' proceedings. Doctor Crispin Adeniyi-Jones (1876-1957), a medical doctor, legislative councillor, and financier, argued against. Adeniyi-Jones suggested that further extension of 'Native Administration' was undesirable for its 'inefficiencies.' He argued further against the category 'native', in principle, as 'derogatory', pointing out that Englishmen are not referred to as 'native.'[499] In *Renascent Africa* (1937), Azikiwe himself had proposed that building a 'New Africa' meant that Africans 'must hurdle over barriers of race or tribe.' Particularist ties needed to be relegated for the sake of 'mental emancipation', material development, and to reinvent Africa

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[498] L. James, 2015: 153
[499] *West African Pilot*, Vol. 1, No. 9, December 1, 1937: 1

as an emergent nation.[500] By 1964 Azikiwe had nuanced his position, arguing that tribalism

'was a reality', which could not simply be rejected. Furthermore, he gave Switzerland, the

USA, and the Soviet Union as examples of successful federated nations constituted by

multiple 'tribes.' Tribalism, he argued, could thus serve as 'a pragmatic instrument for

national unity.'[501]

In his final writings before his death, Azikiwe's old friend, George Padmore,

disagreed. Padmore argued in 1955 that tribalism was 'the biggest obstacle in creating a

modern democratic State.'[502] Colonial chiefs were 'merely pawns in the hands of the Colonial

Administration';[503] and, while 'colonizing European powers did not create Tribalism', they

'[kept] it alive' through indirect rule and by arresting industrial development.[504] Padmore's

views on tribalism and development of the nation took on a particular salience in the last few

years of his life. As a non-African advisor to Kwame Nkrumah in the lead-up to and after

independence, Padmore was attacked by Nkrumah's opposition in the Ghanaian press. In a

series of editorials published in *Daily Echo* in 1955 by K.Y, Attoh, Padmore was described as

'completely detribalised and without moral scruples.'[505] Attoh's credibility might have been

suspect as a political opponent of Nkrumah, but the 'detribalised' slur would have been

effective in conveying the supposed loss of African values that the diaspora had undergone in

their transportation to the New World.[506]

This can be seen as part of the longer standing mistrust of the diaspora by African

conservatives. Nkrumah had been an active participant in transatlantic anti-imperial politics

before returning to the Gold Coast after WWII. Nkrumah had studied in the United States and

London in the 1930s and 1940s. By 1944, he was a 'participating sponsor' of the Council on

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[500] Azikiwe, 1937: 17
[501] Azikiwe, In Langley, 1979: 458-486
[502] Quoted in L. James, 2015: 156
[503] Cunard and Padmore, 1945: 28
[504] L. James, 2015: 157
[505] Quoted in ibid.: 152
[506] Ibid.: 153

African Affairs (CAA), an American organisation which promoted, among other policies, anti-colonialism as a necessary feature of US economic expansion. Co-led by Du Bois and the African-American radicals, Paul Robeson and Max Yergan (1892-1975), the CAA drew on the framework of the Atlantic Charter to ensure 'speedy advancement toward complete self-government for the African peoples.'[507] In April 1944, a CAA conference resolved to promote the welfare of Africans and other dependence peoples as 'an integral part of the projected international order.'[508] The organisation also called for any international commission within Africa to 'be held accountable to the United Nations organization for the abolition of all forms of political discrimination based on race, creed, or color.'[509] However, the CAA also premised prospective unity between African-Americans and Africans on asymmetrical foundations of 'reciprocal dependence.' The presumption was 'Africa needs our skills and services' and 'we need Africa's resources.'[510] As the driving force of a United States of Africa, as part of broader black internationalism and Third World leftist solidarities, Nkrumah's opposition did not always see him as someone whose first loyalty was to local, tribal, and African interests. Kobina Sekyi, the Fante cultural conservative opposed to Western socialism and party politics, refused a role in Nkrumah's government after Nkrumah came to power. This was unsurprising, considering that, in 1922, Sekyi had written

> All the present talk about the return of our brethren from beyond the seas and the
> foundation of black republics is rash and nonsensical. Our brethren beyond the seas
> have become black white men, and black Americans at that, so that if they were to
> come here amongst us, they would assist in the general demoralisation and unsettlement
> that the Europeans have caused in their contact with us. By their acquaintance with

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[507] Max Yergan quoted in Von Eschen, 1997: 71
[508] Ibid.: 72
[509] Ibid.: 73
[510] Ibid.: 72

European methods and thus their greater capacity to disseminate ideas, digested and

undigested and undigestible [sic], indiscriminately by means of newspapers, they would

soon destroy what little balance we may have succeeded in restoring among our

peoples.[511]

Opposition to the 'detribalization' promoted by nation-builders was, on one hand, an elite discourse meant to preserve the power of local authorities against outward-facing unification and integration. The unification of the many against the few implied the necessity of opening culture towards the possibility of its own transformation. On the other hand, revolution needed to reflect the interests of the people it purported to benefit. Without this responsibility to locate democratic pluralism within an actually existing *demos*, international worldmaking risked becoming empire with a black complexion. As already stated in Chapter Two, a principle of international non-domination built on the domination of ethnic and cultural minorities was seen to reproduce the logics of empire and undermine the moral upper hand and strategic alliances between oppressed groups pushing for greater democratic controls on global capitalism.[512] This bind was to become even more pronounced after 1957, when the necessities of state-building, economic development, and Cold War allegiances were drawn in sharp relief by the end of empire and the formal transference of power.

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[511] "Our White Friends", *Gold Coast Leader* (November 18, 1922): 6
[512] Cf. Getachew, 2019

Chapter Five

Development and Liberation:

The rise and fall of post-colonial federal socialism, 1945-1975

5.1. Introduction

From May 22 to May 25, 1963, thirty African heads of state and government met in Addis
Ababa and signed the Charter of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). During the
conference, a principle resolution was included: the African leaders were 'determined to
safeguard and consolidate the hard-won independence as well as the sovereignty and
territorial integrity of our States, and to fight against neo-colonialism in all its forms.'[513] This
was the most unqualified and univocal affirmation of territorial sovereignty for each separate
sovereign state hitherto. Coinciding with this assertion of sovereignty as alignment – more or
less – with colonial territorial boundaries, scholars of African politics began to narrate away
the world revolutionary aims of the previous generation of pan-African and black Atlantic
intellectual activists. One of the first African academic theorists of African international
relations, the Kenyan Ali A. Mazrui, argued in *Towards a Pax Africana* (1967), 'In the
history of colonial liberation movements it was more often the ethnic conception of 'majority
rule', rather than the orthodox liberal one, which had pride of place in African nationalistic
thought.'[514] Although he went on to recognise that 'liberal' conceptions had played a part as
well, Mazrui's account of colonial liberation as being predominantly *for* racial sovereignty,
heralded a new moment when elite voices of African affairs began to reduce the anti-imperial
globalist horizon of these movements to the concerns of the particular. The OAU's protection
of territorial sovereignty followed the breakup of the West Indies Federation into territorial

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[513] Wallerstein, 2005: 64-65
[514] Mazrui, 1967: 23

units by about a year. As we will see in the next chapter, both of these events coincided with new debates about racial segregation in the United States, revivified by the Civil Rights and Black Power movements of the 1960s.

I return to these histories, somewhat well-known at least by historians of African and Caribbean politics, in order to better situate our own contemporary analysis about modernity, development, and non-Western difference in the political struggles which animated earlier debates. Particularly it revives conversations around *development, liberation*, and how anti-imperial leaders and intellectual activists understood the relationship between these two concepts. Liberation, more than 'freedom' or 'revolution', refers to the quest for a kind of pure self-determination. While freedom could simply refer to formal independence, and revolution to the speed in which independence was attained, liberation sometimes suggested a permanent revolution, a need to address every aspect of colonial domination and its legacies. Liberation in this sense can also be denoted with the Swahili word, *uhuru*, which is usually translated as 'freedom', but in context, refers to this deeper meaning of freedom as liberation.

Contemporary critical scholars, especially of the 'decolonial' school, tend to frame the developmental programmes of federal socialists and Third Worldists of the mid to late 20th century as either struggling to subvert colonial logics in small and incremental ways, or as 'fallen natives', duped by colonial logics. By contrast, I argue that development programmes – especially the post-colonial development state – were intimately intermingled with the concept of liberation. The post-colonial development state could gain no legitimacy as merely derivative of the Western liberal state model, and was therefore understood as an evolution and an improvement on this model in at least two ways. First, as a model which would be derived immediately from principles organic to African and Caribbean societies, rather than imported. 'Democracy', 'liberalism', and 'socialism' were thus re-appropriated, not as Western legitimation scripts, but as concepts which also had roots in African tradition,

or the ultra-modern cosmopolitan societies of the West Indies. Second, the post-colonial development state was not understood as another sovereign political unit amongst sovereign political units, but as a vehicle for global progress: a new kind of state, which would move *the world* nearer to global socialism. Alternative, anti-imperial globalist visions for the post-colonial West Indies and Africa can be gleaned, in part, from traditions of world political thought evident in the work of CLR James, Frantz Fanon, Claudia Jones, or Amilcar Cabral. CLR James and Frantz Fanon are two of the most cited anticolonial nationalist theorists in IR, and even in this, aspects of their thought are often neglected. IR engagements with these thinkers usually address their positions on violence, modernity, and the denial of black and colonial agency and subjecthood, which result from imperial racism and exclusion.[515] Less addressed are their global visions for world decolonisation and political and cultural liberation.[516]

This chapter also argues that the loss of the anti-imperial globalist rationales of post-colonial development must be understood in terms of the continuing relations of hierarchy, political allegiance, and liberal self-interest, which, perhaps inevitably, were the destination of anticolonial nationalism. Thus, this chapter also asks: how did the strategic possibilities of the post-war period *delimit* and *determine* certain constructions of national, ethnic, or cultural identity for fledgling African and Caribbean states, as well as the wider, black Atlantic discourse? First, imperial suppression of colonial insurgency, revolt, and unrest had intensified the demand for independence, which, in turn, intensified the demand for unity between colonies. The basis for imperial suppression was understood by anti-imperial intellectual activists, on one hand, as the systemic pressure and anti-democratic drive to protect access to colonial capital, and, on the other, as a continuation of the racist logics of

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[515] See, for example, Sabaratnam, 2011; Shilliam, 2008; 2009; 2012; 2015, Frazer and Hutchings, 2007; Agathangelou, 2011; 2016; Jabri, 2014.

[516] For partial exceptions, which discuss Fanon's 'postcolonial cosmopolitanism', see Rao, 2010; Rao, 2017; Go, 2013.

empire, which continuously relegated colonial subjects to 'the waiting room of history.'[517] Thus, anticolonial leaders and thinkers sometimes asserted national, ethnic, and cultural difference to argue against the imperial imposition of institutional and governance standards. However, the need to build development states after independence remained, provoking the articulation of 'colonial socialisms'; for example, 'African Socialism', as a merger of nation-building and development programmes with particular cultural expressions. Anticolonial nationalists increasingly fought these various freedom struggles both through guerrilla warfare, and through the international political pressure offered by the UN forum. In these different but connected economies, federalism came to have two distinct but partially overlapping meanings: one associated with the interracial solidarity of colonial labourers, and one associated with racial nationalism, cultural tradition, and the world politics of self-determination and sovereignty.

Second, and however, differentiated economic and ideological relations between empire and colony – as well as the USA's emergence as Western hegemon and 'anticolonial empire'[518] -- heavily determined the extent and possibility of integration between colony and colony. The need to court or retain international capital elicited arguments that colonial peoples were essentially modern in their demands for freedom, democracy, and economic rationality. Colonies could represent themselves as sharing the ideological principles of the West, sharing the stage of history, whereupon the Cold War was being fought, and could therefore serve as partners in strategic and development cooperation. This was not always successful, as in the case of North Vietnam, where Ho Chi Minh's public appeal to American principles of freedom and democracy did not prevent US military involvement. 'Neo-colonialism', as identified by Nkrumah,[519] was neither always an unsolicited imposition of

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[517] Chakrabarty, 2000: 8
[518] See Smith, 2003
[519] Nkrumah, 1965

Western economic and political intervention, nor an instance of free choice, where new nations chose to court imperial capital amidst a menu of other options. Rather, it was the result of hierarchical and differentiated relations between actors with different historical ties to one another, and different opportunities to leverage Cold War alliances.[520]

Third, the potential of allegiance to the Soviet Union served as a motivation for Western powers to quell radicalism and secure the loyalty of anticolonial nationalists. However, in some instances, it served anticolonial nationalist leaders, who either pursued Soviet support for ideological and strategic purposes, or played both sides in order to win greater political independence. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the African and Caribbean leaders who most unambiguously sided with the Communists were usually the long-term losers of this game. Early Communist allies, like Cheddi Jagan (1918-1997), democratically-elected leader of British Guiana in 1953, was one of the first victims of the Truman Doctrine and Churchill's Commonwealth policy to 'not tolerate the establishment of communist states in the British Commonwealth.'[521]

Cold War geopolitics, imperial suppression, and anticolonial nationalism eventually became mutually-reinforcing in their constitution of a process whereby anti-imperial globalism was reduced to more limited and localised visions. Long-held political imaginaries, which saw the transformation of imperial world order as a transnational process of social equalisation and radical democratic unity, were more or less totally domesticated to the nation-state container within the space of a decade. Imperial suppression in French Indo-China, Algeria, and Kenya, amongst a host of other colonies, fed more radical forms of

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[520] My argument thus differs, in terms of emphasis, with the argument of Arjun Chowdhury's excellent book *The Myth of International Order* (2018). Chowdhury offers a broadly convincing argument, which explains the inability of post-colonial states to build larger capacity in terms of changes to the international system. Chowdhury argues that new states could no longer levy taxes on their populations to wage winnable wars, as Western states previously could. While true, this argument under-emphasises the continuing importance of neo-colonial political and economic ties. Chowdhury's work can thus be read as symptomatic of a larger trend in neglecting *interdependency* between states *qua* differentiated sectors of a globalised and hierarchical economy.

