

Introduction

The Revolution Will Not Be Theorized

This study critically examines some of the influential theories of black revolution in the United States devised by prominent black revolutionists and their organizations during the Black Power Movement (BPM) of the mid-1960s to mid-1970s through an engagement of their African American intellectual and activist precursors. Although their revolutionary theses informed and guided their programs, practices, and pronouncements, BPM revolutionists are typically acknowledged for their activism, but rarely for their acumen as revolutionary theorists. In fact, they put forth some of the most incisive, timely, and enduring theses of black radical change in the twentieth century; and influenced their own and subsequent generations seeking to transform U.S. society in fundamental ways. Although a wellspring of research has emerged on the BPM—especially in the last decade or so, much of it has been narrative/historical, providing detailed insights and discussions of individuals and organizations, rather than analytical, focusing on the revolutionists' actual theories, especially as they were informed by their revolutionary—as opposed to reformist—antecedents in the United States.¹ As a result, these works are often limited in their ability to assess, much less develop, the theoretical arguments of the chief protagonists of the BPM era; and delineating the African American intellectual precursors of their political, economic, and social revolutionary theses. Further, while the political and economic aspects of black revolutionists' arguments are widely discussed in the “black power” literature, less appreciated are the cultural aspects of their revolutionary theses.² Thus, this study focuses on the intellectual precursors of BPM revolutionists who attempted to integrate their understanding of black culture in their revolutionary theory, as well as the precepts, programs, and practices that emerged from it, while critically examining those who situated themselves

in this tradition and attempted to draw from it: mainly, the black nationalist revolutionists of the era ranging from the Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM), Us, the Black Panther Party (BPP), the Republic of New Africa (RNA), the League of Revolutionary Black Workers (LRBW), the Congress of African Peoples (CAP), and the Pan-African Orthodox Christian Church (i.e., the Shrine of the Black Madonna), among others.³ Through its focus on the cultural aspects of black revolutionary theory, this study situates the theoretical contributions of BPM revolutionists in a broader historiography of African American revolutionary theory tied to arguments from the early postbellum era; to novel theses on black revolution from the interwar era from W. E. B. Du Bois, Alain Locke, Harry Haywood, and Claudia Jones; to prominent postwar theorists such as Harold Cruse, James and Grace Lee Boggs, and Audley Moore; and epitomized in the theses that would have the greatest influence on revolutionists of the BPM, those of Malcolm X. In the next section, I lay out the main argument of the book, followed by an outline of each of the subsequent chapters.

Main Argument

This work argues that BPM revolutionists made important contributions to revolutionary theory. They posited revolutionary changes focused on the simultaneous affirmation of the human rights of individual black Americans and the promotion of the self-determination claims of the black nation in the United States. The latter viewed as consisting not only of a group differentiable by its race, but by its culture as well. Thus, the struggle for black self-determination implicated black culture, which was assumed to facilitate the mobilization of the black nation to achieve its political, economic, and social objectives. A key element of arguments of black nationalist revolutionists of the BPM was the critical role that culture played in their theories, practices, and programs. This was evident in the revolutionary theses of the most influential theorist of the BPM, Malcolm X, who argued the necessity of black cultural revolution in the political revolution he sought, making it a central objective of his major organization, the Organization of Afro-American Unity. The major BPM revolutionists took Malcolm X's revolutionary program as their point of departure; thus, it's necessary to understand Malcolm's thesis on black cultural revolution to comprehend the broader revolutionary theses of the BPM.

In this study, I critically examine black nationalists' engagement with black culture in their formulations of revolutionary theory during the BPM. I focus on activists and organizations that propounded explicit theories of black cultural revolution or put forth arguments on the contributions of black culture to revolutionary theory and practice. I take as my theoretical point

of departure, Malcolm X's thesis on black revolution in the United States, which evolved with his black nationalism from a static, unidimensional, religious-based conceptualization of his Nation of Islam (NOI) years into a dynamic, multidimensional, secular framework of his post-NOI years. At its most developed, it included a thesis on black cultural revolution, which Malcolm X (1970, p. 427) argued was necessary to "unbrainwash an entire generation of black people" and served as a link between the black revolution in the United States that he envisioned and the worldwide revolution that he saw unfolding abroad. These concomitant processes, Malcolm was convinced, were radically transforming the United States.

