CHAPTER 7

Reconnecting

Two striking aspects of the first half of the twentieth century concern the large-scale and widespread circumventions of the African-descended throughout the Americas, and their persistent efforts to reconnect in meaningful ways with Africa. The former was in response to economic need and incentive; the latter was motivated by political, philosophical, and religious considerations. Whatever the motive, people were not forgetting their African ancestry, but endeavoring to remember and sustain it. In these ways, they were reversing sail in their minds and hearts, if not with their bodies.

While reconnecting to Africa, those of African descent were also redefining themselves as a series of communities related yet distinct from each other, a consequence of differing local circumstances and histories. Reconnections and redefinitions took place during periods of rapid industrialization, organization and theorization of labor, emerging struggles against empire, world war, women's rights movements, the rise of allegedly scientific racism, and the division of the world into eastern and western camps. Members of the African Diaspora played significant roles in all of these developments.

From this complex period of interpenetrating influences and experiences arose a cultural efflorescence throughout the African Diaspora. Notable works of art, literature, and scholarship, as well as political and religious innovations, resulted from this intercontinental cross-fertilization of ideas and experiences. The components of the African Diaspora were therefore in extensive dialogue, a conversation reverberating to the present day.

Boats and Trains

The latter quarter of the nineteenth century had been a tremendous disappointment to most throughout the African Diaspora, their hopes of full freedom dashed by the realities of debt peonage, rural wage labor, peasant impoverishment, and either wide-ranging, systematic, state-backed terrorism or a heavy-handed colonialism favoring a few while disparaging many. Whether on an island or mainland, most people were trapped, virtually incarcerated in an economic and political system from which there seemed no escape.

Changes in the international economy, combined with two world wars, created cracks in the prison through the demand for labor. The problem, however, was that those meeting the demand were required to relocate to places hundreds, if not thousands, of miles from their lands of birth, resurrecting the dilemma of opportunity at the cost of family. Conditions were so desperate, however, that many made the sacrifice. The African Diaspora during the first half of the twentieth century was therefore characterized by perpetual motion, in both hemispheres.

The peasant majority in the Caribbean remained locked in a struggle to bypass the power of the planters through strategies of self-reliance. In Barbados and Antigua, they invariably continued to reside on or near former plantations, providing labor in exchange for occupancy. In Cuba, most remained in the countryside as wage laborers on sugar plantations or as squatters in new areas, and in the latter instance were not unlike many in Haiti, where many plantations had been dismantled and divided into smallholdings of one or two acres. Timber and minerals were extractive industries financed by American and European interests in various islands, but after the First World War (1914–1918) the focus shifted to petroleum in Trinidad, Aruba, and Curaçao, and bauxite (for aluminum) in Jamaica and Guyana. The region's economy was strengthened by these two exports until 1929, when the depression contributed to perennial unemployment.

As a consequence, the Caribbean emerged as the quintessential region of migratory activity. Divided into several phases, the first of the region's major redistributions took place between 1835 and 1885, when activity centered on the islands themselves. Persons from economically depressed areas, such as Barbados, sought opportunities elsewhere, especially in Trinidad and Tobago and British Guyana.

About 19,000 left the eastern Caribbean for Trinidad and British Guyana between 1835 and 1846; from 1850 to 1921, some 50,000 emigrated to Trinidad, Tobago, and British Guyana from Barbados alone. Destinations during this initial phase were not limited to the islands, as 7,000 from Dominica, for example, left for the goldfields of Venezuela.

Such considerable flight of labor caused concern within the sugar industry, resulting in government recruitment of workers from outside the Caribbean. In response, labor was drawn from two sources: The first consisted of so-called postemancipation Africans, or persons seized from slave ships and taken to Sierra Leone and St. Helena in West Africa. Some 36,120 were subsequently spread throughout the British-held Caribbean between 1839 and 1867, where their arrival also reinvigorated cultural ties to Africa. The second source was Asia, principally the Indian subcontinent (but also China), from where approximately 500,000 indentured laborers were imported between 1838 and 1917 to such places as Jamaica, Trinidad, Grenada, Martinique, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent. The influx has resulted in certain ongoing tensions, but the Asian presence has also left cultural impressions upon those of African descent, ranging from religion (principally in the form of Islam) to music to culinary tastes.

A second migratory phase originating within the Caribbean between the 1880s and the 1920s was both intra-Caribbean as well as an outmigration. Destinations included Panama, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, and the United States, as well as other Central American sites. It was the construction of the Panama Canal, however, that laid the foundation for this important phase.

The United States' acquisition of the Panama Canal in 1903 was part of an imperialist expansion that began with the Spanish-American War and the U.S. seizure of Cuba and Puerto Rico. The American presence in Panama was followed by a treaty with Haiti in 1915, giving the Americans control over the island's finances and internal security for ten years, a period that actually lasted nineteen, complete with U.S. occupational forces. In 1916 the marines landed on the other side of the island in the Dominican Republic, guaranteeing the preservation of American economic interests there until the present day. Finally, the 1917 purchase of the Virgin Islands from the Danes created an American lake in the Caribbean; de facto American colonialism was therefore extended over a significant portion of the African Diaspora in the Americas. With such military and political control established, American and European economic interests proceeded unencumbered.

By 1903, some 44,000 from the Caribbean were already working on the Panama Canal, mostly from Barbados and Jamaica. By the time the canal was completed in 1914, from 150,000 to 200,000 from the Caribbean had labored on the canal, as many as 30,000 from Barbados alone. Stated differently, those of African descent built the Panama Canal. While the contract workers were mostly men initially, they were joined by women who began arriving in Panama in increasing numbers, eventually evening out the sex ratio. The women worked as domestics and cooks and laundry women, reflecting a general surge in the percentage of women emigrating from the Caribbean through the first quarter of the twentieth century. It was on the canal site that Caribbean workers were introduced to North American Jim Crow, for although they performed every imaginable job associated with the canal's building and operation, they did so in segregated fashion, living in segregated housing. When the canal was completed, the United Fruit Company transported thousands of the unemployed to its banana and sugar plantations and railroads in Costa Rica, Honduras, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic. Cuba alone took in 400,000 Jamaicans and Haitians between 1913 and 1928, and, as is true of Panama, a significant community of their descendants remain in Cuba.