[521] Jagan, 1989: 1

anticolonial nationalism. Anticolonial nationalism, which had the potential to serve as a foundation for globalist politics based on integration and transformation, became reduced to a more rigidly territorialised framework of sovereignty. Cold War geopolitics and old imperial-colonial relations disciplined away much of the emancipatory potential of pan-African, pan-Caribbean, and black Atlantic politics. Rather than institutionalising radical new political and economic alliances to challenge liberal hegemony, the possibility of any such alliance was delimited by its ability to be assimilated into the post-war liberal world order. However, this was not always entirely deleterious to hopes of greater racial equality. The apartheid state in South Africa, for example, was severely tested by the post-war liberal order, even as it managed to hang on until after the easing of Cold War tensions.

Finally, I conclude that recovery of the debate and tension between development and liberation is what is required in our own scholarly analysis of these histories. This means, in part, resistance to the notion that we must or can choose between the two as a binary choice. Development and liberation are both exigencies of post-colonial order. Those who argue that we can bracket off the exigency of development in order to find an epistemic zone of pure non-Western-ness must at some point confront the political efficacy and intellectual reliability of this stance. Likewise, those who would dismiss cultural difference and racism in the pursuit of new articulations of universal progress must also account for how social alienation, segregation, and inequality, set in train by imperial racial hierarchies, are re-articulated so as to bedevil the possibility for transnational and interracial alliances going forward.

5.2. Global visions and the ideology of the federal development state

5.2.1. The emergence of federal socialism

During WWII and its aftermath, the entry of black populations into the global economy and international order on their own terms were viewed as transformative and emancipatory projects by moderates and radicals. From the founding conference of the United Nations held on April 25, 1945, activists who represented black Atlantic and pan-African politics viewed the organisation as a prospective tool for colonial freedom, racial equality, and a greater unity of democratic forces throughout the world. Metz T.P. Lochard (1896-1984), the Haitian-born editor-in-chief of the African-American newspaper, *the Chicago Defender*, wrote of the UN's potential to unite the political struggles of black populations throughout the world: 'the World Security Conference in San Francisco has but one meaning to the Negro people--- that is, how far democratic principles shall be stretched to embrace the rights of our brothers in the colonies and to what extent the American Negro's own security at home shall be guaranteed.'[522] Attendees of the San Francisco conference from all over the global South sought to address the previous omissions of the Dumbarton Oak conference, questions related to fundamental social and politics freedoms 'without distinctions as to race, sex, language or religion.'[523] This discourse around international organisation and the establishment of human rights thus predated the chain of political decolonisation, which would begin in earnest with Indian independence on August 15, 1947.

Even in 1947, the notion that the British and French Empires would unravel over the following fifteen years into a host of new independent nation-states was viewed as unlikely and undesirable by both imperial authorities and colonial subjects. The lessons of 'Balkanization' after WWI were widely learned, and after WWII, the predominant question was whether African and Caribbean colonies would renegotiate for better terms in their existing imperial relations, leave to form new alliances with formerly colonised nations, or some combination of the two. Far less in question for many in the colonies was that the crises

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[522] Quoted in Von Eschen, 1997: 78
[523] Ibid.

of international capitalist order -- which had now produced two world wars -- meant some drastic reformulation of that system along more egalitarian and democratic lines was now a necessity. In its first few decades, many looked to the UN as the main forum where these reforms would take place, while at home they sought greater unity and integration through federated development states.

For a few national leaders, who attained independence early, questions of independence quickly turned to the necessity of the development state. Jawaharlal Nehru initiated a programme of state-led development for India immediately after independence. Combining the Soviet economic model with a vision of global colonial emancipation and rationalisations derived from Hindu scriptures and cosmology, Nehru created a blueprint for several Third World development states to follow.[524] Nehru's merger of Hindu religious elements with ultra-modern economic and political rationales came after an extended period of collaboration with Gandhi. Gandhi had built a mass movement through the promotion of religious teaching, engagement with peasant villages, and the deployment of anti-modern sentiment. Nehru capitalised on Gandhi's following, even as he jettisoned his more insoluble ideological opposition to nation-building. While Gandhi's principled resistance to modernism earned him worldwide scorn and admiration, it was always built on foundations which were not autonomous from global capital. In fact, Gandhi's links to Indian business magnates, who saw him as a useful instrument of Indian nationalism, recently led novelist Arundhati Roy (1961-) to describe him as India's 'first corporate sponsored NGO.'[525]

However, it was not India's dependence on global capital that post-colonial federalists hoped to avoid, but its failure to hold together as a multicultural, multinational state with Pakistan. As we saw at the end of the last chapter, the challenge of building federal states was understood partly in terms of the incorporation of different 'tribal' – ethnic and cultural –

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[524] See Chatterjee, 1986: ch. 5
[525] *Hindustan Times*, March 22, 2015

interests. While Azikiwe, looking to Switzerland or the United States, initially saw nothing inherently problematic in a polity constituted by multiple 'tribes', others, like Padmore, saw tribalism as a formidable obstacle to unity. Tribalism, or the politicisation of ethnic identity more generally, had been a potent tool of imperial divide and rule. Imperial hierarchy in Africa, the Caribbean, and elsewhere across the world was built with white supremacy at the top, and other races and cultures portioned out degrees of autonomous authority underneath. This created social divisions based on race and culture, and as a consequence, ethnicities tended to associate with their own 'kind.' More relevantly to the looming post-colonial polity, different ethnicities and cultures tended to understand their political and economic interests in ethnic and cultural terms, and tended to vote in ethno-cultural blocs.[526]

Federation as a model for the post-colonial development state appeared as a kind of panacea for such post-colonial predicaments. As Getachew shows, Nkrumah and Trinidad and Tobago's president, Eric Williams, proffered the United States' federal constitution in 1787 as the reason the USA was able to cast off the 'economic fetters characteristic of the colonial relations and political dominance of European empires.'[527] Williams, like Padmore and Nkrumah, emphasised the 'international dimensions of the American constitution.' Rather than a polity built on ethnic and cultural homogeneity, the United States was united by the political aims of independence and freedom. Federation 'allowed for the preservation of political plurality within a new federal body while also creating a union government capable of securing the states' independence.'[528] While Getachew is correct that Nkrumah and Williams looked to 'Anglo-American' political models, and failed to an extent to 'engage alternative models', she misses the extent to which Nkrumah and other African and Caribbean leaders understood *their* federal projects as expressions of a uniquely African,

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[526] See Mamdani, 2012
[527] Getachew, 2019: 113
[528] Ibid.: 115

black, and colonial mission to advance world civilisation.[529] Perhaps because she is writing from the American university, and wants to emphasise the importance of the United States to anticolonial political imaginaries, Getachew heavily downplays the importance of socialist frameworks of world historical development to post-colonial worldmakers, as well as to the other models – the Soviet Union especially – to which anticolonial leaders looked. As a consequence, the politics of anticolonial worldmaking are reduced to a negative conception of sovereignty as non-domination, and the globalist, vanguard politics of progressive liberation are neglected.

Missing from narratives of African and Caribbean emulation of Western political models are the politics and context of vanguard socialism, which were prevalent in the anti-imperial imaginaries of the time. The influence of radical thinkers like Padmore, James, or Fanon on national development leaders like Nkrumah, Williams, or Ahmed Ben Bella (1916-2012) cannot be understated here. Few imagined at the time of Indian independence that the Gold Coast (Ghana), the 'very model of a well-run tropical colony', would become the first in Africa to secede from the British Empire and begin building a development state.[530] Padmore's pan-African socialism and his influence on Nkrumah are a key explanation. Nkrumah returned to the Gold Coast after WWII, joined J.B. Danquah's United Gold Coast Convention Party (UGCC), and, in 1948, helped lead a strike on imported European goods. The strike had been driven by a strengthened demand for greater devolution of governance to the colony. Danquah and the UGCC represented a more gradualist, moderate version of the demand for eventual independence and West African unification. The strike ended with the arrest of six UGCC leaders, including Danquah and Nkrumah, which resulted in their being

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[529] Ibid.: 118
[530] Darwin, 1988: 175

made 'national heroes' and the rapid rise of UGCC membership.[531] Skyrocketing mass

support forced the British to begin negotiations for independence.

Nkrumah's vision for Ghanaian independence was initially influenced by Padmore,

and, to lesser extents, Du Bois and Garvey. As we saw in the previous chapter, Padmore's

support for African freedom was founded on the internationalist aims of Lenin's 1917

revolution. In particular, the idea that revolution against capitalism and imperialism should

gradually bring about a unity of equal nations. Padmore opposed Woodrow Wilson's

advocacy of national self-determination as a capitalist ploy to delimit workers' and colonial

revolution, and freedom for any one colony as only as start. Nkrumah formed a friendship

with Padmore while studying at the London School of Economics in the mid-1940s. Padmore

instilled in Nkrumah the idea that African freedom meant institutional pan-Africanism led by

a socialist vanguard state, while Nkrumah was soon seen as the great hope of a circle of

London-based pan-Africanists. Padmore (1953) would later write a hagiographical account of

the young leader's rise to power. Du Bois, by now a committed Marxist and proponent of

world revolution, wrote to Nkrumah at the time of Nkrumah's election to premier:

> I hereby put into your hands, Mr. Prime Minister, my empty but still significant title of
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> President of the Pan-African Congress to be bestowed on my duly-elected successor
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> who will preside over a Pan-African Congress due, I trust, to meet soon and for the first
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> time on African soil, at the call of the independent state of Ghana.[532]

James visited Ghana in July, 1960 and gave a speech declaring that 'the centre of the world

revolutionary struggle is here in Accra, Ghana' and that Ghana's 'national sovereignty which

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[531] Marable, 1987: 99

[532] Quoted in Wallerstein, 2005 [1967]: 26

has been fought for and for which so many have suffered will be given up in the interest of a United States of Africa.'[533] These comments, the transcript notes, were met with applause.

Some, including James, questioned the private sincerity of Nkrumah's commitment to international socialism, but it was nevertheless the running ideological theme of his leadership.[534] His increasingly authoritarian commitment to a revolutionary socialist programme led him to imprison J.B. Danquah, drew suspicion from MI5, who had his phone tapped until at least 1957, and also inspired opposition from Akan elites who resisted his moves to establish a one-party state.

Yet, this was vanguard socialism which understood itself as a rupture from, and evolution of, the international Communist projects of the past. Nkrumah and Padmore framed the liberation of black and colonial subjects as the next phase of a radically democrat project, which ultimately encompassed the transformation of international society and global race relations. Nkrumah conceptualised socialism and its relation to existing African societies in a heterodox and contradictory fashion, which attempted to appeal to socialist and authentically African sentiment, while at the same time denouncing opposition to his leadership as 'doctrinaire communism' or evidence of a 'backward-looking intellectual elite.'[535] In 1959, the year of his death from a sudden illness, Padmore began the composition of 'A Guide to Pan-African Socialism.' The manuscript details Padmore's vision for a unique African role in the global project to transform the world through socialism. 'The great mistake which so many so-called Marxists have made', Padmore wrote, 'is to turn their master's teachings into dogma instead of using it as an intellectual instrument for understanding the evolution of human society and a guide to chart the course of future social development.'[536] For Padmore, it was the task of Africans' to 'subject Marxism to our own critical examination and see what

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[533] James, 1977: 164, 163
[534] Marable, 1987: 95
[535] Quoted in Legum, 1964: 150
[536] Padmore, 1964 [1959]: 227

there is in it which can be usefully applied to the conditions facing us in Africa.'[537]

Specifically, this meant rejecting the Stalinist political model and the lure of the 'one-party system', which 'is not inherent in socialism.'[538] 'Under true Socialism', the people 'are supposed to be not less but much more free than under the rule of capitalism.'[539] Padmore argued instead that Africa should emulate Russia's plan to secure an 'abundance of cheap power' gained through the expansion of its electrical grid.[540] Rapid economic development through public ownership of the means of production would lead to a revolution in society and liberation on the world stage, with '[e]qual opportunity given to all, regardless of race, tribe, color, class, or creed.'[541]

After Padmore's death, Nkrumah turned Ghana's small association of traditional Marxist Communists into a mouthpiece for his brand of African Socialism. Officially, the communist Bureau of African Affairs, and its journal, *the Spark*, opposed a return to 'traditional' African tribal life, declaring traditional African society 'a feudal system based on the hegemony of a few big families lording it over less privileged ones and even serfs.'[542] However, *the Spark* soon became an affiliated organ of Nkrumah's Convention People's Party (CPP), and began favourably promoting Nkrumah's political philosophy, 'Consciencism', as well as a new image of the man as the 'Lenin of Africa.'[543] With *Consciencism* (1964), Nkrumah departed from the Communist hostility to traditional African social models, and argued that a classless society could (must even) be built from the foundations of African 'communalism': 'In socialism the principles underlying communalism are given expression in modern circumstances…. [F]rom the ancestral line of communalism,

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[537] Ibid.
[538] Ibid.: 226, 228
[539] Ibid.: 228
[540] Ibid.
[541] Ibid.: 230
[542] Quoted in Legum, 1964: 151
[543] Ibid.: 157

the passage to socialism lies in reform, because the underlying principles are the same.'[544]

For Nkrumah, socialist revolution was homologous with African traditional society, in that it was a more modern version of the principles underlying Africa's essential communalism. Thus, Nkrumah's African Socialism required a return to the pre-colonial forms of African society before 'their social evolution was "ravaged by colonialism."'[545] However, the ultimate goal was the creation of a 'single mass party for the entire continent', including a continental military, and an image of Africa on the world stage as a leading force in the project of global freedom and democracy.[546]

Nkrumah's counterpart in Tanganyika, Julius Nyerere, espoused a similar message: the need to build out from traditional African society towards the global arena. Nyerere promoted a return to an idea of the traditional African 'community', first through a rejection of private property and nationalisation of land.[547] The basis for Nyerere's African Socialism was *'ujamaa'*, a Swahili word translated as 'familyhood.' *Ujamaa* is 'opposed to capitalism, which seeks to build a happy society on the basis of the exploitation of man by man; and it is equally opposed to doctrinaire socialism which seeks to build its happy society on a philosophy of inevitable conflict between man and man.' For Nyerere, as for Nkrumah, the socialist development state was not a foreign import, because the social and intellectual tools to build such a state were already present in Africa's pre-colonial history:

We, in Africa, have no more need of being "converted" to socialism than we have of being "taught" democracy. Both are rooted in our own past—in the traditional society

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[544] Ibid.: 156
[545] Ibid.
[546] Ibid.: 157
[547] Nyerere, 1964 [1962]: 242

which produced us. Modern African Socialism can draw from its traditional heritage the recognition of "society" as an extension of the basic family unit.[548]

It was this traditional heritage – now unfettered by colonial rule – which made Africans particularly suitable to lead a global mission for democracy and egalitarianism. Modern African Socialism could

> No longer confine the idea of the social family within the limits of the tribe, or, indeed, of the nation. For no true African Socialist can look at a line drawn on a map and say, "The people on this side of that line are my brothers, but those who happen to live on the other side of it can have no claim on me"; every individual on this continent is his brother.[549]

But the recovery of Africa's innate socialism was not only for the sake of Africans: 'Our recognition of the family to which we all belong must be extended yet further — beyond the tribe, the community, the nation, or even the continent – to embrace the whole society of mankind. This is the only logical conclusion for true Socialism.'[550] In a public rally in Zanzibar in 1959, Nyerere stated that an 'African is anyone who has made Africa his or her home and fights for the rights of the country and equality.'[551] Nyerere's pan-Africanism was founded on the need to 'fight white racialism and black chauvinism.'[552]

Like Nkrumah, Nyerere built his case for federation on the grounds that such a unity represented the authentic will of a native Africa *demos* in its struggle for world decolonisation. However, this was a will which would achieve expression through national

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[548] Ibid.: 246
[549] Ibid.
[550] Ibid. 247
[551] Paraphrased in Shivji, 2008: 240
[552] Ibid.

representatives. Nyerere presented a case for an East African Federation of independent states – Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda, and Zanzibar -- at the Conference of Independent Africa States in June 1960. Similar to proposed federations in West Africa, the Pan-African Freedom Movement of East and Central Africa (PAFMECA) would be a stepping stone to greater continental unity. Nyerere stated that federation 'cannot and must not be imposed upon the people of these territories', but 'must be a decision of the people expressed through their elected representatives.'[553] However, Nyerere did not believe that 'the wishes of the people of East Africa [for federation]' had 'to wait until these countries are completely independent.'[554] Nyerere also emphasised the difficulties in the construction of such an organisation: not least, the hard won sovereignty attained by these separate colonies would need to be forfeited. '[O]nce the four nations each have their own representative at the United Nations, have their own national flag and foreign representatives we shall have established centres of vested interests against unity.'[555] However, even if such an eventuality came to pass, the *need* to achieve unity against 'the balkanization of Africa' and the threat of neo-colonialism would remain.[556]

The other impetus to establish a native African unity was the threat of imperial retrenchment, which had as one manifestation the Central African Federation (Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland), established to maintain Crown government in the region. That 'voluntary Federation' would 'destroy any chance of maintaining an imposed Federation in Central Africa' meant that London would be hostile to African nationalists forming their own united political organisation. 'This is no conjecture,' Nyerere stated. 'When I was in London recently many intelligent people remarked that the success of an East African Federation voluntarily created by the African leaders themselves would spell the end of the unpopular

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[553] Nyerere, 1967 [1960]: 85
[554] Ibid.: 87
[555] Ibid.: 89
[556] Ibid.: 90

Central African Federation. It was even bluntly said that I had gone to London to sabotage the Central African Federation.'[557]

We will return to the point about imperial hostility to nationalist federation in the next section, but for now it is worth emphasising that pan-African socialists like Nyerere sought legitimacy for federal projects on the assumption that they represented dual – and potentially contradictory -- demands for: 1.) a democratic desire for federation, and 2.) a *need* for it, based on the assumption that African sovereignty would not survive Balkanization. Therefore, the claim to legitimacy of top-down anticolonial worldmaking rested on a rationale for the need of economic development, but also for a state monopolisation on the meaning of racial and cultural authenticity. The claimed organic socialism of African traditional society and its amenability to modern reform was less an invitation to invite the democratic participation – including criticism -- of different ethnic and social groups, than a national narrative meant to grant legitimacy to the post-colonial development state.[558] This does not mean that there was some pure, authentic cultural and intellectual space ready and waiting to serve as an alternative source of national development. However, there did exist a different vision of liberation based on an awareness that anti-imperialism necessitated both a class struggle and the transformation of ethnicity and culture.

5.2.2. Federalism from below

Alternative, anti-imperial globalist politics can be derived from a reading of James, Fanon, and Cabral which takes two elements as central to their strategic theorising. The first is James's particular interpretation of Marx's theory of 'the dictatorship of the proletariat', applied to anti-imperial strategy. The second is a non-deterministic dialectics, which emerges

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[557] Ibid.: 91
[558] For related by slightly different analysis of this phenomenon see Scott, 1998: ch. 7.

from Fanon's and Cabral's analysis of imperial social hierarchy, and the dynamic transformation of cultural identity as necessary for liberation after formal decolonisation. The next two sub-sections take each of these concepts in turn, paying particular attention to their place within the perceived necessity of creating an African and Caribbean federation from below. Together they engage with a specific question of anti-imperial revolution: how to prevent the elite capture of the revolution – partly through its monopolisation of ethnic and cultural identity -- and its continued cliental relationship with imperial capital?

By the early 1950s, James had abandoned Soviet Marxism and its particular vision of world revolution for a non-deterministic dialectics based in the need for direct democracy. Although a Marxist throughout his life, James stated in 1960 that he 'was very hostile to the particular brand of Marxism that is dominant today.' He complained that 'in the contemporary world today we have Russia with two hundred million people and carrying on a tyrannical rule over I don't know how many. We have China with six hundred million claiming to be Marxists.'[559] For James, Marx's conception of the dictatorship of the proletariat meant something quite specific, and it did *not* mean 'the establishment of a socialist society would have to pass through a stage of dictatorship in the usual sense of that term.'[560] It meant, 'that at all critical moments the will of the class which dominates the economic system, i.e., the proletariat, will prevail. That is all.'[561] In the same lecture, this time drawing on Rousseau's analysis of the citizen in the Greek *polis*, James stated that 'much of our study of modern politics is going to be concerned with this tremendous battle to find a form of government which reproduces, on a more highly developed economic level, the relationship between the individual and the community, that was established so wonderfully in the Greek City-State.'[562]

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[559] James, 2013 [1960]: 45
[560] Ibid.: 48
[561] Ibid.: 48
[562] Ibid.: 35

For James, in the late 1950s and early 1960s, this form of government was the post-colonial multi-national and multi-racial federation. This was not simply to be a facsimile of the United States of America, which failed, for James, in its systemic preservation of the dominance of capital, but a new kind of state intentionally constructed to navigate a more radically democratic world order. James's plan for this new kind of state is laid out in a number of his publications from this period, produced while he was personally active in the political processes of Ghana and the West Indies. On returning to Trinidad and Tobago in 1958, he learned that the fledgling West Indies Federation was already entering a state of crisis. I will unpack the WIF's problems further in the next section, but suffice to say for now that perceived differences of economic and political interest led to a conflict, wherein Norman Manley of Jamaica held a public referendum on whether the federation should continue. Manley wrote to James personally on June 6, 1960 to tell him of the decision to hold the referendum.[563] Jamaica voted to leave, and Eric Williams, having personally lost sight of the federation's value for Trinidad and Tobago, took this as an excuse to also withdraw. Writing in a pamphlet produced after the WIF had dissolved, entitled *Federation: 'We failed miserably', how and why*, James blamed the failure on the new national leadership, a people 'so crippled by Western education (based on Western experience) that they are unable to understand what is going on around them, and see themselves and act as nothing else but the inheritors of the imperialist power, which they vainly seek to dignify as nationalism and independence.'[564]

In works such as *State Capitalism and World Revolution* (1950), *Facing Reality* (1958), and later in *Notes on Dialectics* (1969), James wrote against the bureaucratic capture of revolutionary movements, which had most recently taken place with the Stalinisation of the Soviet Union. After the revolutionary overthrow of a state apparatus by a proletariat, not

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[563] University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. CLR James Collection. Box 5, Folder 105.
[564] James, 1961: 2

only does the revolutionary vanguard consolidate a new state apparatus – often, stereotypically, in a manner which reproduces the tyrannical authority of the old guard ('Bonapartism') – but the background assumptions about revolutionary progress are reduced to questions of good or bad bureaucratic management of the revolution. The consequence is that intra-leadership conflict becomes the ground on which the future of the revolution is fought, and the masses lose authorisation of the means and direction of the revolution. The new state apparatus might maintain control, but the revolution has lost its radical democratic purpose. This is not simply a result of bad, top-down decision making, but the socialisation of states into a global economy and hierarchical political order. A further result of this is that further resistance to the state can take the form of ethnic and cultural grievance. Because the new state has failed to grant institutional representation to the actually existing pluralism of the polity, conflict takes the form of radical assertions of ethno-cultural difference, apathy to politics due to lack of relation with the new authorities, and/or attempts to build syndicalist alternatives to state hegemony.

For James, federation was the means to address the deep-seated pathologies created by imperial-colonial order. First was the economic weakness of the West Indies. This condition necessitated a state plan for economic growth, which required a federal government to orchestrate the different sectors of the economy. However, James qualified the necessity of the centralised development state with the criterion that a state plan needed to have the authorisation of the masses. To achieve this, the federal plan needed to account for the concrete social needs of the people right from the beginning:

> There has to be a set plan, in which the State, taking all needs into consideration, not merely the ordinary economic demands but the social necessities of the population, will decide on a programme, aiming by stages to try to raise the general level, to satisfy the

urgent needs of the people and, this is very important because this is the political issue, to make an impatient people understand that some serious, tremendous, new and sustained effort is being made to satisfy the demands which are increasing every day.[565]

Second, James saw the potential for class and racial conflict in the West Indies as a threat to its existence after independence. Although race relations were generally harmonious before independence, the political parties of Trinidad and Tobago, as well as the political parties of other islands, aligned with the racial identities of their constituencies. Eric Williams's Peoples National Movement (PNM) was understood to represent an Afro-Trinidadian constituency, with the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) representing the Indo-Trinidadian constituency. This dynamic was reflected between islands as well: British Guana was an island dominated in demographics and politics by an Indian diaspora, and Trinidad and Jamaica by an African diaspora. The threat was that West Indian independence would chiefly become an exercise in black *or* Asian sovereignty. These fears reached a particular state of tension as the WIF unravelled in 1962. Stephen Maharaj, a representative of the DLP rose in parliament on January 12, 1962 and said

before 1956 there was no question of what racial stock you belonged . It was no question of who was Indian and who was Negro. The little flare up of racialism here and there had died down, but now it is a question that the P.N.M hooligans, if you do not subscribe to their point of view, and you belong to the Indian race or the White race, or if you happened to be a Negro supporting the D.L.P, then it is even worse. You

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[565] Ibid.: 21

are called all kinds of names in this territory…. I throw that sort of disorder in this

country directly in the laps of the P.N.M. Government.[566]

James saw federation as necessary to building a multiracial national consciousness,

but also the vehicle whereby the West Indies could take an active role in global

decolonisation and world revolution. In a speech given in Trinidad in 1959, James stated,

'Federation is the means and the only mean whereby the West Indies and British Guiana can

accomplish the transition from colonialism to national independence, can create the basis of a

new nation; and by the reorganisation of the economic system and the national life, give us

our place in the modern community of nations.'[567]

Federation was therefore central to James's rationale of global progress, wherein

society, the state, and the state-society relationship would be remade in the process of world

revolution. James also applied principles of his revolutionary federalism to Nkrumah's

development state in Ghana, especially in terms of the state's role in facilitating ethno-

cultural pluralism and gender emancipation. James's travels in the United States between

1938 and 1953 shaped his turn away from conventional Marxism and revolution in its

Stalinist and Trotskyite forms. Despite their reluctance to join nominally socialist parties and

associations, James noted that American workers were revolutionary 'in the most important

sense.' The 'instinctual grasping for the Universal – no mere change in the form of property,

but rather in the social relations of production – could be seen in the actions of 1940s workers

urgently seeking the negation of existing relations.'[568] Therefore, even without an

institutionalised bureaucracy – perhaps even because of, and not despite, this lack –

American workers represented a significant challenge to global capitalism through their

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[566] Hansard, House of Representatives (Trinidad and Tobago), Vol. 1. December 1961-August 1962. National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago: 132
[567] James, 1961: 16
[568] Buhle, 2017: 91

grassroots resistance to the advanced contradictions already on display in American capitalist

society. James's work at this time also evinced his view that 'the American woman' was

'symbolic of the freedom in the [American] civilization.'[569] In a major repudiation of

international Communist doctrine, James observed that capitalism was not necessarily a

threat to cultural advancement; in fact, the ultra-capitalist United States had managed to

foster robust cultural formations – such as gender emancipation and great literature – which

were both the impetus and promise of a truly free and revolutionary society.

This notion of a grassroots revolutionary public, unconstrained by the bureaucratic

capture represented by the Soviet Union, informed James's evolving assessment of

Nkrumah's revolution, and his continuous desire for federation in the West Indies. James's

initial admiring assessment of 'the Ghana revolution' was premised on Nkrumah's strategy of

uniting several disparate social sectors together with the goal of ejecting the British.

Demonstrating his belief that tribalism was not necessarily a reactionary force, James noted

that, in contemporary Africa, the tribe tended to form the basis for 'unions and associations of

all kinds, mutual benefit associations, religious groupings, literary associations, a vast

number of sports clubs, semi-political associations or associations which provide in one way

or another for one or some or all of these activities.'[570] However, this was a feature of urban

African life, which, although it did not erase the tribe, it made 'of the city a meeting place

and solvent of the ancient tribal differences.'[571] Thus, while 'the tribe' could be manipulated

for the purposes of divide and rule, it could also be a 'source of unity', supposing that tribes

were allowed or encouraged to come together over shared goals and interests.[572] The strength

of Nkrumah's leadership campaign had been to focus on these united grassroots social

formations and build his support from below. Especially Nkrumah's practice of building

[569] Ibid.: 123
[570] James, 1977: 54
[571] Ibid.: 55
[572] Ibid.: 52

support amongst thousands of female market traders, who eventually filled Accra's streets

singing and chanting for Nkrumah's election.