After reviewing Malcolm's thesis, I offer a critique of it, noting among its major shortcomings Malcolm's "reverse civilizationism," which assumed that black Americans had been stripped of their culture by the depredations and travails of enslavement. Following Malcolm, prominent BPM revolutionists and organizations became convinced that black Americans had no meaningful national culture to speak of, and their theses became preoccupied with *African* rather than *African American* cultural expressions and institutions (e.g., RAM, Us, CAP, PAOCC), New African formulations of the same (e.g., the RNA), or lumpenproletarian aspects of black urban culture (e.g., the BPP). As a result, their theory, with notable exceptions (e.g., the LRBW) insufficiently appreciated the urbanized, Christian-identified, working-class black culture that both guided and comprised a pivotal segment of the black communities that they sought to mobilize. Relatedly, reverse civilizationism privileged contemporary African anticolonial struggles over historical African American revolutionism as referents; thus, BPM revolutionists often did not appreciate the significance of African American revolts in U.S. history, including the only successful black revolution in the United States—the Slave Revolution of the U.S. Civil War. Interestingly, in his major study of 1935, *Black Reconstruction*, W. E. B. Du Bois had historicized the Civil War Slave Revolution as an instance of a black cultural revolution initiating a political revolution in the United States; and a decade later Alain Locke had theorized American cultural revolution. Therefore, even as Malcolm invoked the necessity of a black cultural revolution in conjunction with a black political revolution on the cusp of the BPM, a framework for both was available from Du Bois and Locke to guide and inform the incipient BPM; however, these domestic African American sources were largely unrecognized or ignored.

Synthesizing Du Bois and Locke, it suggested the importance of black participation in the U.S. Civil War—and the "General Strike" that accompanied it—as an indigenous political revolution in the United States; and the emancipatory potential of black culture—especially black religion—to generate cultural revolution; and, thus, provided both a historic example and a contemporary model for black political and cultural revolution in the

United States. Malcolm and other BPM revolutionists didn't appreciate the extent to which it was a more meaningful referent than the contemporary anticolonial revolutions in "third world" countries that they drew on for guidance and often sought to emulate. Largely oblivious to Du Bois's and Locke's theses, BPM revolutionists deferred to Malcolm as both theorist and activist and inculcated reverse civilizationism in their often diverse theories and programmatic formulations. As a result, BPM revolutionists failed to adequately historicize their own movement; and, instead, spent an inordinate amount of time and resources attempting to import models of revolution from abroad that often did not fit the historical context or developmental trajectory of their uniquely African American experience. Without a theoretical compass oriented to the peculiar landscape of their very American oppression, they sought to coordinate a revolution across the terrain of the most powerful country in the world using strategies and tactics better suited for an African or third world country (Henderson, 2015).

Further, black power advocates, with notable exceptions (e.g., the PAOCC), failed to link their incipient revolutionary theses to the prominent cultural institution in black communities, the Black Church, which was also the institutional hub of black political mobilization throughout the United States at the time, much as it is today. The prospect of mobilizing black communities on a national scale for revolution—or almost any major political objective—without a strategy that utilized, neutralized, or mobilized the Black Church was doomed to failure. Moreover, failing to link black cultural revolution to the major black cultural institution was both a practical and theoretical nonstarter. The vacuum left by the distancing of BPM activists from the Black Church was filled by black elected officials (BEOs) who, although largely integrationist, nonetheless drew heavily on black nationalist rhetoric, practices, and initiatives to gain political power, not through an independent black political party but by binding their programs to the Democratic Party. This drew the BEOs—and the political trajectory of black communities—away from the political orientation of the BPM; and even farther away from its revolutionary thrust. As a result, by the mid-1970s the BPM on a national scale petered out, nonetheless leaving an influential set of insights, practices, and programs that would continue to inform black activism in the United States to the present.