Taking jobs in other parts of the Caribbean and Central America was not an entirely effective strategy, however, as the economies of these areas declined during the First World War. The United States, already a focus for many who had worked in Panama, became the destination for others. Those who had come directly from Panama paid for their and their loved ones' voyages with "panama money," highly esteemed because of the horrific human costs associated with it – thousands had died or were permanently maimed in constructing the canal. These workers and their families were for the most part illiterate, according to some accounts, whereas those from the Caribbean who joined them later were from a different social stratum and were either literate or in possession of marketable skills. By 1930 over 130,000 had arrived in U.S. urban areas, including Miami and other Floridian cities, but their major port of call was New York City, where some 40,000 took up residence in Harlem between 1900 and 1930, providing a substantial proportion of the professional and entrepreneurial classes. Most were from the English-speaking islands, but they also came from Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic. The Caribbean presence and contribution to New York City, dating back to colonial times, has therefore been crucial to its development as an economic and cultural mecca.

Emigration from the Caribbean continued after the Second World War. Bauxite and petroleum were still the region's leading industries, but bananas replaced sugar as the leading export of a number of islands. The rise of agribusiness, combined with increased mechanization, resulted in the collapse of plantation agriculture and heightened unemployment, forcing people to again seek work elsewhere. Haitians went to the sugar fields of the Dominican Republic; both Haitians and Dominicans came to Florida along with others from the Caribbean and Central America; Puerto Ricans and (eventually) Dominicans undertook major migrations to New York City. Those from the English- and French-speaking islands also relocated to cities in Britain and France, and they would find their way to Canada in a movement that became much more significant in the 1950s and 1960s.

In North America, blacks already in the United States joined Caribbean immigrants. The Great Migration between 1916 and 1930 witnessed more than 1 million leave the South for the North, with over 400,000 boarding trains between 1916 and 1918. This was an intense period of relocation, involving such push factors as economic despair (related to the ravages of the boll weevil) and white racism in the South. The latter element had become particularly pernicious, as more than 3,600 people were lynched between 1884 and 1914, the vast majority black southerners. Pull factors centered on the high demand for labor in the North, occasioned by global war and the precipitous decline in foreign immigration from Europe, from 1.2 million in 1914 to 110,000 by 1918. The Second World War had a similar effect, and in the 1940s an additional 1.6 million black southerners are estimated to have left for the North as well as the West (especially the Los Angeles and San Francisco–Oakland areas), a figure that does not include movement to the South Atlantic and Gulf coasts, where many found jobs in defense-related industries. Such migratory activity continued in the 1950s and 1960s, when 2.9 million are estimated to have left the South. The movement north would transform the majority of African Americans into urban dwellers, so that by 1950, some 52 percent of African Americans were living in cities and large towns (a figure that would increase to 81 percent by 1980).

Paralleling the economic experiences of those in North America and the Caribbean were those of the African-descended in Brazil. As the 1835 Malê revolt revealed, the politics of racial identity in Brazil were complicated; by the late twentieth century, over 100 options would appear on the Brazilian census, such was the fusion of African,

European, and native elements. To speak of "black" Brazilians therefore is to employ terms both unstable and ever evolving. The percentage of Brazilians with African ancestry is undoubtedly much higher than official estimates allow, as many ostensibly white Brazilians admit to having had a "foot in the kitchen" (a reference to long-standing white male access to black female domestics). Discounting such persons, the concept of black Brazilians is used here to denote those of discernible African descent (well over half of the current Brazilian population) who may or may not have embraced the classification of *prêto* (black) or *pardo* (mixed), or who may have appropriated such categories for some purposes and not others, or whose identification with blackness was no barrier to their simultaneous embrace of alternative identities. Reference to black Brazilians also recognizes a pervasive reality that darker-skinned people have historically been disadvantaged, however they defined their individual identities, and that poverty and ignorance and disease were historically concentrated in the squalor of their existence. This was true not only of Brazil but also the entire western hemisphere.

In the sugar-producing northeast, black Brazilians remained as wage laborers and tenants on the plantations, but in the coffee region of the southeast there was considerable migration to the rapidly developing cities of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. There, they ran into the issue of *embranquecimento*, or "whitening," an effort to increase European immigration and thereby achieve so-called civilized status as a nation, equal to that of North America and Europe. As one example of this idea-turned-policy, some 90,000 Europeans immigrants, called *colonos*, arrived in Brazil between 1886 and 1889. The policy's implications for São Paulo were dramatic: By 1894, colonos outnumbered Brazilians in a variety of industries and accounted for 79 percent of all manufacturing workers. By 1940, colonos controlled 44 percent of the city's earned industrial capital and far outnumbered those of African descent in São Paulo, who made up only 12.6 percent of an estimated 1.3 million. Factory jobs were reserved for European immigrants, while those of African descent were forced to accept menial, low-wage jobs.

Regarding world war, black folk participated as both combatants and civilians. As an example, when the United States entered World War I in 1917, some 400,000 blacks went into military service. Emmett J. Scott, Booker T. Washington's secretary at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama for eighteen years, served as a special assistant to the secretary

of war, advising him on matters relating to blacks. His presence, however, could not alter the deep-seated hatred of and discrimination against blacks; while represented in almost every branch of the army save the aviation corps' pilot section, they could not serve in the marines, and only as menials in the navy. Black soldiers were assaulted by white civilian mobs in a number of incidents throughout the country, resulting, for example, in a (white) riot in Houston in 1917. Those who made it overseas were largely relegated to serving as stevedores and laborers, while those who were allowed to actually fight suffered disproportionate casualties. At war's end, a bloody race riot in East St. Louis in 1918, in which forty blacks were killed, presaged the famous Red Summer of 1919, in which twenty-five race riots erupted from June to the end of the year. The competition for jobs was one factor precipitating the flare-ups, one of the worst of which took place in Chicago in July and August, leaving 23 blacks and 15 whites dead, with 537 injured and over 1,000 (mostly black) left homeless. As for the Second World War, discrimination remained but was less of an impediment. Approximately 1 million black men and women served in the United States military, over 700,000 in the army, and perhaps a half-million overseas. One of the more dramatic developments was the formation of the 99th Pursuit Squadron of the U.S. Army Air Corps, the famed Tuskegee Airmen, 450 black pilots who were later incorporated into the 322nd Fighter Group and flew combat missions in Europe, contributing significantly to the war effort.

The African-descended from British and French colonies also participated in both world wars under the flags of the respective colonial powers, joining the African-born in European theaters of war. The French were particularly active, recruiting nearly 200,000 for the First World War, mostly from West Africa. Both wars were also fought on African soil, especially the second, and though it was Le Clerc's all-white division that was given the honor of liberating Paris, more than half of de Gaulle's Free French were African or Arab.