For James, now writing after Nkrumah's death, Nkrumah had erred when he had

abandoned the revolutionary grassroots pluralism of his initial support and established a one-

party state.[573] Underpinning this notion was the idea that the African one-party leader tended

to promote their own particular tribalism, while simultaneously denouncing other tribalisms

as neo-colonialism:

> It is the practice of the contemporary African politician in power to denounce tribalism
>
> as the chief enemy of progress in Africa. By that he is usually defending the centralised
>
> power he wields (this he identifies with the nation) against trivial and unscrupulous
>
> politicians who, defeated at the elections, i.e. the struggle for the centralised power,
>
> find in their own tribe a basis for immediate and partial and possible complete power.
>
> These quite unprincipled tribalists are not helped to see the error of their ways by a
>
> similar unscrupulous use of tribal connections, associations and rivalries by the very
>
> government which is denouncing tribalism. These unsavoury practices are a
>
> commonplace of African politics, and their superficies are quite often repeated by the
>
> liberal and socialist supporters and apologists of African self-government.[574]

Resistance to the post-colonial development state's reduction to masculinist and

cultural chauvinist logics of liberal recognition also formed the bedrock of Claudia Jones's

life's work. Also from Trinidad and Tobago, Jones gained notoriety in 1958 as the founder of

the London-based *West Indian Gazette (WIG).* Although usually referenced as a theorist of

intersectional oppression, Jones was also an active analyst of world politics, particularly as a

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[573] See James, 1992: chs. 21, 22, 24

[574] James, 1977: 20

Communist, pan-Africanist, and supporter of West Indies Federation. Really Jones should be seen as part of a tradition of women and men who recognised that imperialism, as well as in the arena of world politics, gained expression in quotidian social life. As Carole Boyce Davies notes, Jones saw that 'imperialism did not reside solely in its economic-based and international manifestations but in the way it manifested at the domestic and local levels in which black women were the most vulnerable.'[575] While Jones used the *WIG* to advocate for federation in the West Indies, she did not see it as a panacea against 'necolonial leadership.'[576] Jones's essay 'American Imperialism and British West Indies' warned of US and British business interests in the Caribbean, and stated that the WIF needed to protect the 'rights of minorities' as well as 'cultural and other forms of development' in order to authentically represent a politics of liberation.[577] In a March 1958 issue of the *WIG*, Jones compared 'the birth of the nation of Ghana to the birth of a West Indian Federation as "another new nation"; "Federation in the Caribbean is the first of a series of great steps required to ensure full national independence as a whole and self government for its units."[578]

As we have seen, anti-imperial globalism suggested a push towards an international system which was post-racial and post-class simultaneously. This intersectional focus meant that anti-imperial globalist politics were characterised by: 1.) the orientation of its theories of the international towards practical programs for balancing the power of the colonised against the imperial powers, and 2.) its insistence that social inequality and material inequality must be addressed in tandem at the local and international levels. These two tenets of anti-imperial globalism necessitated that class, cultural, gender, and racial identities serve as tools of the global liberation struggle. However, for Fanon and Cabral, two theorists particularly attuned to the ways in which the cultural nationalisms of an Nkrumah, Nyerere, or Senghor could

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[575] Davies, 2008: 60
[576] Ibid.: 63
[577] Ibid.
[578] Quoted in Davies, 2008: 90

reproduce the ethno-nationalism which authorised imperialism, culture was a weapon which would need to be transformed through its use.

5.2.3. Liberation as cultural transformation and non-deterministic dialectics

As a general practice, empires maintained a hierarchy of cultures within and across colonies as a key instrument of denying democratic power to the colonised. The mobilisation and assertion of cultures which had been diminished by Europeans was therefore a potent tool to reclaim power in colonised countries. However, in turning culture outward, the danger was that it become an inert celebration of itself and not drive towards its own transformation and that of the wider world.[579] Central to this perspective is the idea that culture is an expression of material conditions. Furthermore, the material conditions fostered and sustained by colonialism continued to preserve dominant and oppressive forms of cultural representation 'invented' by imperial divide-and-rule.[580] This did not mean that all 'native' cultures should be absolutely rejected, but neither should they be taken as essential, fixed, nor exempt from criticism. It is through the process of organised resistance against dominant culture – both imperial and native – that new emancipatory identities emerge. In a 1972 speech at UNESCO, Cabral noted that the internal transformation of culture is particular to a certain alliance of class interests—a minority of the 'native petite bourgeoisie' and the 'popular masses.'[581] Native bourgeois intellectuals, like himself, sought out the indigenous cultures which had best held out against foreign domination, either through the ferocity of their resistance or the remoteness of their location.[582] These masses were least susceptible to cultural domination, which proved a challenge to the bourgeois leaders who had only

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[579] See Murray, 2019
[580] See Cohn 1983; Ranger 1983
[581] Cabral 2016: 167
[582] Ibid.: 170

intellectual resources from the Western canon to relate to them. However, the 'everyday efforts and sacrifices of the struggle itself' produced an 'organized political expression of culture': a new, emergent identity, which was a product of class collaboration and struggle.[583] Cabral also emphasised that it was only a minority of the native bourgeoisie who sought this transformation. This was because another minority benefitted from incumbent forms of dominant cultural representation, and because 'the majority, silent, wallows in indecision.'[584]

Although many scholars have focussed on Fanon's espousal of colonial violence and violent anticolonial resistance, Fanon was neither an indiscriminate proponent of violence nor did he reject ethical commitments to cultural difference. Fanon held any rightful course of political action to be internal to particular sociohistorical formations, where no external ideology or ethical duty could presume to hold sway.[585] Fanon's analysis of the colonised world came from his training as a psychologist, his experience as a member of the Algerian revolutionary party *Front de libération nationale* (FLN), and also his experience as a colonised subject born and raised in French Martinique. He argued that anticolonial struggle was driven by the absolute exigency of liberation, but there was no universal, morally sanctioned means to achieve liberation removed from the context of a particular colonial life and psychology. Fanon made a distinction between the politics of difference meant to cast off the yoke of colonialism, and the politics of difference which could concretise the power of post-colonial rulers and destroy the transnational solidarity between revolutionaries. For Fanon, unity, solidarity, and difference were not meant as context-distant moral imperatives, but components of an anticolonial power politics derived from the concrete experience of insurgency. The antithesis to colonialism is to turn its violence against empire, and continue until there has been a fundamental transformation of both national and international society.

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[583] Ibid.: 172
[584] Ibid.: 171
[585] See Maldonado-Torres, 2008: ch. 2

Speaking at a conference in Accra in 1960, and just after Kwame Nkrumah had taken the podium to denounce violence as part of the African independence struggle, Fanon differentiated between the context in Kenya – which had improved since the Mau Mau insurgency officially ended -- and Algeria:

> A European was recently sentenced to death in Kenya for having killed an African. Well, in Algeria such a thing is impossible. On the contrary, I think they would congratulate a European who did something like that and they would give him a medal for pacification.[586]

He also stated that 'international moral pressure is a major asset' in the struggle against the apartheid government in South Africa.[587] Algeria, on the other hand, represented a type of struggle where violence has become the last inescapable option of a desperate people. 'In certain colonies,' he said,

> the violence of the colonised is the last gesture of the hunted man…. In 1954, the Algerian people took up arms because at that point the colonial prison became so oppressive that it was no longer tolerable…. It was no longer a question for the Algerian of giving a meaning to his life but rather of giving one to his death.[588]

As I have argued elsewhere, the imperial division of the world was assisted by the notion that different ideas, epistemes, and thought systems rightfully belong to different regions of the world. I call this analytical assumption *epistemic mapping*.[589] Anti-imperial

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[586] Fanon, 2018: 656
[587] Ibid.
[588] Ibid.
[589] Murray, 2019

globalists like Fanon and Cabral associated the claim of rightful cultural ownership with either tribalism, which was often a conservative obstacle against the end of colonisation, or the imperialist idea that natives were not fully capable of grasping supposedly 'Western' ideas and institutions. The problem was that intellectual ownership can turn stagnant, chauvinistic, and can be used by certain groups of people to lord power over others. For Fanon and Cabral, there was nothing essentially different about 'non-Western' ideas in this regard. Their answer to this problem was to promote new, emergent thought systems and cultural institutions which would emerge from the processes of global decolonisation. Although they argued that these new knowledge formations could form the basis of a more peaceful, humane world in the future, it would be a mistake to try to disentangle their speculative articulations of a 'new humanity' from the power political impetus to build post-colonial federalisms which could compete in the realm of world politics.

Central to global liberation is the theoretical wager and political claim that intellectual discoveries seen to be for the benefit of all humanity rightfully belong to all of humanity. The problem is not to do with some essential difference between foreign and local ideas, but with the imposition of foreign or local ideas by the powerful on the weak. This is why, for Cabral, 'cultural resistance' is simultaneously emergent, novel, and organic to the social intercourse of the revolutionary movement. Cabral, more so than Fanon, both recognised and valued the epistemic diversity of the African masses. However, like Fanon, he saw their potential to establish ossified forms of hierarchical power which could dismantle the revolutionary movement. Speaking to the PAIGC in 1969, Cabral argued that intellectual diversity reflected differentiated relations with nature. This was not unique to Africa, but the same all over the world, and with similar and comparable traits in societies of a certain relation to nature. Those who are 'afraid of lightning, floods, and thunder have songs and dances that are of a

certain type. There might be one or another difference, but they're similar.'[590] African folklore and customs are notably different from Western Europe, which is 'ultramodern', but similar to those of Eastern Europe.[591] This did not mean that Western Europe was intellectually superior in absolute terms, by virtue of being 'more advanced.' On the contrary, its claim to superiority was a 'colonial mentality', which had to be rejected.[592] On the other hand, the negative aspects of 'African culture', such as the superstitious practice of child sacrifice, also had to be rejected.[593] Cabral argued neither for a total embrace of European or African ideas, but a synthesis of African tradition and the shared intellectual inheritance of humanity: 'we have to create a new culture, also based on our traditions, but respecting everything that the world has won today for serving people.'[594]

The claim of a right of ownership to the shared economic and intellectual commonwealth of humanity was also expressed by Padmore before his death. For Padmore, modernisation was unavoidable in view of the centuries of racial oppression that had come before. Padmore once told his fellow pan-Africanist, Peter Abrahams (1919-2017), that 'it was a matter of power'; 'the moment the Africans and Asians and Jews had political power, the world would respect them.'[595] This was in part a question of racial vindication, but it was also international power politics: the balance of power viewed in racial terms. Development was imperative, but this was not mere mimicry of a Western modernisation program. This was development with African characteristics, and in view of Africa's right to a fair share of the material inheritance of global modernity:

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[590] Cabral, 2016: 118
[591] Ibid.
[592] Ibid.: 117
[593] Ibid.: 116
[594] Ibid.
[595] Abrahams, 2000: 45

> [I]t is only by liberating themselves from colonialism and imperialism that there will be
> any chance at all for [the colonial masses] to assert their own African personality and
> their right to share in the abundance which the present level of economic and
> technological development has made possible for all to enjoy.[596]

The threat of imperial retrenchment or sustained dependency made development necessary. It also made continental federation necessary: 'some form of regional unity as the forerunner of a United States of Africa.'[597] This required a challenge to tribalism, which was a legacy of imperial divide-and-rule, and now an obstruction to unity and state-led development.

For Fanon, too, ethnic and cultural identity is critical to the struggle against empire, but it is secondary to the political struggle which creates other forms of identity and solidarity. 'My black skin is not the wrapping of specific values', Fanon wrote.[598] 'Every time a man has contributed to the victory of the dignity of the spirit, every time a man has said no to an attempt to subjugate his fellows, I have felt solidarity with his act.'[599] 'I am a man, and in this sense the Peloponnesian War is as much mine as the invention of the compass.'[600]

Fanon saw racial difference as a social fact, but also as a social formation to be transformed through decolonisation and the establishment of African and West Indian federations. Fanon first awoke to race politics through the representation of white heroism displayed in a monument to Victor Schoelcher (1804-1893), the white abolitionist who had helped abolish slavery in the French colonies.[601] The ten year-old Fanon saw the monument on a school trip, where the reverence for Schoelcher covered over any reference to the lives

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[596] Padmore, 1964 (1959): 224
[597] Ibid.: 229
[598] Fanon, 2008 [1952]: 177
[599] Ibid.: 176
[600] Ibid.: 175
[601] Hudis, 2015: 15

or actions of the slaves themselves. Yet, writing seventeen years later, he explicitly denied any ambition to redeem this history characterised by the marginalisation of his race:

> In no way should I derive my basic purpose from the past of the peoples of color. In no way should I dedicate myself to the revival of an unjustly unrecognised Negro civilisation. I will not make myself the man of any past. I do not want to exalt the past at the expense of my present and of my future.[602]

This present and future are each represented in Fanon's dialectics, both in linear, programmatic terms, and in terms more cyclical and non-deterministic. In the course of decolonisation, the individual/national/particular is a necessary access point to the human/international/universal.[603] Colonial rule alienates its subjects from each other. For its negation, the colonised population has to seize and define its communal identity, but then turn this outwards towards the wider transformation of (international) society. This is fundamentally an internationalist project, to which national consciousness is a necessary stage, and nationalism is a stumbling block.[604] Fanon's conception of decolonisation as a stadial process can be seen in a discussion of the West Indies Federation written in 1958. 'A Caribbean national consciousness has been born', he wrote. However, it is

> wiser that each people begins to gain independence within the framework of its situation so that the federation of all the Caribbean is not a rapid, artificial and fragile construction, but a confederation of mature states, determined to help each other and to defend each other's freedom.[605]

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[602] Fanon, 2008 (1952): 176
[603] Hudis, 2015: 137
[604] Fanon, 1963: 190-199
[605] Fanon, 2018: 589

Decolonisation is at the same time an opening to the potential for innumerable struggles to come. Although these intellectual activists wrote as if transformation of international order was imminent, their politics were not stamped with a 'use before' date. A mistaken but very common reading of this history overlooks the openings created by the politics of liberation and takes its failures as more real and more final. Even though Fanon's politics were necessarily imbedded in time and place, they also invoked a general solidarity in struggle. The future for these politics is not expressed by a demand for recognition, but a demand for a different world.