Plan of the Book

Following the Introduction, chapter 1 introduces and critically examines Malcolm X's thesis on black revolution, which was the centerpiece of theorizing among black nationalist revolutionists during the BPM. As noted above,

Malcolm's thesis evolved from a static, unidimensional, religious-based program of his NOI years into a dynamic, multidimensional, secular framework of his post-NOI years. At its most developed, Malcolm's thesis envisioned black revolution in the United States as part of a "worldwide revolution." A key conduit linking the two was what Malcolm called a black cultural revolution. Malcolm's worldwide revolution proceeded in two stages: the first was a classic political (military) revolution against Western imperialism as evident in the anticolonial wars occurring throughout the "third world" at the time; and the second was a cultural reawakening, galvanizing black Americans to mobilize against white supremacy in a black cultural revolution, which would be associated with a political revolution in the United States. In radically transforming the most powerful country in the world, the black revolution in the United States would culminate the worldwide revolution. The breadth of his revolution reflected Malcolm X's view that political, economic, and social/cultural factors were intimately tied together—thus the broad program of his two post-NOI organizations, the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) and Muslim Mosque Inc. (MMI). Yet, Malcolm's theses suffered from reverse civilizationism, which assumes that black Americans were stripped of their African culture through enslavement and Jim Crow, thus, they had no culture apart from the detritus of white American culture. Reverse civilizationism implied that African Americans trailed Africans in their degree of cultural consciousness; and given that such a consciousness was a requisite for national consciousness, it was critical in the struggle for national self-determination. Absent such a cultural consciousness, black Americans were compelled to follow the lead of their African cousins on the continent in deriving their models, programs, and theory for black revolution in the United States. Second, and relatedly, Malcolm's reverse civilizationism contributed to his failure to both identify and appreciate the historical role of African American culture in the social transformation of blacks in the United States. Third, and most telling, it led to his failure to appreciate the revolutionary antecedents in U.S. history to inform black revolutionary praxis in the 1960s. In these ways, reverse civilizationism informed both Malcolm's black nationalism and his thesis of black revolution, which derived from it. These shortcomings, individually and in combination, confounded the major BPM revolutionists and their organizations that derived their analyses and conception of black revolution from Malcolm X.

In chapter 2, I historicize Malcolm's reverse civilizationism in the broader scholarship on black nationalism. The chapter begins with a discussion of black nationalism as a concept, and its historical evolution, in order to demonstrate its dynamic, multifaceted, and multidimensional aspects as an ideology; and to delineate how it gave rise to Malcolm's thesis of black revolution in the United States. I point out that the shortcomings in Malcolm's and subsequent