Organizing Black Labor

Blacks in the United States had perhaps the largest percentage of industrial workers in the African Diaspora in the early twentieth century; by 1910, over 350,000 of them were in factory jobs in both the North and the South. Even so, black labor was virtually banned by all-white

labor unions, making it very difficult to acquire skills and experience in certain vocations. The Knights of Labor had accepted 60,000 black workers as early as 1886, but the Haymarket Square riots of the same year discredited the organization as a foreign-controlled entity. The American Federation of Labor permitted widespread discrimination against blacks, leading the latter to form their own unions, including the Associated Colored Employees of America and the Association of Afro-American Steam and Gas Engineers and Skilled Workers of Pittsburgh. Efforts at self-organization intensified following the First World War, and the American Negro Labor Congress held its inaugural meeting in Chicago in 1925 to mobilize. Perhaps the most significant union of this type, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and Maids, or Pullman Porters, was also founded in 1925 by A. Philip Randolph. The 1930s and 1940s would witness a broad campaign by the Congress of Industrial Organizations to unionize black workers throughout the South, resulting in the Steel Workers Organizing Committee, the International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers, and the Food, Tobacco, Agricultural, and Allied Workers, names indicative of a wide range of industries reliant upon black labor. These efforts point to the complexity of black life in the American South, as Marxist-influenced unionization often called upon local churches and benevolent societies for their support. Blacks who joined unions maintained their religious values, suggesting a multidimensional analysis of social realities.

In the English-speaking Caribbean, membership in industrial unions was severely limited, although there was some development between 1919 and 1929, the result of a robust regional economy based upon bauxite and oil. However, the ensuing depression wiped out these gains. Increased unemployment and British seeming indifference resulted in an activism in the 1930s that was interested not only in workers' rights but also the end of colonial rule. The Butler Riots of 1937 in Trinidad are an example of the period's unrest, as workers joined Grenadian T. B. U. Butler's rival union to counter one supported by industry and colonial authority, and reacted violently to the refusal of the American-owned oil company to restore pay cuts after the company had rebounded from a momentary drop in revenues. A 1938 workers' revolt in St. Thomas Parish, Jamaica, site of Paul Bogle's 1865 assault on Morant Bay, involved some 1,400 machete- and stick-wielding persons whose protests were likewise put down by the state. In similar fashion, sugar industry workers vehemently reacted to the loss of wages and work throughout the islands in the 1930s.

In Brazil, individual choice of identity did not shield the discernibly African-descended person from discrimination, and racial barriers to industrial jobs meant that black Brazilians found it difficult to organize labor unions. Their response was to develop trade associations focusing on social security and retirement benefits, much like self-help societies. Brazilian trade associations tended to be segregated, reflecting occupational divisions along racial lines. For example, artisans and barbers were traditionally "black" occupations going back to slavery, and these professions were represented organizationally by the Artisans' Philanthropic Union Beneficent Society and the Barbers' Union Beneficent Society, both associations of *homens de côr*, or people of color. Although not a trade association, the Sociedade Protectora dos Desvalidos, or the Society for the Protection of the Needy, was critical in that it offered benefits to blacks of all trades.

Faiths New and Renewed

While those of African descent were fighting to recreate themselves as free workers, they were also developing religious traditions that can be placed into three streams. The first extended a process that began with the African's initial contact with European Christianity, whereby the religion was steadily Africanized both liturgically as well as theologically. The second stream, also continuing from previous periods, involved practices developed in Africa and transferred to the Americas, where they were renewed with some alteration but remained identifiably African. The third stream saw the creation of new religions, typically taken from the fabrics of Islamic-Judeo-Christian traditions and woven into entirely novel patterns, informed by a vision of Africa as a historical power and, at least in one instance, a future destination. While the following examples are taken from specific regions, the streams of religious tradition they represent are not territorially limited but can be found flowing elsewhere in the Americas.

The first stream is more a river, in that Christianity contains a range of African influences often inversely proportionate to class: the higher the class, the lesser the African influence. The practices of hoodoo and voodoo, analogues derivative of West and West Central African religions, permeated the beliefs of peasant and working class black Christians in the American South, whose religious services were in any event charged with song and dance and possession in the Holy

Ghost. In the English-speaking Caribbean, Christianity was often infused with substantial African content and connected with obeah, the use of supernatural powers to inflict harm, and *myalism*, the employment of spiritual resources and herbs to counteract witchcraft and other evil. The religions of *convince* and *kumina* also developed, the former involving respect for the Christian deity, but also an active veneration of the spirits of African and maroon ancestors by practitioners known as Bongo men. Kumina, otherwise known as *pukumina* or *pocomania*, also venerates ancestors, who rank after sky gods and earth deities.

The second stream is most prominently represented in Brazil and Cuba, where many were adherents of renewed African religions. Enslaved Africans entering Brazil maintained the concept of distinct ethnolinguistic groupings by pursuing, as one strategy, religious traditions peculiar to their lands of origin. In the complex society that would become Brazil, the reality was that groups intermingled, borrowing ideas from one other while retaining the concept of distinct communities, or *nações* ("nations"). As the black population became predominantly crioulo (Brazilian born) and stratified along lines of color gradation during the nineteenth century (with prêtos or "blacks"and pardos or intermediate shades as the basic divisions), persons born in Bahia and elsewhere began to choose a nação. This was significant, as those who made such choices were also choosing an African identity and an African religion. The various nações, such as the Nagôs (Yoruba) and Jêjes (Aja–Ewe–Fon), maintained distinctive religious traditions, which can collectively be referred to as *candomblé*. The various African traditions, associated with specific nações, were centered upon sacred spaces known as *terreiros*, where rituals were held. Originating in private houses, the terreiros expanded to separate plots of land during the first half of the twentieth century, facilitating the pursuit of candomblé as a way of life with minimal outside interference. In this way, the terreiros became epicenters of not only African religion but also African culture. Women were the principal leaders of candomblé, and perhaps the most famous of the terreiros in Bahia, Ilê Iyá Nassô or Engenho Velho, was founded around 1830 by women from the Yoruba town of Ketu. Terreiros were established in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by women of considerable financial means, including Eugenia Anna dos Santos, or Aninha, who founded the terreiro of Ilê do Axe Opô Afonjá in 1910. Hers is a fascinating example of the mutability of ethnic identity in Bahia, as she was initiated into the

Nagô tradition at Ilê Iyá Nassô, but her African-born parents were not Yoruba.