5.3. Hierarchy strikes back: shifting allegiances in the age of dual hegemony and development

5.3.1 Hierarchy and divergence

The post-War context and the growing imminence of sovereign independence from European empires cast previous imaginaries of political identity and unity into contention. There were three interconnected reasons for this: economic dependency, different experiences of armed conflict, and reconfigured political allegiances with respect to the Cold War, imperial historic ties, and the rise of US hegemony.

As we have seen, many African, African-American, and Afro-Caribbean politicians and intellectual activists had espoused the idea of federation for decades before WWII. Now, with anti-imperial momentum growing, West Indian and African politicians needed to seriously consider how to fund these political enterprises. W. Arthur Lewis, the St. Lucian development economist, who became a Nobel laureate in 1979, drew up development plans

for both Ghana and the West Indies in the late-1950s.[606] Lewis had been a member of the

League of Coloured Peoples in London along with C.L.R. James and others, and was part of

the cadre of colonial intellectuals who saw the development and independence of Africa and

the West Indies as part of a larger struggle over racial equality. He was also seen by The

Bank of England and the Commonwealth Relations Office as a 'safe pair of hands', who, in

the Ghanaian context, was described as a 'moderating influence' on Ghana's more 'wild'

finance minister, Komla Gbedemah (1912-1998).[607] Lewis found that Crown Agents of

London had mismanaged the sterling surpluses of Nigeria, Malaya, Ghana, and other colonial

territories through a bad investment record in long-term securities.[608] This was part of a larger

practice of the British Labour government to continue to extract sterling reserves and unpaid

imports from colonial territories to aid in its financial troubles after WWII.[609] The effect was

to drain colonial treasuries, as well as create the possibility for a currency crisis if the

mismanagement was heavily publicised. However, rather than risk such a crisis – an outcome

which would not help Ghana or any other colony – Lewis did not publicise the

mismanagement, and instead got to work on a solution.

The new administrators of Ghana and the West Indies wanted to see short-term

economic results, and Lewis recommended top-down state planning, and a 'general

atmosphere' of 'welcoming "know-how" and capital overseas' to achieve them.[610] Lewis

imagined an 'agricultural revolution' in Ghana's economy, particularly its centuries-old

cocoa sector.[611] This would involve reform of the indigenous systems of property rights,

which were 'obstacles to economic development.'[612] The WIF, by the time it was formally

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[606] The most complete history of Lewis's involvement as economic adviser to Ghana and the West Indies is Tignor, 2006.
[607] Tignor, 2006: 157
[608] Ibid.
[609] James, 2015a: 86
[610] Quoted in Tignor, 2006: 161
[611] Tignor, 2006: 162
[612] Austin, 2005: 343

inaugurated in 1958, also had no treasury surplus, and all of its revenue had been dependent on imperial trade circuits and taxation. Furthermore, the different island colonies which constituted the WIF specialised to varying degrees in different primary commodities. As with many postcolonial economies, this made the constituent units of the WIF more competitive than complementary, and still heavily dependent on their historical ties with the British Commonwealth.[613] Lewis recommended a centralised fiscal, monetary, and trade policy for the federation: an arrangement which meant that the individual member states would lose revenue, but might subsequently be compensated with government grants.[614]

What this meant was that national and transnational consciousness built on racial oppression within white world order was now subject to the highly asymmetrical global economy. Trinidad and Tobago was the WIF's oldest and largest oil exporter, but now that Jamaica had also built an oil refinery, Norman Manley pressed for trade protections for the burgeoning industry. While solidarity between Africans and West Indians had once formed a robust anti-imperial black Atlanticism, Trinidad and Tobago and Ghana were now competitors for global cocoa revenues. Still moving within the assumption of federal integration, the government of Trinidad and Tobago continued to build trade partnerships with the Western powers as an independent unit. The United States had leased certain regions of Trinidad and Tobago from the British for 99 years. Eric Williams made the renegotiation of this lease a cornerstone of his anti-imperial platform; particularly, the release of the Chaguaramas port, which the US had occupied in order to build a naval base. Williams stridently opposed the lease, led a march to Chaguaramas, and demanded that it be released in order to serve as the WIF's capital. In 1959, Sir Edward Beetham (1905-1979) was helping to oversee the transition of Trinidad and Tobago to an independent state. At the opening of a legislative council meeting in that year, on side with William's government, Beetham made

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[613] Getachew, 2019: 128
[614] Ibid.: 127

reference to the contested lease, but also to Trinidad and Tobago's ongoing relations with the United States and Canada. Specifically, the 'steady inflow of capital' from 'United States investors, led by Texaco (Trinidad) Inc.' which were 'actively expanding our oil industry' and 'economic prospects.'[615] After Jamaican exit and the looming disintegration of the WIF, Williams did a volte-face and agreed to share Chaguaramas with the US military, in exchange for ongoing economic relations, and the US agreeing to build quarters for Trinidadian marines.[616] James and Maharaj, who had championed Williams's march on Chaguaramas, were horrified, and split to form a new anti-imperial socialist party, the Workers and Farmers Party, with oil workers' trade union leaders, including George Weekes (1921-1995).

It is likely that James saw Williams's temptation to resume colonial economic relations with the West as a threat to the WIF even before its disintegration. Early parliamentary debate of the WIF included awareness that Britain was about to join a federal arrangement with Europe. Some, including Williams, argued that this was a reason to resume and even strengthen Trinidad and Tobago's colonial economic ties with Britain, in order to benefit from the new European common market. In a personal letter of 1961 to Carl La Corbiniere, James suggested that a way to narrate this for the benefit of the WIF, was to inform the people that British entry into the common market was the primary reason for a recent curtailment of migration from the colonies into Britain. Britain was now looking away from the Commonwealth and towards Europe, which meant that the West Indies needed to stick together and not rely on its historic ties with Britain.[617]

In Africa, political and ideological divisions, as well as economic, opened up between Nkrumah, other heads of state – especially Azikiwe – and Nkrumah's own cabinet. As Robert Tignor shows in his economic history of late colonial Egypt, Nigeria, and Kenya,

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[615] Council Papers 1959. Council Paper No. 10, 10 July 1959. National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago.
[616] Hansard. House of Representatives Trinidad and Tobago. December 1961-August 1962. National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago.
[617] Letter to Carl, November 6, 1961. University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. CLR James Collection. Box 5, Folder 105.

decolonisation was not a clean process, but 'a tumultuous series of events', often characterised by the racist and pessimistic attitudes of the British, French, and American governors meant to help facilitate the process.[618] These processes can also be generally – but not totally -- characterised by imperial powers, and transnational, Western-based businesses, attempting to establish stable business ties with a more moderate national elite at the expense of more radical political and labour interests.[619]

The power of these interests, and the general consensus in Africa around the importance of foreign capital for the federal development state, coincided with opinions on African unity, which were already heterogeneous. While Nkrumah called for maximal integration of African territories, Azikiwe and others disagreed. Azikiwe argued in *the Future of Pan-Africanism*, that Nkrumah's plan exacerbated 'deep-seated fears in the minds of certain African leaders' that unity would undermine Africans' hard-fought sovereignty.[620] Furthermore, Azikiwe argued for 'the right of African states to equality of sovereignty irrespective of size and population; the right of each African state to self-determination and existence… and the principle of non-intervention' be established as principles within any African union.[621] An African union, Azikiwe suggested, should not be one large state, but a 'miniature United Nations.'[622] However, it should be noted that the Nigeria Azikiwe now led was not really seen at the time as a unitary nation-state, but a multi-national federation, which was going through its own considerable struggles holding together as a single entity.

Aside from his Padmore-inspired support for immediate, maximal unity, Nkrumah practiced or put forward other policies which were either controversial, or resented by other member nations of the newly establish Organisation for African Unity (OAU). In 1965, a French-speaking union of African states, the Afro-Malagasy Common Organisation, accused

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[618] Tignor, 1998: 7, 14
[619] See Tignor, 1998: 11
[620] Azikiwe, 1961: 13
[621] Ibid.
[622] Quoted in Getachew, 2019: 135

Nkrumah of intervention in their member states' affairs, particularly of subverting the

leadership and harbouring political exiles from other African states.[623] This was part of a

suite of policies which led many to believe (probably correctly) that Nkrumah wanted to

centralise the mission for African unity on Accra and his regime. The rationale for

intervention in other OAU member states' affairs was often to do with the real threat of

armed conflict throughout the high period of decolonisation.[624] Yet, African leaders disagreed

on the degree of African military involvement in international affairs. During the Congo

crisis of 1960, following Patrice Lumumba's (1925-1961) removal from power by Joseph

Kasa-Vubu (1915-1969), several African heads of state voted at the UN against the seating of

Kasa-Vubu's delegation. Once only a vaguely anticolonial voice on the world stage, the

Congo crisis also lured the United States into African affairs to a far great extent than

hitherto. When their vote failed, a cadre of African heads of state decided to withdraw their

troops from the United Nations Command in the Congo. Nkrumah was a rare voice in this

process arguing against this decision as a retreat and a concession.[625] In 1963, Nkrumah also

proposed that each African state pledge 30, 000 GBP to support 'the freedom fighters' in

Algeria as part of a pan-African 'liberation committee.'[626]

    As well as other African heads of state, few members of Nkrumah's own cabinet

shared his *particular* internationalist vision.[627] Bad blood in Nkrumah's cabinet predated the

OAU, when Nkrumah's internationalist project clashed with those of other Ghanaian

politicians. For example, the liberal internationalism of UGCC leader, Danquah. Before the

strike action of 1948, Danquah had been an important African member of the colonial

government. On the UGCC leaders' release from prison following the strike, Danquah began

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[623] Wolfers, 1976: 150-155

[624] I do not have the space to give the complex internal politics of African unity its due. For primers on this subject, see Wolfers, 1976; Wallerstein, 2005; Davidson, 1992; Cooper, 2014; Dunn and Englebert, 2019.

[625] Wallerstein, 2005: 47-48

[626] Wolfers, 1976: 167

[627] See Marable, 1987: ch. 2

negotiations with the British for a gradual process of devolution. Nkrumah was able to use Danquah's caution, old ties with the British, and his own mass support, which he had cultivated through campaigning in the Gold Coast's peasant communities, farms, markets, and various workers' organisations, to mount a counter-movement, represented by the slogan, 'Self-Government now.'[628] Nkrumah's split from the UGCC led to the creation of his Convention People's Party (CPP), which brought about a relatively rapid separation from the British Empire. Nkrumah's leadership eventually became a cult of personality, and Nkrumah used his power to chase political rivals into exile, such as the sociologist, Kofi Busia (1913-1978), as well as imprison Danquah.

Writing to Nkrumah during the time when he had been made a political pariah and imprisoned, Danquah denounced both African *ujamaa* – the form of African communal socialism advocated by Tanzania's Julius Nyerere – and the 'German-made thalidomide tranquilizer called socialism.'[629] Instead he advocated liberalism, that the rights of the individual were held above the interests of the state, pan-African political integration, and the progressive move towards a world government and world parliament.[630] He held all this in parallel with the idea that Ghanaian culture and Ghanaian values, understood to represent a syncretic merger of Christian and traditional Akan components, should form the basis of the independent nation. Liberalism, for Danquah, was not a European import, for 'the African… is, at heart, a liberal' and 'the Ghanaian in particular' is 'a greater liberal even than the Englishman.'[631]

As was the case with Eric Williams, Nkrumah was also divided between loyalty to the emergent political organisations of former colonies, and historic ties to the British Commonwealth. As Mélanie Torrent shows (2016), Nkrumah's prospective post-colonial ties

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[628] James, 1977: 47-49; Marable, 1987: 100-102
[629] In Ofusu-Appiah, 1974: 181
[630] Ibid.: 138-139, 172-173
[631] Ibid.: 176

with Asia and other African territories were less demanded than *negotiated* with the oversight

of British and French colonial authorities. Despite employing a rhetorical stance to the

Commonwealth, which underscored its neo-colonial character, Nkrumah sought pan-African

arrangements, initially with Guinea specifically, and Afro-Asian allegiance with India *within*

the framework of the reformed post-colonial British Commonwealth. In the early 1950s,

visits of Indian officials to the Gold Coast, accompanied by potential promises of financial

and institutional support and cooperation, stimulated concern from British officials hostile to

prospective African and Indian cooperation. As has already been established, British and

French African territories were the subjects of constant surveillance, usually within the

rationale of monitoring potential Communist infiltration. With respect to India, British

officials worried that the 'Indian Government would encourage African movements to

embrace more fully Gandhian *Satyagraha* in their opposition to British rule, even where

some devolution of power had already occurred.'[632] The predominant rationale was therefore

that 'Indian activity in British Africa, at all stages of constitutional evolution, should… be

monitored closely.'[633] Britain's colonial policy was also hostile to Nkrumahian pan-

Africanism, on one hand, because it represented a threat to its influence in Africa, and, on the

other, because prospective ties between French and British African colonies threatened

British relations with France. The Conference of Independent African States and the All

African People's Conference, held in Accra between 1951, and, after Ghana's independence

in 1958, were closely monitored by British colonial officials. However, their general state of

alarm was periodically assuaged by the conciliatory tone struck by Nkrumah, particularly of

the Ghanaian leader's denunciation of violence. British officials eventually came around to

the opinion that Nkrumah's politics were pragmatic, and not necessarily a threat to Britain's

international interests. This was evidenced, in particular, by Nkrumah's positive 'attitude to

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[632] Torrent, 2016: 577
[633] Ibid.

the US government and business as a source of aid and investment.'[634] As a result, pan-African and Afro-Asian allegiances suffered in relation to ongoing political and economic ties with Britain and the United States. The evidence suggests that Nkrumah sought to strategically pursue both kinds of alliance, but hierarchical relations with Britain ultimately persuaded – if not pressured – him to limit the extent of South-South cooperation. Nkrumah's relationship with the West would ultimately sour as he sought strengthened ties with the Communist world. However, by the time this occurred, Nyerere's prediction that inert nationalism would quickly foreclose paths to greater South-South unity had already come to pass.