BPM activists' rendering of black nationalism were not specific to them but were evident among critics as well as advocates of black nationalism, more broadly. Some of them resulted from misunderstandings of the characteristics of black nationalism rooted in its dualities, as a concept, and a specific program for black liberation; and three of these stand out: (1) the duality of statist and nonstatist definitions of black nationalism; (2) emigrationist and non/anti-emigrationist aspects of black nationalism; and (3) Eurocentric and Afrocentric (or Anglophilic and Afrophilic) cultural orientations in black nationalism. I show how much of the theoretical synthesis of black nationalism with respect to these dualities was achieved by Du Bois (1903) at the outset of the twentieth century and are reflected in his "modernized" conception of black nationalism, which rejected the civilizationist narrative often adopted by nineteenth-century emigrationists, which appropriated the technological and cultural component of the "civilizing mission" of Western imperialist discourse for black people, in general, and Africans in particular (Moses, 1978). Du Bois, in contrast, promoted the cultural practices and cultural heritage of African people throughout the world, including those of African Americans; thus, modern black nationalism in the United States after Du Bois became synonymous with black cultural nationalism; and it insisted that African Americans possessed an African American culture. Du Boisian modernized black nationalism also promoted particular forms of black revolution emanating from its view of black culture: black cultural revolution. I show how Malcolm and subsequent BPM activists "reversed" some of the Du Boisian contributions to both black nationalist theory and black revolutionary theory that derived from it, dislodging them from their African American conceptual, cultural, and historical roots. One result was that black American revolutionaries in the BPM privileged African culture and revolutionary antecedents more than African American referents, leading them to orient their movement across the terrain of the most powerful country in the world using a theoretical compass better suited for an African or third world country. The difficulties conceptualizing black revolution in the United States were not unique to Malcolm X; but, many analysts, activists, and scholars also misunderstood the processes operative in black liberation struggles tracing back more than a century, including those that would assist the BPM in realizing its revolutionary objectives. This orientation largely precluded them from searching U.S. history for useful referents and analogues for the black revolution that they were attempting to organize in the black power era. Drawing again on Du Bois, I examine what may be the most significant revolutionary referent in the United States, which was largely ignored by BPM revolutionists—and their nonblack allies, as

well—the Slave Revolution that occasioned the U.S. Civil War, and this is the subject of chapter 3.

In chapter 3, I point out that the major repercussion of reverse civilizationism was that it led revolutionists of the BPM to become preoccupied with African and third world revolutions and inattentive to the history of African American revolutionary struggle in the United States and, specifically, to ignore Du Bois's argument that black participation in the U.S. Civil War constituted a revolution. In *Black Reconstruction* (1935), Du Bois argued that enslaved blacks waged a General Strike during the war to gain their freedom in what was “the largest and most successful slave revolt.” The salience of this “Slave Revolution” as a model for BPM revolutionists should not be obscured by the fact that many of its successes were aborted by the postbellum reestablishment of white supremacy in the U.S. South. The Slave Revolution had been successful in destroying the socioeconomic system of chattel slavery and overthrowing the government of the Confederate States of America (CSA). The historical analysis of the processes associated with black participation in the U.S. Civil War demonstrated a connection between slave religion and “hiring-out” slaves, and the “General Strike” that emerged from their confluence, suggesting that black cultural revolution inspired political revolution, just as Malcolm emphasized a century later, while failing to draw on this historical example. Moreover, although Du Bois historicized black revolution in *Black Reconstruction*, he did not theorize what he observed. A theory of cultural revolution was supplied by Alain Locke, who argued that cultures were intrinsically dynamic as a result of transvaluation and the transposition of values within culture groups; along with the intercultural transmission resultant from tolerance and reciprocity between them. These processes, according to Locke, are heightened in democratic societies; thus, Locke's thesis links cultural change with democracy. Cultural revolution results from the expansion of the claims for political and economic democracy to the cultural sphere in ways that implicate multiracial democracy. As applied to the Slave Revolution, Locke's thesis suggests that the transformation of slave religion and slave hiring constituted cultural changes that ramified into the political and economic spheres and motivated the General Strike and the political revolution of the Civil War. In theorizing the black cultural revolution that Du Bois historicized in *Black Reconstruction*, Locke's thesis suggested to BPM revolutionists the need to draw on Aframerican cultural initiatives and institutions—epitomized in the Black Church—to realize its revolutionary objectives; but, most revolutionists of the BPM—largely under the influence of Malcolm X's reverse civilizationism—were unaware of this revolutionary thesis “beneath their feet” (Henderson, 2018b).