All of these various candomblé houses were associated with *irmandades*, brotherhoods and sisterhoods that were mutual aid societies, providing burial benefits and unemployment assistance at a time when state relief either did not exist or was woefully insufficient. Examples include the Bôa Morte (Good Death) sisterhood and the Senhor dos Martírios (Lord of the Martyrs) brotherhood of the Nagôs, and the Bom Jesus das Necessidades e Redenção dos Homens Prêtos (Good Jesus of the Needs and Redemption of Black Men) of the Jêjes. The affiliation of the brotherhoods or sisterhoods with specific terreiros underscores an important feature of candomblé: its connection to the Catholic Church. Indeed, the multiple orishas or deities of candomblé, such as Eshu, Yemanja, Oshun, and Shango, are associated with the various saints and principal figures of Catholicism, which was useful when candomblé needed concealment.

Other African-centered religions include West Central African *macumba* near Rio de Janeiro, and elsewhere the practice of *umbanda*. Together with convince, kumina, and candomblé, these religions feature the common elements of African spiritual entities, sacrifice, drumming and singing, and spirit possession. They parallel the Cuban experience, where research is revealing the importance of such clandestine religious organizations as the *abukuá*, a society originating in the Cross River area of southeastern Nigeria and Cameroon. Cuba is also a center of Yoruba or *lucumí* influence, apparent in the practice of *santería*. Divisions among the African-born and their descendants, which like Brazil eventually became a matter of choice, were equally preserved in Cuba's system of *naciones*, supported as they were by the respective *cabildos*, the functional equivalents of the Brazilian irmandades. Yoruba-based religion can also be found in Trinidad in the religion of *Shango*, in which the Yoruba gods Shango, Yemanja, Eshu, and Ogun are worshiped along with deities of Trinidadian origin.

The third stream of religious expression is just as dynamic as the first two. Perhaps its most innovative example is the Rastafarian movement. The onerous economic struggle in the Caribbean not only produced emigration, labor unionism, and social unrest, but also conditions in which the sufferers reenvisioned themselves within an international context. Incessant emigration and subordination to the colonial empire generated within the Caribbean a transnational perspective, contributing specifically to the belief among the downtrodden in Jamaica that

there was a special connection between the Diaspora and Ethiopia. Leonard Percival Howell, experienced in foreign travel, returned to Jamaica in 1932 to proclaim that black Jamaicans should no longer offer their loyalty to England, but to the emperor of Ethiopia, Ras ("Lord") Tafari Makonnen, crowned in November of 1932 and given the throne name Haile Selassie I. The idea that a black man was a sovereign ruler, at a time when most of African descent were under colonial rule in both Africa and the Americas, stirred the collective African imagination. Howell, Archibald Dunkley, and Joseph Hibbert further held that because black Jamaicans belonged to an African nation under Haile Selassie, they should not pay taxes to England.

The 1935 Italian invasion of Ethiopia was a watershed event in the history of the African Diaspora. All around the world, people of African descent were scandalized by the occupation of this ancient, Biblically related land, and they rallied to support the Ethiopian cause. A remarkable, formative moment, the response to the invasion demonstrated the importance of Africa to the struggles of persons thousands of miles and hundreds of years removed from its shores. The invasion also strengthened the position of Howell and his associates. In 1937 the Ethiopian World Federation was founded by a Dr. Malaku Bayen in New York City to promote Ethiopia's liberation, linking it to the fortunes of black folk everywhere. The Federation elevated Haile Selassie as the "Elect of God" and maintained that Africans were the Twelve Tribes of Israel, a claim based upon the Beta Israel and the ancient *Kebra Nagast*.

The British persecuted and imprisoned Howell and his followers, who in 1940 had established a commune at Pinnacle in the hills of St. Catherine, Jamaica. Released from prison in 1943, Howell led a process through which the tenets of the Rastafari were gradually worked out. Haile Selassie acquired divine status and the capitalist, imperialist system was identified as Babylon, its rejection symbolized by "dreads" or locking of the hair, apparently in emulation of Kenya's Land and Freedom Army (or "Mau Mau") in the 1950s, and by the use of ganja and the pipe, both introduced to the Caribbean from India. Africans and their descendants were the true Israel, and Ethiopia the promised land, to which the Rasta would eventually return. The Pinnacle would be repeatedly raided by the authorities, and Howell would be placed in a mental asylum more than once. Nevertheless, the Rastafari movement became an international phenomenon, influencing the anticolonial struggle and giving rise to a deeply political and spiritual reggae.

While the Rastafari borrowed from Judeo-Christian traditions, innovations in the United States engaged these traditions as well as Islam, forging movements that, while entirely novel in theory and practice, were politically similar to the Rastafari in their anticolonialism and advocacy for the black poor. Specifically, the Moorish Science Temple of America, possibly founded in Newark, New Jersey by Noble Drew Ali as early as 1913, offered the startling proposition that African Americans were in fact Moors from Morocco, and as such were part of a larger "Asiatic" community of persons that essentially included everyone except Europeans. The claim of Moorish ancestry, like the Rastafari, linked the Diaspora back to Africa, but the Asiatic identification suggests a concern that was not limited to Africa. Unlike the Rastafari, Noble Drew Ali never advocated a physical return to Morocco. As Moors, his followers adopted Islam as their religion, but it was unorthodox; Noble Drew Ali penned his own *Circle Seven Koran*, drawing upon metaphysical beliefs foreign to conventional Islam. Noble Drew Ali died under mysterious circumstances in 1929, by which time another neo-Islamic movement was taking root. The Nation of Islam, founded in Detroit by W. D. Fard Muhammad in 1930, certainly employed Noble Drew Ali's notion of an international Asiatic identity, but it went much further in its denunciation of Europeans, identifying them as "devils." Indeed, the Nation rejected the principles of sanctioned religion as such, dismissing the idea of an afterlife and the conception of God and Satan as spiritual beings, positing instead that just as whites were devils, blacks were divine, with W. D. Fard Muhammad as Allah. The Nation's identification with Africa was not as strong as the Moors and the Rastas, however, for although members were given an "X" or an equivalent variable to represent the African name lost through enslavement, the original home of blacks was not Africa but Mecca, from where they later migrated to "East Asia" or Egypt, and then to other parts of the African continent. The Nation embraced a variant of Islam in conflict with many of the latter's central tenets, including the claim that Elijah Muhammad, W. D. Fard Muhammad's successor after the latter's disappearance in 1934, was a messenger of God. With the death of Elijah Muhammad in February of 1976, the movement splintered into several factions, with some either embracing or moving toward orthodoxy.