5.3.2. The Cold War frame

As was broached in the previous section, the political processes meant to build South-South unity were negotiated under scrutiny by Western officials: through covert surveillance, promises of greater devolved powers, and through the interpersonal relationships of officials and new national leaders. This scrutiny was inseparable from the Cold War context, and longer global Cold War animosity between the political forces of global Communism and global liberalism. From the interwar period, and through to the post-war period, international Communist parties had built support amongst black populations through an emphasis on 'Negro liberation' in general, and the espousal of a transnational 'Negro Nationhood' in particular.[635] While a patchy history of commitment to black-particular politics had gradually weakened black support for the international Communist project, the exigency to establish lasting development ties with the West was even more deleterious. This did not happen overnight, and protracted anti-capitalist revolutions, such as Cuba (1953-1959), continued to

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[634] Ibid.: 599
[635] See Berland, 1999

fuel radical politics and insurgencies throughout the black world. However, while Cold War politics did not eradicate left radicalism, they by and large dealt a deathblow to the political projects of federal socialism.[636]

The Western axis's association of national federalism, South-South international integration, and other pan-nationalist movements with Leninist vanguard anti-imperialism profoundly shaped the rhetoric and direction of these movements. As several studies have now made clear, not least Westad's formulation of a 'global Cold War' between the Western 'empire of liberty' and the Soviet 'empire of equality', the perceived threat of Communist expansion to every corner of the colonised and formerly colonised world was central to Western foreign policy since, at least, 1945.[637] The 'red menace' justified continued growth in the surveillance apparatus, intelligence gathering, and military intervention of Britain, France, and the United States from the end of WWII throughout the high period of decolonisation, approximately 1947-1975.[638] Of course, this was the rationale behind major conflicts in Cuba, Vietnam, and Korea. Escalating crises throughout Africa in the late 1960s and 1970s created US fear of an 'internationalization of the guerrilla war… from which the Soviet Union might profit.'[639]

The threat of Communism's spread sometimes provided cover, if not a blank cheque, to one of the most violent periods of imperial suppression of colonial unrest. The British suppression of Kikuyu resistance in Kenya from 1952 to 1956 – or so-called 'Mau-Mau' insurgency – had little to no connection to international Communism, but nevertheless gained some international credibility under the more widespread anti-Communist policy.[640] Jomo

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[636] In this, my argument is in agreement with, and builds on, Byrne, 2016 and Chamberlin, 2018

[637] The historical literature on this subject is too large to cite in its entirety. See, for example, Westad, 2007; Prashad, 2012; Životić and Čavoški, 2016; Chamberlin, 2018. This is also not to say that every US intervention in anticolonial struggles had an impetus which was solely anti-Soviet Union. See, for example, Connelly, 2000; Connelly 2002.

[638] See Thomas, 2008 and Walton, 2013 for more detailed histories of these processes.

[639] Jansen and Osterhammel, 2017: 114

[640] For more historical context on British anti-Communist policy, see Luff, 2012.

Kenyatta, the perceived leader of the insurgency, was the subject of an MI5 investigation on his links to Communism since 1930.[641] By the end of the insurgency, about 20, 000 Africans had been killed by British forces, with scores more held and tortured in Gulag-like detention camps.[642] In other cases, the perceived suspicion of solidarity and collaboration between radical anticolonial movements had more merit. For example, after 1959, representatives of *l'Armée de libération nationale* of Algeria (ALN) attended meetings in Hanoi on the operational and ideological facets of revolutionary war, hosted by General Vo Nguyn Giap (1911-2013), the hero of Dien Bien Phu (1954) amongst other important anticolonial battles.[643]

As stated in the introduction, the incumbency of Cheddi Jagan to the premiership of British Guyana was an early target of Western Cold War policy. Although elected overwhelmingly in 1953, Jagan's electoral victory needed to be ratified by London. The USA 'went to extraordinary lengths' to pressure Britain into postponing the withdrawal it had planned from the colony, and called on Britain not to recognise Jagan's victory. The US State Department believed that Jagan and his People's Progressive Party (PPP) would "'ruin' the colony and establish a Marxist-communist beach-head in America's back yard.'[644] The Colonial Office, succumbing to US pressure and with Churchill's support, cancelled the election and used Jagan's 'communism' as an excuse. Really, Jagan was a progressive and a socialist, whose American Jewish wife, Janet (born Rosenberg, 1920-2009), had made some inroads to the British Communist Party without establishing strong links with political communism. MI5 intelligence on the Jagans more or less cleared them of suspicion, but Britain and the United States feared that Jagan's nationalist policies would block them from

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[641] Walton, 2013: 259
[642] See Anderson, 2011; Elkins, 2005; Walton, 2013; 236-273
[643] Byrne, 2016: 61-62
[644] Walton, 2013: 156

access to British Guyana's large aluminium and bauxite deposits.[645] On October 19, 1953, Time Magazine published a sexist and racist article about the Jagans, defending their removal from power. A blond American Jew married to an Indo-Guianese man – and an eminent political thinker in her own right, who would eventually become Guiana's president – Janet Jagan was smeared as a middle-class Communist agitator who apparently could not find a white man to marry. The British 'had hoped by the example of good manners and management to cool off the hot-headed East Indian and Negro leaders elected in backward Guiana', until the US State Department made them see sense.[646]

For good reason, US involvement reflected by the Jagan incident had a chilling effect on socialist vanguard projects in the West Indies and West Africa. By 1966, James had found himself an enemy of Eric Williams. Trinidad's *Evening News* printed a story on October 5 of that year, relating Williams's policy to 'crush any Marxist movement in the country.' The front page story depicted James, and two other members of the Farmers and Workers movement, above the headline 'Williams: I'll Crush the Marxists.' James was called out as a self-described Marxist, inspired by the Cuban Revolution to overthrow Williams's government. James was now a pariah of mainstream politics in Trinidad, a development which signalled the end of any prospective West Indies Federation as a radical socialist project.

The Cold War dynamic in Nkrumah's Ghana was less straightforward. Nkrumah's reputation as an 'LSE communist' with links to known anti-imperialist, George Padmore, made him a target of MI5 intelligence, especially after he gained political prominence after 1951.[647] The Colonial Official, Sir Charles Arden-Clarke (1898-1962), formed a friendly relationship with Nkrumah, and at the same time initiated an inquiry into his political views

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[645] Ibid.: 158
[646] Time Magazine. October 19, 1953: 27
[647] This history is more fully detailed in Walton, 2013: 211-232

and ties. Arden-Clarke made an early assessment of Nkrumah as a socialist moderate, and

Padmore as a heterodox Marxist with no real ties to the Soviet Union. Yet, the Special

Branch continued to read Nkrumah's mail and keep him under close surveillance throughout

his rise to power. In 1956, one year before Ghanaian independence, and after the Special

Branch had decided on Nkrumah as a 'pragmatist' and moderate, an MI5 agent revealed

himself as MI5 to Nkrumah. The agent suggested to Nkrumah that the Ghanaian leader invite

the Special Branch to stay in the country, so as to keep an eye on suspected subversives,

including Nkrumah's rival in pan-African leadership, Gamal Abdel Nasser (1918-1970).

Nkrumah agreed, and MI5 stayed with Nkrumah's consent until 1960. MI5's recruitment of

new national leaders to spy on communists became a wide practice, and soon other African

leaders, including Nyerere, were acquired as assets.[648] Nyerere was one of the most consistent

critics of neo-colonialism, and he likely resented having to keep an eye on communism for

the West, though he had little choice.[649]

   After independence, Nkrumah began to seek closer ties with the Eastern bloc. He was

awarded the Lenin Peace Prize from the Soviet Union in 1962, and established cooperative

agreements with Mao Zedong in the same year. While this shift has been read as an

ideological 'lurch to the left' by historians of Nkrumah's rule, my reading suggests that it is

more likely that Nkrumah simply drew from Padmore's pan-African realism.[650] Neither

Padmore nor Nkrumah were strict ideological loyalists to Western or Eastern governments,

and rather played both sides in the pursuit of their ultimate aim: pan-African unity. As a

result of forged KGB documents, Nkrumah became increasingly convinced that the West was

planning to withdraw support, if not topple, his leadership. His paranoia at this time is

reflected in an exchange of letters with C.L.R. James. James wrote to Nkrumah several times

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[648] See Walton, 2013: 283
[649] Shivji, 2008: 243
[650] Cf. Walton, 2013; 232

between 1959 and 1962.[651] On June 4th, 1960 and in July 1962, James asked his old London friend to help 'establish the West Indian-African connection' and to promote the WIF any way he could. During the period of the WIF's collapse, James asked Nkrumah to give his public support for the WIF, as Nkrumah's testimonial would mean so much to the West Indian people. Nkrumah wrote back about the WIF in August, 1962, and stated 'I shall never fail to take an active interest in the future welfare of the West Indies people, for their destiny is linked up with ours.' But then in a subsequent letter, seemed to ignore James's request, and instead wrote, 'it is not a very pleasant thing to know that people are plotting to do away with you, but when you become a revolutionary, you have to expect assassination plots, traitors, and so forth…. The imperialists are not asleep and we must be vigilant.' J.K. Harley, the head of Special Branch in Ghana, became convinced that Nkrumah planned to turn Ghana into a Soviet satellite, and initiated a successful coup against him on February 24, 1966.[652]

Cold War politics worked against anti-imperial globalism in different ways in other moments of (inter)nationalist struggle. Following Algeria's independence from France, Ahmed Ben Bella and Mohamed Khemisti (1930-1963) spearheaded diplomatic missions to other African states with a socialist vanguard rationale. Directly informed by Fanon's pragmatic anti-imperial globalism, the Algerian diplomats sought to lead 'the fight against imperialism by supporting national liberation movements to their utmost, leading the struggle against *neo*-imperialism by propagating socialist revolution.'[653] In practice, Ben Bella and Khemisti put aside ideological difference by initiating peacekeeping campaigns, reaching out to Western-backed states like Cote d'Ivoire, and helping to establish the OAU. These policies initiated the spread of new alliances against imperialism within and beyond Africa over the next year. Although initially on good terms with President Kennedy and the Unites States,

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[651] PRAAD. Letters to Kwame Nkrumah. Folder RG 17/1/178.
[652] Walton, 2013: 232
[653] Byrne, 2016: 188

Ben Bella opposed US support for Portugal in Cabo Verde and Angola, and began to support left wing opposition movements in Morocco, Niger, and Zanzibar. This led to acrimony with Washington, and a consensus that Ben Bella was hostile to Western interests. The beginning of the end of Algeria's globalist ambitions came as a result of the Sands War with Morocco, October-November 1963. A dispute over colonial borders led to conflict between Algeria and Morocco. Each saw the other as guilty of subversion: Ben Bella was convinced that Rabat was propping up his opposition; Rabat saw Ben Bella's socialist revolution as a threat to its conservative monarchical government. Eventually, King Hassan of Morocco (1929-1999) attempted to convince Washington that Maghreb had 'become a new front in the Cold War.'[654] Kennedy wanted to resist further conspicuous involvement in such conflicts in Africa, yet, the USA and France continued to secretly deliver armaments and munitions to Morocco during the conflict. Eventually Cuba and Egypt were drawn into the skirmish. Although the Sands War ended in diplomatic détente, it fuelled nationalism and state-centrism in Algeria, drew hard demarcations between Cold War camps, and helped further dismantle the idea that Africa was united.

While Western involvement and liberal internationalism helped scupper federal socialism, this does not mean that it *never* provided an outlet for racial and cultural equality struggles, at least in a more limited sense. A notable example of this is the period in the 1960s during which the International Court of Justice (ICJ) brought a case against South Africa's apartheid state. With the backing of Lyndon B. Johnson's government, the UN's African Group launched a series of actions against South Africa in the early to mid-1960s. Made up of a large constellation of African governments – the largest advocacy group of its kind at the UN -- the African Group represented the political potential of a united Africa working in concert at the international level. Initially the African Group argued that South Africa was a

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[654] Byrne, 2016: 217

danger to 'the maintenance of international peace and security', which meant that the Security Council 'would be obliged to take action under the provisions of chapter VII.'[655] When this failed to sway the United States and Great Britain, who had 'sizeable economic investments' in South Africa, the African Group brought litigation against South Africa through the ICJ.[656] While the African Group was ultimately unsuccessful in ending apartheid through international law, the ICJ effectively put longstanding colonial rationales on trial: the notion that whites had an international mandate to rule over other races, and that non-whites were on their own (inferior) path of development which made integration impossible.[657]

The ideological backbone of the African Group's case was that the modernization represented by international organisations like the UN *necessarily implied* 'nonracialism.'[658] The purpose of modernization was not to perpetually provide upgraded rationales for empire to lord standards and conditions over weaker and poorer nations, but the establishment of normalised pathways for the gradual attainment of radical democracy and equality. But, through the continuous struggles of African leaders to navigate the waters of Cold War clientalism, the global economy, and the persistence of global racial hierarchy, the resolve to fight for these pathways was worn down. As Ryan Irwin writes, 'the fight against Afrikaner nationalism hardened how African leaders talked about territoriality, development, and race.' While the African Group was successful in bringing about the 'delegitimization of racial discrimination and the creation of a new discourse of autonomy', it also engendered a realisation that 'encouraged the Third World's collective turn away from the United Nations and toward the economic nationalism and dependency theories of the early 1970s.'[659]

Yet, like many historical narratives of decolonisation, Irwin's explanation creates a foreclosure through the construction of hard discursive epochs. While it is true that Cold War

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[655] Irwin, 2012: 106-107
[656] Ibid.: 107
[657] For the full history of this event, and its complex politics and clash of ideologies, see Irwin, 2012.
[658] Irwin, 2012: 106
[659] Ibid.: 10

politics and the failed struggle for rights at the UN demonstrated the persistence of hierarchy, it is a massive overstatement to suggest that counter-hegemonic anti-imperialism was diverted entirely to inert national autonomy. Such a framing underemphasises the ongoing evolution of globalisation, and the political rationalisations which facilitate the different forms in which global hegemony crystallises. The dual exigencies of development and liberation continue to this day in different forms, and they continue to necessitate a social and political imaginary which can accommodate a global and transnational scale.