Given the anteriority of the concept of cultural revolution in the academic literature—especially in Marxism—chapter 4 begins with a brief discussion of the applicability of Maoist, Leninist, and Gramscian theses of cultural revolution to black America; as well as the allusions to it in Harry Haywood’s “Black Belt” thesis. I trace the roots of early formulations of black cultural *evolution* to the social development theses of black nationalists—especially black nationalist feminists—in the nineteenth century and discuss how it informed later theses of black cultural *revolution* before turning to Du Bois’ formulations on black culture as a change agent during the Harlem Renaissance, which became a prominent perspective among subsequent theorists. As noted in chapter 3, cultural revolution was central to Du Bois’s exegesis in *Black Reconstruction*; but, in practice, he advocated evolutionary more than revolutionary pursuits for black Americans in the twentieth century, which, for him, focused on the development of independent black institutions of civil society led by the Black Church, black economic cooperatives, and black schools and colleges. Interestingly, this cultural *evolutionary* focus on developing parallel institutions of black civil society became a mainstay of BPM revolutionists, rather than the cultural revolutionary focus in *Black Reconstruction*. In addition, as the Harlem Renaissance ensued, Du Bois became increasingly critical of the Black Church as a progressive change agent; therefore, the cultural evolution he sought became distant from the major cultural institution in the black community, which subsequent BPM revolutionists would replicate as well, and to their detriment. Projecting forward, while BPM revolutionists seemed oblivious to these major indigenous theses on political and cultural revolution and the relationship between them, they adopted evolutionary approaches to guide their revolutionary programs; and while appreciating the centrality of black culture, they distanced themselves from the major black cultural institution. Their approaches both reflected and rejected aspects of extant black American theorizing on cultural revolution and evolution, which, inter alia, left them advocating revolution while neglecting their most relevant source of revolutionary theory.

In chapter 5, I discuss Harold Cruse’s thesis, which was the first explicit thesis of black cultural revolution in the United States during the BPM, and argued that the interrelationship of culture, politics, and economics necessitated that blacks focus on the weakest aspect of their domestic colonial milieu, and this was the cultural front; thus, his cultural revolution had as its objective capturing the “cultural apparatus” of U.S. society and putting it under democratic control. Since cultural issues and institutions are embedded in and reinforce the white racist political and economic institutions of the country, then an American revolution would have to address cultural dimensions of black oppression. Cruse (1968, p. 117) contends that “it is precisely

the economic spheres of cultural communications in America that must be revolutionized for more humanistic social use before such changes take place in commodity production, political organization or racial democratization.” Building on C. Wright Mills’s conception of the “power elite,” he asserted that mass media in the United States was controlled by an increasingly unified and coordinated elite, which reduced the public to media markets and U.S. citizens to individuated consumers of mass media, increasingly vulnerable to its manipulation. The development of mass media provided opportunities for the black intelligentsia to lead a black cultural revolution; but, for Cruse, “the Negro” of the black power era was “the victim of the incompetence of radical social theory” and the intellectual atrophy of “the Negro intelligentsia,” who did not comprehend the salience of cultural revolution to black liberation (p. 65). The cultural apparatus seemed insufficiently salient as an objective to orient, or a theme by which to mobilize for, the black cultural revolution that Cruse sought, especially considering more relevant black cultural claims related to chattel slavery and Jim Crow, such as black reparations. In addition, Cruse’s thesis insufficiently focused on the cultural apparatus of the black community itself as a precursor to this broader struggle, insofar as it ignored the major black cultural institution, the Black Church, in his theoretical arguments on cultural revolution. Cruse also largely ignored the role of sexism as a major institutional impediment to the cultural change that he sought. Nevertheless, Cruse’s thesis provided a point of departure for BPM revolutionists theorizing the role of culture in black liberation, anticipating both the Black Arts Movement and the broader engagement of black cultural revolution in the BPM. Contrasting Cruse’s thesis with those of Haywood and Boggs, which were rival theses of the era, I contend that these three approaches represented the major theoretical trajectories of BPM organizations that seriously considered cultural revolution in the era.