The racialism of the Nation of Islam reversed the assumptions and values of the day. Blackness, long associated by whites with evil, immorality, filth, and worthlessness, became the embodiment of holiness,

cleanliness, morality, and self-confidence. The Nation's emphasis on hard work and economic self-reliance was the means by which a disproportionate number of its members achieved middle-class status, and it provided a model for black economic development. At the same time, the Nation's early years were very much influenced by global conflict and by its support of Japan during the Second World War. An early form of black nationalism, the Nation saw white racism as a phenomenon separate from capitalist venture, condemning the former while embracing the latter; indeed, the Nation was generally opposed to leftist movements, and in this way it differed in quality from the more radical Rastafari.

The Nation of Islam and the Moorish Science Temple of America were also mutual aid societies, but there were others in the Americas not so directly tied to religion. To be sure, Freemasonry enjoyed a significant white following, but the Masons, Odd Fellows, Order of the Eastern Star, and Sisters of Calanthe were parallel secret societies with large black memberships, providing significant assistance in times of need, while organizations such as the Ancient Sons of Israel and the Independent Order of St. Luke issued insurance policies to cover sickness and death. Those in and from the Caribbean often had their own mutual aid networks, and the *sou sou*, a fund into which members paid regularly and out of which they could draw when necessary, was a common societal feature. Beneficial and insurance societies such as the Young Mutual Society of Augusta, Georgia and the Workers Mutual Aid Association of Virginia were not secret societies, but they provided similar services through the collection of weekly dues. Hospitals, orphanages, and homes for the elderly were also established. But as important, if not more so, was the extensive assistance provided by black churches, efforts supported in varying degrees by white congregants of mainline denominations, especially concerning education. In a nutshell, black folk throughout the Diaspora drew upon what meager resources they had, their activities animated by belief systems reaching back to an ancient African past.

Conceptualizing the Solutions

Just about everything black people did and said carried political implications. Their labor, religion, and mutual support systems all addressed social and economic relations of power. Black folk revealed

views on social policy with their benevolent societies; they communicated their sense of community through religion; and they protested economic conditions through strikes, riots, and stoppages. These were all significant, but black folk also articulated political views in clear and explicit terms. Political developments within the African Diaspora require greater attention to individuals as leaders of the masses, but the participation of the latter was just as critical.

As early as Denmark Vesey and David Walker, black leaders of the highest caliber have consistently displayed an awareness that the plight of their particular community was somehow tied to similar communities elsewhere. Eventually referred to as pan-Africanism, connections between these communities varied, but it was rare for a visionary to not have a sense of a more broadly defined, African-derived community extending beyond geopolitical boundaries. The last quarter of the nineteenth century through the first half of the twentieth saw the growth of this principle among the leadership. Their activities, in conjunction with labor migrations, advances in technology, and the reality of empire itself, helped disseminate the concept of an African Diaspora among working class blacks. Reconnecting to Africa and others in the Diaspora, initially envisioned as an intellectual quest or an ideological campaign, often led to concrete action, albeit limited.

Early leaders of pan-Africanism, many of whom were Christian ministers, included Henry Highland Garnet, whose grandfather was Mandinka and whose immediate family escaped Maryland slavery in the 1820s. In his 1843 *Address to the Slaves of the United States*, Garnet called for armed revolt against the slaveocracy, citing Toussaint L'Ouverture as an example to be emulated (Frederick Douglass, who initially opposed Garnet's call for revolt, later reversed his position). Garnet further revealed a diasporic perspective in predicting that the islands of the Caribbean would eventually be "ours" (a reference to blacks in the Caribbean, not North America), and by his organization of the Cuban Anti-Slavery Committee in 1873. He completed the circle in his voyage to West Africa in 1882, where he died and remains buried. His contemporaries Alexander Crummell, Martin R. Delany, and Henry McNeil Turner all favored black emigration to either Africa or Central and South America, convinced that they would never receive the "full free" in the United States. Edward W. Blyden, born in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, repatriated to West Africa beginning in the 1860s, where he became a leading force in establishing educational institutions in Liberia and Sierra Leone. While Anna Julia Cooper, born

to an enslaved mother and a white slaveholder, cannot be categorized as a back-to-Africa emigrationist, her 1892 *A Voice from the South* established connections between racial and gender inequalities in the United States and downtrodden populations beyond its borders.

Perhaps the quintessential expression of diasporic political consciousness was the creation of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League (UNIA) under Marcus Garvey. Born in Jamaica on August 17, 1887, Garvey learned the printing trade before joining the tens of thousands who left the Caribbean for work in Central America. Traveling to London in 1912, he came across the pan-Africanist ideas of the Egyptian Dusé Muhammad, editor of the *African Times and Orient Review*. Upon his return to Jamaica, he founded the UNIA in 1914, in which his wives Amy Ashwood and later Amy Jacques Garvey would play prominent roles. Venturing to the United States in 1916 to raise money for the UNIA and to meet Booker T. Washington (who, unknown to Garvey, had died the previous year), he incorporated the UNIA in New York state in 1918, establishing his headquarters in Harlem. Garvey's "back-to-Africa" movement was much more involved than a simple call for repatriation. Facing colonialism in both the Caribbean and Africa, he advocated the dismantling of European and American empire and the reconstruction of black societies everywhere. His businesses, such as the Black Star Line, were launched to promote trade between black communities in the Americas. His official organ, the *Negro World*, was the most widely circulated black publication in the world, appearing in English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese, and was edited from 1923 to 1928 by T. Thomas Fortune, former editor of the New York *Age*. By 1921, Garvey had achieved international recognition, his parades through Harlem, along with his annual August conventions, attracting thousands from all over the world. His initial backers included A. Philip Randolph (who would later withdraw his support) and Ida B. Wells Barnett, champion of the antilynching campaign, while Madame C. J. Walker, cosmetics entrepreneur and multimillionaire, provided some financial backing. Centered in Harlem, the UNIA was the literal embodiment of pan-Africanism, and in time it established 996 branches in forty-three countries, including Cuba, South Africa, Europe, and even Australia. Its membership is difficult to calculate, but it conceivably numbered in the hundreds of thousands.