5.4. Post-Cold War developments

In a 1984 issue of the London Review of Books, C.L.R. James, now 83-years old, gave his assessment of Maurice Bishop's (1944-1983) recently-failed New Jewel revolution in Grenada, alongside his review of a book which offered an account of it, *Grenada: Revolution and Invasion*. The 'three English academics' who wrote the book, James decided, came 'to a particularly old-fashioned conclusion.' While they rightfully acknowledged that revolutionary societies in the global South could not merely copy 'Western parliamentary democracy', they then made the mistake of plunging 'headlong into another popular miasma': the need for a 'Marxist Leninist Vanguard Party.' James summed up: 'It is curious that those who put forward this battered recipe never give a single example of a society in which that type of party has been successful. They do not give it because they cannot give it.'[660]

Grenada was just the latest failed attempt to mount a counter-hegemonic response to Western and neo-colonial hegemony that James had witnessed. There had been others since Nkrumah's pan-African revolution and the WIF had ended. Perhaps most notably, Nyerere's

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[660] *London Review of Books*, 'A United Caribbean.' 6-19 September, 1984: 23

dual disaster of, on one hand, village collectivisation (*ujamaa*) in Tanzania – a project James

had once described as the most radical socialist project ever attempted – and, on the other,

Nyerere's failure to establish a New International Economic Order (NIEO) with other post-

colonial leaders, including Norman Manley. *Ujamaa* had been built on the notion that 'pre-

colonial African societies were inherently democratic and practiced a form of "primitive

communism" that could lay the groundwork for modern socialism.'[661] While *ujamaa* did

produce some benefits, the project was characterised by widespread denial of democratic

accountability, and ultimately ended in food shortages and Tanzania's dependency on

international aid.[662]

The NIEO had been inspired by the success of the Organization of the Petroleum

Exporting Countries (OPEC) in gaining leverage over Western economies. Its political

rationale followed principles put forward by development economists such as Raúl Prebisch

(1901-1986) and Gunnar Myrdal (1898-1987) that Third World states were at a permanent

disadvantage in the global economy due to the inelastic price of primary commodities. The

NIEO sought to band post-colonial nations in the global South together, and for each state to

seize 'full permanent sovereignty… over its natural resources.'[663] The NIEO was ultimately

shattered due to the rise of oil prices in the early-1970s, and the rise of sovereign debt in non-

oil producing countries. Anti-imperial common purpose had once unified leaders politically

throughout Africa, the West Indies, the Middle East, and elsewhere. Now the creation of new

economic alliances around sovereign control of resources, and the differentiated ability of

different states to benefit from or withstand price fluctuations, largely ended the Third World

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[661] Kelley, 2012: 30

[662] For critical accounts of the *ujamaa* project, see Shivji, 1976; Babu, 1981; Scott, 1998. For a more recent and positive assessment see Lal, 2015.

[663] Dietrich, 2017: 264-265

project. The notion that post-colonial international organisations might be a mechanism for global redistribution would 'unravel beyond repair' by 1975.[664]

Neoliberal structural adjustment programmes, imposed by imperial powers through the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IM), came soon after. These programmes often put political conditions on international aid. Eurocentric standards of liberal democracy and economic rationality were imposed on new nation-states. Imperial legitimation scripts of 'civilisation' had come full circle. Western academics, with little or no grounding in the anti-imperial histories which came before, facilitated this project by demarcating different civilisations as disconnected spheres of essentially different values. Or, as one scholar of international ethics classified them in 1992: 'Western tradition[s] of thought' and 'Asian and African traditions.'[665]

As with the empire-backed chiefs of indirect rule, new national elites played on this international imaginary of essentially different values and culture to earn support and legitimacy at home and overseas. Nevertheless, visions of federal unity from above and below continued in new forms. While many Western liberal analysts came to see the failures of the more utopian institutional visions of pan-Africanism and black internationalism as proof of the territorial nation-state's global applicability, 'nation-statism' and dependency (or neo-colonialism) were met with a variety of viewpoints from left academics and commentators. In the 1960s, white observers of African politics like Michael Wolfers, Basil Davidson, and Immanuel Wallerstein generally viewed the OAU as a necessarily difficult prospect, but still an evolution of the interwar 'social movements' to which they were favourably inclined. James continued to search for progressive internationalist alternatives to the post-colonial state until his death in 1989. For some, such as the Egyptian scholar, Samir Amin (1989; 1990), autonomous state socialism came to be seen as a necessary progression

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[664] Ibid.: 268
[665] Jones, 1992: 44-45

of the armed anticolonial revolutions, which had erupted in colonies such as Vietnam, Algeria, Kenya, Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and Cuba.

Different ideological fissures over the direction of African unity came to renewed prominence in the late-1960s and 1970s, and again in the 2000s. Oginga Odinga (1911-1994) was a Kenyan Luo tribal chief who renounced his chieftaincy in 1957 to take a more active role in the anti-imperial political struggle. Initially on the side of the president, Jomo Kenyatta, Odinga ultimately opposed Kenyatta over the latter's pursuit of US and Western capital. In his political autobiography, which has a title that became a political slogan, *Not Yet Uhuru* (1967), Odinga diagnosed Kenya's post-colonial problems as due to Kenyatta's government privileging Western capital over the demands of workers' struggles. For Odinga, *uhuru* meant pan-African unity, but this had to come from the creation of an international organisation of democratic workers' movements and the ejection of Western powers from the continent. 'Imperial tactics in southern, central and east Africa are clear,' Odinga wrote. 'They are to hold back the assault on the southern strongholds of colonialism and White domination for as long as possible; to protect and preserve strategic and economic interests in the Congo; and in East Africa, using Kenya as a base, to keep a careful watch on and if necessary to isolate and undermine the new state of Tanzania.'[666] Within the last fifteen years, Mbeki of South Africa, Mummar Gaddafi, and Museveni of Uganda have all announced Pan-African institution-building projects to gain legitimacy for weakly democratic regimes.

The conception of anti-imperial pan-Africanism from below would take different forms, for example, in the fiction and political essays of the Kenyan nationalist writer and academic, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o. Ngũgĩ's last novel in English, *Petals of Blood* (1977), depicts a post-colonial Kenya dominated by Western capital, as well as a national elite which uses

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[666] Odinga, 1967: 312-313

traditional culture as a tool to wield sectarian authority on one hand, and to oppose *political* intervention from the West on the other. In terms reminiscent of Fanon, the protagonists in this struggle are those who demand 'a different world' through class struggle and grassroots opposition. Kenyatta's administration imprisoned Ngũgĩ in the late-1970s for expressing his revolutionary Marxist views in *Petals of Blood*, and other works. In his published prison diaries, originally released under the title, *Detained* (1981), Ngũgĩ took aim at Kenyatta for using his cultural nationalism as a substitute for emancipatory politics. Kenyatta 'was a graduate of Malinowski's school of anthropology at London University, a cultural nationalist (he had written *Facing Mount Kenya* in which politics was deliberately cut out).' He was also 'a petty bourgeois to the core, who never consciously rejected that class base…. As a leader of an anti-imperialist alliance of classes, he kept on shifting his position, depending on the strengths and weaknesses of the two mortally contending classes: workers and peasants, and the imperialist bourgeoisie.'[667] Negatively comparing Kenyatta with Cabral, Ngũgĩ wrote that, once in power, petty bourgeois leaders would tend to betray the people's struggle. '[L]ike Cabral', he wrote, they must 'recognize this reality if [they are] going to transcend it, by consciously rejecting [their] class to find a true and permanent, regenerative link with the people.'[668] Ngũgĩ remains an advocate of African culture and language to this day, but he has never been a narrow nationalist, and has always framed different imperial and anti-imperial strategies as linked through globally connected processes and practices. He even spoke at the General Assembly of the United Nations in 2009 to argue in favour of limited Responsibility to Protect (R2P) interventions, as long as they were not used as subterfuge for imperialism.[669]

Continuing to reflect the transnational political sociology of black experiences with white world order, similar evolutions in anti-imperial discourse came from African-American

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[667] Ngũgĩ, 1981: 161
[668] Ibid.: 160
[669] Ngũgĩ, 2009: 1-6

and Caribbean writers over the same period. One of the more interesting thinkers to emerge

from the African-American context was Harold Cruse. In *the Crisis of the Negro Intellectual*

(1967), Cruse gave a provocative critique of counter-hegemonic African-American politics in

the first three-quarters of the 20th century. He argued that African-Americans were an

internally colonised population, whose politics had always taken place at the junction of

'nationalism' and 'integrationism.' Pointing to the Black Power and Civil Rights movements

exemplified by Malcolm X (1925-1965) or James Baldwin (1924-1987), Cruse argued that

contemporary black nationalists were characterised by romantic and abstract notions that all

black people were united and strong in a common stance against oppression. Meanwhile,

integrationists sought recognition and inclusion in white-dominated political, economic, and

cultural institutions, and turned away from struggles being waged by the black populace at

large. Cruse's prescription was to argue for a more rigorous sociohistorical analysis, for black

intellectuals to produce a programme for how segregated, already existing black institutions

could be built and developed for the eventual aim of social, political, and economic equality

with whites. Probably influenced to an extent by the anti-internationalist imaginary of the

Cold War, Cruse argued for a rejection of old pan-African and black Atlantic politics to the

benefit of a primary focus on African-American struggles.[670]

　　Maybe somewhat ironically, Cruse's rejection of globalist and internationalist politics

were really evolutions of ideas expressed by global dialectical thinkers like Du Bois and

Fanon. As we have seen, Du Bois and Fanon both also (ultimately) rejected abstract and

romantic conceptions of black subjectivity, when they saw these as ineffective or deleterious

to their anti-imperial strategies. The difference was to do with the strategic content of the

times. Du Bois and Fanon could both articulate international collective identities because the

relational networks of empire imbued these collective identities with concrete political

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[670] Von Eschen, 2004

content and opportunity. As Cedric Johnson (2007) argues, Cruse was to the Black Power movement what Herbert Marcuse was to European Marxism: an intellectual trying to diagnose the mass stagnation of the workers' revolutionary movement in the face of new and powerful allegiances to capital.[671] Marcuse argued that labour movements in the United States no longer represented a contradiction to capital because of these allegiances. Instead, the contradiction needed to come from 'black Americans, inhabitants of the Third World, the unemployed, and the dispossessed': those Fanon had once described as the wretched of the earth.[672] Marcuse's diagnosis made him the European critical theorist of choice for the Black Power movement. However, compared to Cruse's analysis, which recognised that black America was also classed, and therefore counted amongst its number people with their own allegiances to capital, Marcuse's was relatively essentialist and romantic.

Other attempts to articulate new futures for anti-imperial politics continued to reach for the universal, but looked inward to locate alternative sources of universalism. For example, the Martiniquan philosopher and poet, Édouard Glissant, produced an alternative dialectics based on his conception of radically heterogeneous Caribbean society. Contributing to the *créolité* literary movement, Glissant characterised 'creolizations' as the formation of a 'complex mix' of endlessly emergent forms of 'humanity's Being' through 'an interplay of relations.'[673] Really Glissant advocated an anti-universalist universalism: an ethical commitment to the multifarious forms of society and social being, and the ways in which these are constantly becoming something else, evolving through 'mutual mutations.'[674] However, this, for Glissant, was not a substitute for politics – or even an alternative to anti-imperial armed struggle – but an intellectual disposition to an alternative global ontology, which resisted imperialism's fixed, essentialist definitions.

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[671] Johnson, 2007: 17
[672] Ibid.
[673] Glissant, 1997: 90
[674] Ibid.

Although Glissant himself was not entirely guilty of conflating culture with politics, the organisation he once worked for, UNESCO, eventually became a site for cultural politics. Another outcome of the histories I have related in this thesis was the emergence of a discourse which presents cultural categories of thought as a final frontier of transnational anti-imperial conflict. By this, I do not mean that military engagement ceased between liberal order-keepers and 'anti-status quo' groups in the global South. Such military engagement, of course, continues to this day. Rather, categories of thought, such as knowledge and culture, emerged as aspects of the politics of globalisation, which could still be contested on a global scale, when, for example, the nation-state form, could no longer be. With the failure of anti-imperial movements to transform the hierarchical structures of political and economic institutions, categories of thought, through the post-colonial university and organisations like UNESCO, became one of the few remaining bastions of transnational counter-hegemonic struggle.

For example, in 1984, the US threatened to withdraw from UNESCO because it had good reason to believe that Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow (1921-), the Senagalese director-general of the organisation and Glissant's colleague, was turning the organisation into an anti-Western Third World political front and ally of the Soviet Bloc.[675] This conflict can be seen as a continuation of 'the culture wars' carried over from the Global Cold War, to a time when political international institutions were no longer seen by Third World leaders as possible sites for the promotion of radical democracy and redistribution.[676]

some of the most radical insights in anti-imperial globalist discourse and politics came from women. Although sometimes expressed tacitly or unsystematically, a central idea in much of this discourse throughout the 20th century was that political unity driven from below

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[675] See *The New York Times*, Foreign Affairs; Airing UNESCO's Closets by Flora Lewis. March 1, 1984. Available at: https://www.nytimes.com/1984/03/01/opinion/foreign-affairs-airing-unesco-s-closets.html. Accessed 28/09/2019.
[676] Dickstein, 1993; Saunders, 2001

would advance the position of women in the world by giving networks of grassroots women's movements greater access to the international political sphere. As we saw in Chapter Three, Adelaide Casely Hayford, developed a combination of pan-African and feminist views prior to the First World War. After working for Garvey's UNIA, she attempted to start a girls' vocational school based on a combination of these principles. In 1932, French Martiniquan writer Paulette Nardal presented a theory of black women's racial consciousness, and envisaged a teleology of liberation based on the synthesis of black and white cultural elements. Amílcar Cabral would espouse similar ideas at UNESCO four decades later. Trinidadian journalist Claudia Jones was an advocate of pan-Africanism, Communism, and the West Indies Federation, who prefigured black feminists like Audre Lorde (1934-1992), Angela Davis (1944-), and Sylvia Wynter (1928-). These generations of radical women, to varying extents, located the dehumanisation of the (post-)colonial subject at the level of capitalist world order, and its related masculinist conceptions of political authority and subjectivity.