Chapter 6 provides a more detailed focus on several prominent organizations of the BPM that saw themselves as heirs of Malcolm’s legacy—both theoretically and programmatically—and their attempts to develop a theory of black cultural revolution to inform their strategies, programs, and practices. Specifically, I examine the Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM), which was the first BPM organization other than Malcolm’s OAAU to formally advocate black cultural revolution; and the organization Us (as opposed to “them”), which developed one of the most influential theses of black cultural revolution; and contrast those with the theoretically eclectic, but heavily Maoist-influenced theses of culture and revolution of the Black Panther Party (BPP). The differing perspectives reflected in large part the tension among Harold Cruse’s, James Boggs’, and Harry Haywood’s perspectives on the role of culture in black revolutionary struggle, with RAM—true to its origins

as a group initially organized around Cruse's theoretical precepts, but also mentored by Boggs, who served on its executive board—embracing aspects of both before moving closer to those of Haywood. Us adopted prominent aspects of Cruse's orientation—namely its open advocacy of cultural revolution and its critique of American Marxism, while the BPP rejected cultural revolution theses—at least those proffered by Us, and was at least partly in line with aspects of Haywood's and Boggs's neo-Marxist perspectives. Interestingly, RAM advocated a general strike strategy, but did not integrate it into a thesis of black cultural revolution. RAM's approach involved at different times advocacy of guerilla warfare to liberate the "Black Belt," consistent with Robert Williams's and Haywood's thesis; and later this was augmented with an electoral strategy to promote an independent black political party in order to consolidate black power in the North. RAM's dual strategy for activism in the South and North was a precursor to those strategies of both Us and the BPP. Although Us advocated black cultural revolution, embracing reverse civilizationism it insisted that African Americans did not possess a culture and should view themselves as Africans, which is a view that Cruse rejected. The BPP, consistent with Boggs, viewed black culture as minimally relevant to the political change that it sought, and largely epiphenomenal of class dynamics. The BPP saw the vanguard of their revolution as the lumpenproletariat, which was a view that Boggs wavered on and Haywood and Cruse rejected. Both Us and the BPP would change aspects of their theses over time, and RAM was even more fluid with theirs; however, while their divergent arguments contributed to the theoretical diversity and vitality of the BPM, they also reflected the difficulty of BPM activists to develop Malcolm's thesis on black cultural revolution even among major BPM organizations more closely tied to Malcolm's approach.

For example, chapter 7 begins with an examination of the organization most closely associated with the political doctrine of Malcolm X other than his own OAAU and MMI, the Republic of New Africa (RNA). The RNA focused on the liberation of the Black Belt, which it viewed as the five contiguous states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina, where blacks were long settled. They made a compelling historical, political, legal and moral argument for reparations for black descendants of enslaved Africans, New Africans. Where neither was forthcoming, they advocated "people's war" against the United States to liberate New Africa. Unlike many of the national groups that advocated armed struggle, the RNA, which began in the North, moved South to press its claims. They employed a minister of culture and incorporated the concept of cultural revolution into their doctrine. Although the RNA drew on Haywood's "Black Belt Thesis," their program was not Marxist, which brought them into fraternal

dispute with the BPP. Moreover, without a more expansive program rooted in the major cultural institutions of the black community, such as the Black Church, the RNA in Mississippi foundered before it could develop social networks that could strengthen its ties to the local community. Also, their intellectual distancing from important aspects of Haywood's thesis, which focused on organizing rural workers of the Black Belt, may have contributed to their insufficient coordination with black farm workers, sharecroppers, and other rural elements who were central to their plans for both revolutionary transformation of the counties of the Black Belt as well as armed resistance in the South.