Familiar with racism and light skin privilege, Garvey instilled pride in persons with dark skin, thick lips, broad noses, and nappy hair. He

originated the Red, Black and Green flag of pan-Africanism and black nationalism, and he taught that hard work and discipline were the keys to success. His overall message was a much-needed balm, but there were problems in the organization. Succinctly put, his advisors were not up to the task, and his investments were poorly advised. There were also elements within the American black community appalled by his back-to-Africa message, at his ability to raise substantial sums of money, at his rapid ascent. Some were sincerely concerned that Garvey was a charlatan, but others were driven by the politics of xenophobia and personal ambition. For them, Garvey was an outsider with an accent, a dark-skinned West Indian who had come to Harlem, the center of the black world, and virtually taken over. His critics became even more alarmed after Garvey met with the Ku Klux Klan in 1922, their anxiety converging with that of the federal government, the latter concerned about the implications of Garvey's antiracist, anticolonial activities. Britain also was uneasy with Garvey, and together with the United States covertly opposed the UNIA's attempt to acquire land and establish a presence in Liberia. The "Garvey Must Go" campaign resulted in his indictment on mail-fraud charges in 1921 and conviction in 1923. In 1925 he began serving a five-year term at the federal penitentiary in Atlanta, Georgia. His sentence was commuted in 1927 by President Coolidge following a campaign for his release by the national black press. Garvey would return to Jamaica, and from there to London, where he died in 1940. The UNIA still exists though in much truncated form, as Garvey's efforts at revitalizing it were largely unsuccessful.

One of Garvey's principal critics was W. E. B. Du Bois. Born in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, Du Bois's long life span (1868 to 1963), his training at Fisk, Harvard, and Berlin, and his unparalleled intellect positioned him to make incredible contributions to the struggle of black folk and the downtrodden throughout the earth, for whom he continues to serve as an exemplar of the scholar-activist. As early as 1897 he founded the American Negro Academy with other black intellectuals, including Alexander Crummell. Between 1896 and 1914 he led the annual Congress on Negro Problems at Atlanta University. In 1903 he published *Souls of Black Folk*, challenging, among other things, Booker T. Washington's emphasis on vocational training, his public deemphasis of the struggle for social and political equality, and his extraordinary influence in the decision-making process affecting black people, otherwise known as the "Tuskegee Machine." Instead,

Du Bois proposed a vigorous campaign for full citizenship led by a black "talented tenth," in whom he would express great disappointment later in life.

Du Bois, at the head of a similarly minded group, met in Niagara Falls, Canada in June of 1905. Four years later, the Niagara Movement became institutionalized in the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), whose leaders included Ida B. Wells Barnett (but not Monroe Trotter, publisher of the Boston *Guardian*, who disagreed with the inclusion of whites). In 1911, the National Urban League was founded, likewise an multiracial organization dedicated to improving the social and economic plight of blacks. It was in such a context, with national organizations already in place and fighting to improve conditions for those of African descent, that Marcus Garvey entered the picture.

Du Bois concluded that Garvey did not understand North American race relations, and he saw him as a menace. It did not help that both men engaged in personal invective. They differed from each other in a number of ways, but one of the greatest ironies of the period is that both were committed to the struggles of black people on an international scale. As longtime editor of the *Crisis*, official organ of the NAACP, Du Bois published articles and information that covered the whole of the African Diaspora, and in that way paralleled the range of Garvey's *Negro World*. A series of several Pan-African Congresses, begun in 1900, saw Du Bois's organizational involvement in 1919, 1921, 1927, and 1945. These congresses, convened to marshal opposition to colonialism and racism, were not unlike Garvey's annual conventions, and the two men's efforts were often confused in the media. Du Bois would go on to incorporate a Marxist analysis into a powerful critique of capitalism, while Garvey remained an unabashed capitalist enthusiast. Disillusioned with developments in the United States, Du Bois relocated to Ghana in 1960, joined the Communist Party, and renounced his American citizenship; he died in Ghana on the eve of the August 27, 1963 March on Washington. Tensions between Du Bois and the Garvey camp lessened when Amy Jacques Garvey and Du Bois collaborated in organizing the 1945 Manchester Pan-African Congress. The tempestuous reality of Du Bois and Garvey as pan-Africanist pioneers was symbolically reconciled on African soil under Kwame Nkrumah, independent Ghana's first president. Having studied in the United States at Lincoln University, Nkrumah's pan-Africanist vision for Africa was directly inspired by both men.

The Caribbean contribution to pan-Africanism and the concept of the African Diaspora was therefore highly significant. In addition to Garvey and Blyden, Trinidadian Henry Sylvestre Williams called the first Pan-African Congress in London in 1900, and he collaborated with Dr. Robert Love of Jamaica to establish branches of the Pan-African Association in Jamaica in 1906. Deeply disturbed by the 1935 Italian invasion of Ethiopia, Jamaican Harold Moody transformed his League of Coloured Peoples from an educational organization to a decidedly political one, while Trinidadians George Padmore and C. L. R. James responded by founding the International African Service Bureau in London in 1937, along with the future president of Kenya, "Burning Spear" Jomo Kenyatta. Padmore, born in 1902, had attended Fisk and Howard universities, dropping out of the latter's law school in 1928 and joining the U.S. Communist Party to combat imperialism. A gifted writer, Padmore became editor of the influential *Negro Worker*, rising to prominence in the Communist International, for which he wrote *The Life and Struggles of Negro Toilers*. But four years before establishing the Bureau with James, he exited the Communist Party over differences concerning race. Padmore would control the Bureau until it became the Pan-African Federation in 1944, and he was instrumental in recruiting many of the organizers for the Manchester Congress the following year. Having published the insightful *How Britain Rules Africa* in 1936, he continued to write articles for a number of publications, including the *Crisis*, the *Chicago Defender*, and the *Pittsburgh Courier*, demonstrating the international dimension of the black media during this period. Padmore's influence as a journalist writing on labor strikes in Trinidad and the Caribbean in 1937 and 1938 was far-reaching, exposing the relationship between foreign capital and colonial rule in the increasingly desperate plight of the peasant turned wage laborer. He would precede Du Bois in Ghana, where in the 1950s he served as an advisor to Nkrumah.

C. L. R. James, another towering scholar-activist whose work continues to influence, left Trinidad in 1932 with only a high school education. In 1938 James published *The Black Jacobins*, the seminal work on the Haitian Revolution, simultaneously igniting a scholarly revolution by inaugurating a movement in which history is written "from the bottom up," or from the perspective of the working and downtrodden classes. His 1938 *History of Negro Revolt* centered people of African descent in world history, emphasizing the vital role they must play in future global struggles. As was true of *Black Jacobins*, James

demonstrated how the African-descended could take ownership of ideas originating in Europe and forge them into implements of liberation in his 1963 publication concerning cricket, *Beyond a Boundary*.