Audre Lorde (1984), in particular, presented a radical plea for the right to self-define against imperial impositions of social normalisation. Characterising decolonisation as an aspect of the social, Lorde demanded to be recognised in terms of a complex social identity, not reducible to any constituent category: 'As a Black lesbian feminist comfortable with the many different ingredients of my identity, and a woman committed to racial and sexual freedom from oppression, I find I am constantly being encouraged to pluck out some one aspect of myself and present this as the meaningful whole, eclipsing or denying the other parts of self.'[677] This threat to self comes from all sides: white men, heterosexuals, white women, and black men. Lorde understood her subjectivity in terms of structures of power

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[677] Lorde, 1984: 120

shared by 'Black and Third World people', and thus in terms of a social identity directly linked to histories of anti-imperial world politics.[678]

I want to suggest that we can read Lorde as, in some ways, most characteristic of the context defined by the decline of the Third World project. The demand for self-definition, for an understanding and representation of self which does not rely on the acceptance of others, is perhaps the purest example of the turn to autonomy after the failure of anti-imperial globalism to revolutionise (international) society. As scholars such as Tadiar (2009) have shown, Claudia Jones's fears that the deeper meaning of anti-imperial revolution would be overshadowed by masculinist nation-building projects has largely come to pass. While I am sceptical about the political efficacy implied by Lorde's pure spurning of 'the oppressor', and the reliability of her claim that Black and Third World people experience the same oppression, it must be acknowledged that imperial hierarchies which remain in society are likely to continue to elicit such radical representations of self and other.

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[678] Ibid.: 114

Chapter Six

Conclusion

This thesis has given an answer to why transnational visions were dominant, and then were marginalised, in the black anti-imperial politics of the early to late 20ᵗʰ century. Departing from other readings of these transnational histories, I have argued that African and diasporic critics of empire were neither passive recipients of 'Western' political forms, nor were they representative of an autonomous black or African genre of political thought. Instead, these politics were shaped through their necessary interaction with a dominant global discourse, which understood the problems of the 20ᵗʰ century as requiring large-scale forms of political organisation and integration. The dominant global discourse was *determining* in that it delimited the possibilities of what pathways out of empire might entail. Yet, what is most notable, is how consistently and to what extent colonial activists and leaders pushed against the parameters of what a nation-state or an international institution was supposed to be. Rejecting the ethnic chauvinism and aggressive expansionist logics of imperial nation-statism, some argued that the modern state, and even world government, could be remade as servants of social justice: as socially, politically, and economically progressive forces. In addition to serving a 'bigger is better' security rationale, inter-racialism, and workers' interests, the vision of post-colonial federation represented the capability of non-white, non-European people to join and surpass their former rulers on the shared terrain of global progress.

Anti-imperial globalism was also determined by a discourse of race. While not the only factor, *racialisation* placed limits on the ability of anti-imperial politics to sustain momentum across ethnic divides. From 1919 to 1975, colonial subjects who struggled against empire negotiated different identities and allegiances alongside different visions of a post-

colonial world. Empire's politics of difference engendered a fundamental tension between the self-understanding of particular anticolonial groups and a commitment to global progress defined as liberation. This tension defined the anti-imperial globalist relationship to the idea of international order, international cooperation, and modernity itself. Disagreements between anticolonial activists and leaders were expressed as racialialised identities, with a view to how these identities would come to be represented within an international system which was becoming increasingly formalised through the project of liberal world order.

However, these disagreements were not always counter-productive or debilitating to goals of sovereignty and self-determination. Fissures could sometimes be ignored or ironed out in favour of the common cause depending on the historical conjuncture. Race discrimination and injustice often served as the initial impetus for social change. Black anti-imperial politics overlap, but are not reducible to, other anti-imperial politics, because their agents consistently pursued strategies which were seen to benefit the race, and rejected those that would elide race in favour of other solidarities, such as class. Still, the notion that the end of empire was ultimately for the purpose of benefitting any one race was broadly rejected by progressive black anti-imperialists.

This changed after independence, when racialisation played a role in delimiting national, let alone transnational, cohesion. Sovereignty, though seen as a necessity by many, had a sting in the tail. The colonial socioeconomic divisions based in race – but where 'race' also stood in for the social meanings denoting hierarchical cultural and class categories – served as the basis for neo-colonial relations with the Great Powers during the Cold War, and as a way of excluding minority voices and interests from democratic decision-making in fragile post-colonial states. In these new national and international contexts, the idea of a Third World socialist federation driving global progress had little oxygen to survive.

Throughout this study I have demonstrated how analysis of anti-imperial globalism from 'above and below' allows us to foreground plural and contested visions of the post-colonial state and political community to world politics. This framework provides more than more nuanced history. It provides a critical response to the notion that the post-colonial nation-state in its post-1945 form was the only or most desired form of political organisation after empire; while at the same time, a better understanding of the structural constraints of those who pursued a more progressive and inclusive state as the means to end colonial rule. Anti-imperial globalism from above can be seen to represent all the lessons that mainstream IR has traditionally wrung from decolonisation: struggles for sovereignty and recognition, the assertion of 'non-Western values', the construction of regional inter-governmental orders. However, rather than reproduce a unitary actor ontology, I have shown how these politics were shaped through their relational co-implication with other political discourses and visions. Anti-imperial globalism from below was also a part of the world politics which helped shape the post-1945 order. These politics stressed the dialectical relationship between global racial disparity and domestic social injustice: two 'levels of analysis' traditionally kept as distinct by mainstream IR.

Sovereignty and recognition were only worth pursuing to the extent that they would remake imperial-colonial power relations at state and international levels, and not reproduce them in a new form. Likewise, 'non-Western' culture and knowledge were valued to the extent that they could bring about a more modern politics, and could form the basis for class collaboration in political organising. Global order was necessary only to the extent that it could provide fairer and more peaceable relations between societies. Throughout the anti-imperial struggles of the 20th century, we can see the relationship between different anti-imperial globalisms from above and below at work. This does not mean political uniformity across a seamless global transition from empire to nation-state. Instead it reveals a plurality

of different ideas about resistance, reform, and progress, which were connected through their reaction to more prevalent events and racialised structures.

International and transnational solidarities were a prevalent feature of activist and ethnic minority nationalist politics after WWI. They arose in response to the global crises of the Great War and the subsequent crises and great power conflicts left in its wake. WWI provided a global demonstration for many colonial subjects that the emperor had no clothes when it came to world civilization's deeper promise of democracy, progress, peace, and prosperity. This feeling was underpinned by the demonstration of black and Asian colonial forces fighting for the integrity and expansion of imperial territory. Race leaders, like Marcus Garvey, W.E.B. Du Bois, and J.E. Casely Hayford, were indicative of a rising transatlantic black power and a growing intolerance for the colour line. For some, their politics also demonstrated the limit to which essential representations of 'blackness' could be used to argue for greater inclusion of black populations into the liberal capitalist order, without a more fundamental reform of that order. Radical thinkers like Hubert Harrison and Cyril Briggs, suggested an alternative politics through their critiques of these race leaders. Each argued that global transformation would need to come from colonised populations on the ground: harnessing the actually existing potential for ethno-cultural and class collaboration within communities on both sides of the Atlantic. This included a rejection of imperial 'civilisationism', but not globalism, inter-racialism, or federalism. Harrison and Briggs show that, historically, it has not been the idea of 'world civilisation' itself that is imperial, but white societies' claim of ownership to it, and their claim of the right to lord its standards over other societies.

The various political mobilisations spurred by the Italian invasion of Abyssinia and the expansion and decline of the COMINTERN showed a connected and galvanised black internationalism. Yet, they also reveal divergences in the way that 'revolution' could be

articulated rhetorically by different black intellectual activists in different social milieu.

Revolutionary politics were not like an instruction manual passed down from the

Enlightenment as a way to show non-European people the road to sovereign statehood.

Rather, ideological texts, like Marxist-Leninism, were one part of a larger pool of resources

used, in a selective and creative fashion, to guide and mobilise anti-imperial struggles. These

struggles were directly precipitated by the colonial encroachments and racism experienced by

people throughout the empire, and they helped bring about a dominant global discourse of

revolution. However, they were also informed by more widely prevalent discourses about the

need for political integration and world government. These were interpreted by different

people in different ways, and did not follow one logical path from colonial enslavement, to

sovereign statehood, to world government. Claude McKay and others saw the potential for

revolution in the mismatch between black subjectivity and global modernity. They argued

that black subjects were inherently ill-suited to modernity, and therefore would continue to

represent its limits and potential for transformation outside of formal institutions. These more

anarchistic conceptions resonated with those of federalists, like James, Padmore, Du Bois,

and Jones, who argued that the state needed to be remade as a radically democratic and

egalitarian institution. McKay, Padmore, and Du Bois shared the belief that white supremacy,

globally and in colonial societies, was an impediment to any truly revolutionary course of

action. McKay's first-hand experience with the COMINTERN and white labour led him to

largely give up on organised political movements. Du Bois concurred that 'the wages of

whiteness' were a roadblock to inter-racial collaboration, and so he argued for strategic and

temporary segregation as a path to multiracial democracy. Padmore, James, and Jones argued

for black sovereignty for Africa and the Caribbean, but each imagined this as a path to

federalism, which would embody and defend multiracial democracy, social freedom, and

egalitarianism. Each saw these forms of political organisation – not as abstract -- but already

in place through various patterns of labour organising, particularly the longstanding tradition of West Indian labour federation.

While more of a subject for contention in previous generations, the idea that Africans and the diaspora shared a path to development with the West became dominant in the post-WWII discourse of African, Caribbean, and black American Third Worldists. This reflected both a perceived need to establish robust development economies to pay for state independence, and to enter into new forms of international cooperation with the Great Powers. At least in the case of many African and Caribbean nations, the rhetoric of non-alignment often concealed new forms of imperial dependence between emerging post-colonial states, the United States, and the Soviet Union. Though they mattered more than some post-colonial leaders wanted to, or could, admit, Cold War geopolitics and colonial legacies with Britain and France delimited the possibilities for political union and more direct and equal popular sovereignty.

Again, racialised discourse and policy played an important role. New African leaders sought to promote traditional cultural difference in order to legitimate democratic and socialist reforms. Various African Socialist programmes were devised with progressive intentions, but, in practice, often served ethno-nationalist and authoritarian ends. Promoting a single traditional 'African difference' often put the ruling party and majority ethnic group at the head of multinational constituencies, which could not conform to this totalising statist vision without coercion. Native African opposition was labelled 'reactionary', 'nativist', or 'neo-colonial', if it was not amenable to new development targets and state building policies. These political divergences were often framed in terms of ethnic difference—some Africans were more 'fit for modernity' than others. Obversely, both in Africa and the Caribbean, black sovereigntism could be used to justify exclusion and suspicion of non-black residents – or progressive, 'communist' ideas -- on the grounds that they were inauthentic or neo-colonial.

This combination: new leaders maintaining hierarchical ties with the Great Powers and former empires, and legacies of imperial racialisation, are both necessary to explain why the *interwar* politics of anti-imperial globalism and progressive federalism from below did not survive the transition of power in African and the Caribbean. This is not to say that no movements for multi-racial unity and social egalitarianism exist today– far from it. But arguments that these values could become foundational for the conduct and form of state and world government – the basis for international relations between former empires and colonies -- are far scarcer today than they were in 1919, 1935, or 1957.

These histories offer context and lessons for analysis of contemporary international relations. First, IR should expand or depart from its overemphasis on order, and make space for an analysis more attuned to justice claims. This is not to say that IR scholars must devote themselves to the political theoretical work of ethics or normative evaluation. However, scholarship concerned with the constitution of international relations should be attentive to the ways that movements and arguments for justice play a key role in shaping politics and identities between societies. Order based in a norm of sovereignty has often been a potential or actual impediment to the justice claims of marginalised groups, and thus cannot be assumed as the taken-for-granted end goal of world politics. Justice claims and movements might, of course, involve demands for sovereignty, but IR should not only pay attention to them when they do. The West Indies Federation and United States of Africa did not come to fruition in the form imagined, but we should expect that global injustice and inequality will continue to inspire reformist and revolutionary politics, including those to remake the state as a progressive force, or to seek new forms of inter-societal unity.

Second, the politics of the 'non-West' are not reducible to recognition of the particular or the different, any more than 'the West' should continue to claim its privileged access to 'universal knowledge.' Claims to difference are often arguments for alternative

universalisms, and might also contain a potential or actual impetus to shape the world in the claimants' image. A valuable contribution of scholarly work to 'provincialise Europe', is not necessarily to demand that we recognise cultures and politics outside Europe, but to show that trans-boundary power, imperialisms, and totalising ideologies always come from a *particular* place, though they might create global forms of engagement and conflict. Scholars should also be cautious when promoting recognition, that they are not enacting *colonial recognition*. IR can and should study recognition claims, but should not define groups of people in terms of fixed characteristics or essences.

Third, empires engender thick social relations and boundary-crossing discourses, which have determining effects on social practice. These social relations and discourse can provide an important analytical orientation for future inquiry into empire, racialisation, their legacies in, and effects on, contemporary international relations. The recent interest in race in IR carries with it the potential for a proliferation of anti-racist sentiment, which can simply ascribe 'racism' to individuals and attitudes, without a deeper exploration of why racialisation persists in many societies throughout the world. This is not to draw a false equivalency between different racisms. Rather, I merely suggest that the academic goal when it comes to racialisation should be *understanding*, not litigation or defence. IR has recently begun to draw upon related disciplines for better understanding social relations and boundary-crossing discourses: global historical sociology and intellectual history. From the tools offered by these disciplines we can fashion a historical-relational approach to empire and race in IR, which can provide a richer understanding of the power relations shaping contemporary world politics.

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