Contemporaneously with the development of the RNA in Detroit was the emergence of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers (LRBW). The League incorporated in its revolutionary strategy a focus on organizing a national general strike. In this way, unlike most major organizations of the BPM, it aligned itself with the strategy that black Americans had employed successfully in the Slave Revolution. The League emphasized developing independent black unions, beginning in the automobile industry in Detroit. It also focused on community-based organizations ranging from student-based initiatives in high schools and universities, to parent-based school decentralization groups, as well as those focusing on anti-police brutality, welfare rights, and tenants' rights. Its dual strategy simultaneously centering on in-plant and out-of-plant organizing allowed it to initiate strikes against the auto industry with assistance from community supporters. Unlike the BPP, the League insisted that the black working class, the proletariat—not the lumpenproletariat—was the vanguard of the black political revolution because only the proletariat held power at “the point of production,” which it could leverage for concessions from the auto companies to address the immediate demands of black workers and, ultimately, the broader objectives of revolutionary change in the United States.

Pursuant to the latter, the League embraced black reparations and the liberation of the Black Belt. However, where Haywood focused on black agricultural workers in the South as the key to liberating the Black Belt, the League's focus was on industrial workers in the North. Further, the League failed to fuse its class/race-based analyses into a coherent theory to guide its actions, consolidate its program, and coordinate its supporters; devolving into sectarianism, it imploded under its own weight. Ironically, the League probably came closest to developing a black cultural revolution as envisioned by Du Bois, Locke, and Cruse; but it hardly drew on these theoretical referents, opting instead for poorly fitted, mainly third world models to inform their project. I synthesize their sectarian orientations, wedding them to earlier theses of black cultural revolution in a theoretical and programmatic fusion,

and demonstrate how the tensions within the group might have been resolved in such a way as to facilitate their revolutionary objectives. Nevertheless, even with such a composite strategy, the League was battling against time, as deindustrialization in the United States was decentralizing industry offshore while simultaneously transporting the industrial core of Northern cities to suburbs and nonunionized Southern venues, removing the most potent base of League organization from the central cities in which unionized black workers were concentrated.

Chapter 8 focuses on two of the most influential BPM organizations that espoused black cultural revolution: the Congress of African Peoples (CAP) and the Pan-African Orthodox Christian Church (PAOCC). CAP's Newark chapter was led by Amiri Baraka, and its Midwest chapter was led by Haki Madhubuti. The former harnessed black cultural revolutionary theses to urban electoral mobilization and independent political party organizing before abandoning black nationalism and adopting Haywood's Marxist political thrust. The latter rose from similar origins, however, it remained committed to independent black community institutionalization, focusing on black independent schools and black publishing, while explicitly rejecting Marxism. Baraka's organization, CFUN, initially worked closely with Us and drew on its *kawaida* approach in its development in Newark. CFUN integrated the emergent black elected officials under black nationalist leadership and institutions; and its successes motivated the founding of CAP in 1970. However, eventually Baraka's CAP was outflanked by those same BEOs it had assisted in gaining office for a variety of reasons, which he attributed to the shortcomings of black nationalism itself, and motivated him to abandon nationalism for Marxism. In contrast, Chicago CAP—like Brooklyn CAP led by Jitu Weusi—maintained its black nationalist orientation and developed a critical response to the neo-Marxism of Baraka's CAP and the broader ideological sectarianism in the BPM. Chicago (Midwest) CAP grew out of Madhubuti's development of Third World Press in 1967, which provided an independent publishing arm for the Black Arts Movement (BAM); and the Institute of Positive Education, which became a blueprint for independent black schools around the country. As a result, Madhubuti was key to the promotion of black culture in the BPM, laying a basis for the Afrocentrism that would become even more prominent in the 1980s. Chicago-CAP, however, retained aspects of reverse civilizationism through its embrace of *kawaida*; and, as a result, the Afrocentrism that emerged from it had two tracks: the activist one, focused on the development of independent black organizations; and the reverse civilizationist one that led to an overindulgence in the study of ancient African societies and practices, instead of the largely urban-based industrial working-class culture of African

Americans living in the most powerful country in the world. The former was consistent with the development of parallel institutions and was a mainstay of the BPM and essential to the continuation of its revolutionary thrust, while the latter was a departure from the revolutionary spirit and praxis of black cultural revolution as Malcolm foresaw it, and into the almost purely rhetorical and increasingly escapist fantasies of embracing ancient traditions that were often devoid of incentives toward revolutionary or even progressive political activism beyond the creation of book clubs or study groups with little if any activist component.