No less important was North American Paul Robeson, born at a time (1898) when the memory of slavery was quite fresh, his father having escaped it at the age of fifteen. Raised in Princeton, New Jersey, Robeson graduated from Rutgers and then Columbia Law School after stellar accomplishments both academically and athletically. While his acting and singing careers began during in law school, he traveled to London in 1927 to study at the London School of Oriental Languages. There he met James, Padmore, Kenyatta, and Nnamdi Azikiwe, first president of Nigeria, and would later recall "I discovered Africa in London." Robeson studied African languages and read widely on Africa, adding to his understanding of art and spirituality in the African Diaspora. His 1934 publication, *What I Want from Life*, is one of the most incisive inquiries into the collective psyche of the African-derived, emphasizing the importance of retrieving an African-centered identity. During his travels to the Soviet Union and Spain in the 1930s, he developed a deeper appreciation of the plight of the downtrodden, and he began to stress the need to coordinate anticolonial and antiracist struggles throughout Africa, the African Diaspora, and Asia. He became increasingly radical as his singing and acting careers soared, helping to establish in 1937 what became the Council on African Affairs (CAA) and serving as its chair for most of its existence after 1942.

Perhaps the CAA's most important work was in South Africa, where it supported the African National Congress. Robeson's anticolonial activities intensified after the Second World War, but following the CAA's "Big Three Unity" rally in June of 1946 at Madison Square Garden in New York City, attended by 19,000 people and led by Robeson, Du Bois, Mary McLeod Bethune, and others, Cold War politics caused a major split in African American leadership. As early as 1942, the FBI had begun investigating the CAA for subversive activities, and by 1948 a previously receptive white media joined the NAACP under Walter White in denouncing Robeson (and Du Bois, who was dismissed from the NAACP that same year). Concerned with the influence of Robeson and Du Bois in West Africa and elsewhere, the U.S. government revoked Robeson's passport in 1950. Robeson would suffer a fate similar to that of Du Bois, virtually forgotten by his people who owed him so much, reaching the end in 1976.

Notwithstanding the complexities of racial identity in Brazil, consciousness of a larger black world managed to develop there as well. In São Paulo, black newspapers such as *A Liberdade*, *O Menelick*, and *O Alfinete* ("The Pin"), published early in the twentieth century, initially featured community news and information, social commentaries, and reports concerning racial discrimination. These earlier newspapers gave way to *O Clarim da Alvorada* ("The Clarion of Dawn") and *Progresso* in the 1920s, and *A Voz da Raça* ("The Voice of the Race") in the 1930s. Under the leadership of cofounder José Correia Leite, *Clarim* sought to unify the African-descended community by examining the challenges of the day and by emphasizing African Brazilian history. At the same time, the first African Brazilian activist organization in São Paulo was founded, the Centro Cívico Palmares, its name a tribute to the famous quilombo. Correia Leite was a member of the Palmares organization and connected *Clarim* to both an activist agenda and a diasporic vision, as *Clarim* published articles from the *Chicago Defender* and Garvey's *Negro World*. Robert Abbott, publisher of the *Defender*, visited Brazil in 1923, and subsequently he began sending his paper to *Clarim* and to *Progresso* (the Garvey influence apparently came through an English teacher in Bahia named Mario de Vasconcelos, who sent translations of *The Negro World* to the offices of *Clarim*).

Black Brazilian consciousness took a momentous step forward in September of 1931, when the Frente Negra Brasileira, or Black Brazilian Front, was founded under the leadership of Arlindo Veiga dos Santos and others. A civil rights organization as well as a benevolent society, the Frente Negra launched *A Voz da Raça*. However, schisms between the Frente Negra and other sectors of the African Brazilian community arose as a result of Vega dos Santos' autocratic style of leadership and embrace of fascism. Dissolved (along with all political parties) by the imposition of the *Estado Novo* (New State) under Getúlio Vargas in November of 1937, the Frente Negra nevertheless remains a critical turning point in the effort both to unify the African-descended population in Brazil and to connect them with blacks elsewhere. A similar movement developed in Cuba, where the Cuban Independent Party of Color was established in 1907 by Evaristo Estenoz and Pedro Ivonet. Fighting for equality of treatment from a government under heavy American influence, they were opposed by others of African descent such as Juan Gualberto Gómez, who saw their race-based efforts as divisive and anti-Cuban. The party was outlawed in 1910, Esenoz and Ivonet were arrested, and the ensuing revolt by aggrieved party

members brutally repressed by President José Miguel Gómez (with American backing). Unlike members of the Frente Negra, thousands of party members were slaughtered, including women and children. The aspirations of African Cubans would suffer for many years to come.

Efflorescence

Black folk have always maintained a dynamic and vibrant life of the mind. Not even slavery, Reconstruction's failure, and the rise of state-sponsored terrorism in the American South could stamp out their creativity and scientific genius. Individuals of distinction followed in the footsteps of the mathematician, astronomer, almanac maker, and surveyor Benjamin Banneker (d. 1806), discovering how to intellectually transcend the impediments of racism. While Banneker, greatly responsible for the design of the District of Columbia, had been free-born, the slave-born George Washington Carver (d. 1943) developed hundreds of applications for such plants as soybeans, sweet potatoes, and peanuts, and he was instrumental in aiding the South's flagging agriculture from his laboratories at Tuskegee Institute. Elijah McCoy (d. 1929) was also familiar with slavery, his parents having escaped the institution in Kentucky to Canada, Elijah's birthplace. Eventually settling in Detroit, McCoy accumulated nearly sixty patents, his steam engine lubricator so celebrated that it became "the real McCoy," a standard by which such machinery would be measured. Freeborn Granville T. Woods (d. 1910) also held over sixty patents, and he played a major role in the development of the rail by creating a telegraph system that allowed communication between trains and stations. Likewise, Norbert Rillieux (d. 1894), son of a slave woman and a planter in Louisiana, received an education in France and made contributions to industry with his invention of an evaporating process to refine sugar. Perhaps as significant was the accomplishment of Rebecca J. Cole (d. 1922), the second black female physician on record in the United States, who received her medical degree in 1867. Edward A. Bouchet (d. 1918) was also highly educated, receiving a doctorate in physics from Yale in 1876. Lewis Latimer (d. 1929) held patents for an electric lamp and a carbon filament for light bulbs, and he was a member of Thomas Edison's laboratory. Madam C. J. Walker (d. 1919) became wealthy as an innovator of female hair care techniques.