The final organization examined is the PAOCC (i.e., the Shrine of the Black Madonna), which was led by Albert Cleage (Jaramogi A. Agye-man), and has been among the most enduring BPM organizations espousing black cultural revolution. Cleage, an ordained minister, did not share BPM revolutionists' dismissal of the Black Church, but argued that it should be the central organization of their black revolution. The PAOCC fused political, economic, and social aspects of the BPM. It utilized the methods of the Essene order to train cadres capable of organizing churches, as well as informational and cultural centers throughout the United States and abroad. Cleage had a powerful impact on the culture and politics of Detroit, playing a prominent role in the election of Coleman Young as Detroit's first black mayor in 1973. While he emphasized the primacy of the Black Church in black cultural revolution, he did not specify which institutions should be subsequently transformed or in what order. Relatedly, it was unclear what would constitute a critical mass of counterinstitutions that would effectuate the cultural revolution that he envisioned; nor was it evident how the values associated with the church would transfer to secular domains such as in politics and economics, beyond elections. Subsumed by the need to overhaul the church and develop the PAOCC as its own denomination, Cleage did not attend adequately to the development of the other prospective counterinstitutions. Nevertheless, his focus on the Black Church and the development of counterinstitutions was one of the most influential theses of black cultural revolution in the United States. Ironically, in helping support the ascendancy of the black elected officials, the PAOCC helped bring to power the leadership group that would supplant the black power organizations of the era and end the BPM.

The Conclusion summarizes some of the major implications of the work, reminding us that on the cusp of the BPM, there was an extant thesis of black political and cultural revolution in the United States, which could have provided a theoretical point of departure for BPM revolutionists. Ignoring or oblivious to these, their formulations, nonetheless, were insightful, transformative, and in some cases groundbreaking; however, they suffered from

important weaknesses, paramount among them reverse civilizationism. In the event, BPM revolutionists inadequately historicized their own movement; and did not avail themselves of the revolutionary framework that a fusion of Du Bois's and Locke's theses provided. Instead, where the importance of religiously inspired workers in the Slave Revolution and the ongoing CRM and BPM should have inspired them to focus on that group's revolutionary propensities—as well as the Black Church in which many of them were institutionally grounded or emotionally attached—BPM revolutionists often dismissed, denigrated, or denied the salience of the Black Church, promoted quasi-African cultural forms, and largely distanced themselves from the very community they sought to organize and mobilize for revolution. This theoretical enervation (along with governmental repression) contributed to their lack of cohesion and reinforced their sectarianism, which left them vulnerable to organized efforts of reformists often wedded to the Democratic Party, giving rise to the black elected officials and the decline of the BPM.

The point is not that the failure of BPM revolutionists to adopt the revolutionary framework of Du Bois and Locke was the reason for the dissensus in the BPM and its sectarianism; but only that it contributed to the lack of intellectual grounding in African American political science in their revolutionary theories, programs, and practices. Consumed by the view that black revolution in the United States would take the form of an armed struggle resembling contemporary anticolonial insurgencies or earlier Marxist revolutions, they were hesitant to draw on their own revolutionary antecedents in the United States, epitomized in the Slave Revolution in the Civil War. A better appreciation of these black American intellectual precursors to their theorizing on black revolution would have tempered their preoccupation with adopting and adapting frameworks from the third world to their first world conditions in the most powerful country in the world and encouraged a more serious engagement with the “revolution beneath their feet.” Such theoretical myopia regarding black revolution in the United States persists in both black and nonblack social movements today.