The preceding are just some of the African-descended who made significant contributions to science and industry. They would be accompanied or succeeded by such individuals as Roger Arliner Young (d. 1964), who in 1940 became the first black woman to receive a doctorate in zoology from the University of Pennsylvania and who went on to publish significant research; Dr. Daniel Hale Williams (d. 1931), who performed the first known successful open heart surgery, in 1893; Dr. Ernest E. Just (d. 1941), noted zoologist; Howard Medical College professor Ruth Ella Moore (1903–1994), the first African American woman to earn a doctorate in bacteriology from Ohio State University, in 1933; and Dr. Charles Drew (d. 1950), a leading expert in blood plasma and a pioneer in the creation of blood banks. While most of these notables were formally educated, there were many others who never had the opportunity to grace academic halls, but who nonetheless had formidable knowledge of the medicinal properties of plants and herbs, or had unusual insight into the habits of animals and insects, or knew the movements of the constellations from years of observation. They were also scientists, though uncelebrated.

Regarding cultural production in the African Diaspora, the plastic arts, music, dance, and literature were tightly interwoven with labor and politics, reflecting as well as influencing. Whatever the political circumstances, black folk have consistently lived in strikingly beautiful and uniquely innovative ways. In the beginning of the twentieth century, however, black artists and writers and musicians began to experience a notoriety previously unknown by their ancestors. The "discovery" of black aesthetics had the effect of intensifying cultural production, otherwise referred to as a renaissance. We should not approach the phenomenon uncritically. Black intellectuals debated the purpose of black cultural production, whether it should always have redeeming social value and be of use in the overall struggle to "uplift" the poor and oppressed. Further complicating black art were questions relating to white patronage, whether it was merely supportive or more intrusive. Issues of authenticity were also present, as the relatively privileged, in some instances, sought to interpret for a white audience the experiences of the downtrodden. Twin considerations of white patronage and class difference therefore raise this question: How representative of the black masses was the cultural work of a small black elite?

We can begin this discussion in Harlem, where the early-twentieth-century arrival of immigrants from the English-, French-, and Spanish-speaking Caribbean merged with that of blacks migrating from the

American South to create an atmosphere of tremendous energy. The rise of the UNIA and the NAACP invigorated the black community, as did other organizations whose leaders addressed throngs of listeners from their stepladders on Harlem's various street corners, charging the air with an expectancy that looked to move beyond the legacies of slavery to a new day. Harlemites vigorously debated alternative visions of the future, thrilled with the thought that they could at least dream a better future, a world in which increasing emphasis was placed on similarities between the African-descended rather than differences.

It was in such a context that the Harlem Renaissance, also called the New Negro Movement, began to flourish, spanning the 1920s and early 1930s, having been slowed by the depression of 1929. The idea was that a different kind of black person was emerging out of the shadows of the past, a person much more assertive and demanding of his rights. Black writers in particular achieved recognition during this period, benefiting from a growing American interest in urban life and social challenges.

For many scholars, the Renaissance began with Jean Toomer's *Cane* (1923), an excursion into issues of race from which Toomer took a detour as his life unfolded, opting to explore mysticism instead. Jessie Fauset, who supported Toomer's development as a writer, was herself a major figure of the period, serving as literary editor of the *Crisis* from 1919 to 1926. Like Toomer, Fauset's *There is Confusion* (1924) and *Plum Bun: A Novel Without a Moral* (1929) both examine interracial questions, in particular the notion of light-skinned blacks "passing" for white. Fauset also played a role in the rise of Langston Hughes, often referred to as the "Poet Laureate of the Negro Race." Author of "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," Hughes published *Weary Blues* in 1926 and *Not Without Laughter* in 1930, demonstrating his versatility as both poet and novelist. *The Big Sea*, his 1940 autobiography, is an important source for what is known about the Renaissance. Countee Cullen was also a poet of tremendous talent, publishing *Color* in 1925, containing his most famous poems, "Heritage" and "Incident." The second black person to win a Guggenheim Fellowship, he followed *Color* with *The Ballad of the Brown Girl* and *Copper Sun*, both in 1927. Though ending in divorce in 1930, his 1928 marriage to Du Bois's only child Yolande demonstrates the interconnectedness of the period's black intelligentsia.

James Weldon Johnson had been active prior to the emergence of Jean Toomer. Secretary of the NAACP for a time, Johnson published *Fifty Years and Other Poems* in 1917, followed in 1922 by *The Book of*

Negro Poetry. His *Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man* was reissued in 1927, the same year that *God's Trombones* appeared, in which the oratorical style of the black preacher was poeticized (and immortalized). Perhaps the most recognized figure of the Renaissance, Johnson was later joined in prominence by the celebrated Zora Neale Hurston, whose insight into the lives and culture of the black peasantry and working class, particularly her depiction of women and their struggles in black southern communities, is exemplified in such works as *Jonah's Gourd Vine* (1934) and *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937). An anthropologist, she also studied African-based religions in the American South and Haiti; *Tell My Horse* (1937) remains an important discussion of the latter, while her autobiographical work, *Dust Tracks on a Road* (1942), is a reflective as well as stinging critique of American policies.

In 1925, Alain Locke published a major compilation of nonfiction prose called *The New Negro*; among those who would become prominent later, but who participated in the Renaissance at an early age, was Sterling Brown, whose 1932 collection of poetry, *Southern Road*, was a significant landmark. Du Bois himself contributed to the literary movement through his creative writing, including *The Quest of the Silver Fleece* (1900) and *Darkwater* (1920), and by editing the works of others.

Writers from the Caribbean were also among the leaders of the literary outpouring; Nella Larsen was possibly among them, as her mother may have come from the Caribbean. Her novels *Quicksand* (1928) and *Passing* (1929), however, correspond more closely to issues raised in the work of Jessie Fauset. More clearly fitting this category was the Jamaican Claude McKay, who in 1924 published the classic *Home to Harlem*. He was joined by Eric Walrond, from British Guyana, who worked for a number of black journals before publishing his *Tropic Death* in 1926. As writers explored connections among African-descended populations and Africa's meaning for the Diaspora, tensions sometimes developed; McKay, for example, became alienated from black American intellectuals. For all of his disaffection, however, he contributed greatly to the creation of a diasporic intellectual network, maintaining a lively correspondence with North American and Caribbean thinkers during his stay in Europe from 1922 to 1934. For his part, Walrond helped to publish the writings of the Martinicuan René Maran in *Opportunity*, a journal of the Urban League, for whom Walrond worked at one point. Mention of *Opportunity* allows

for the general observation that black periodicals of the day, including Garvey's *Negro World* and Du Bois's *Crisis*, were instrumental in promoting the literary renaissance, as they regularly published short works of fiction as well as poetry.

In addition to creative writers, New York City was either home or way station for a constellation of other black intellectuals and artists, including the prominent sociologist E. Franklin Frazier, political activist and organizer Hubert Harrison, journalist J. A. Rogers, and bibliophile Arthur (Arturo) Schomburg, the last three from St. Croix, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico, respectively. Arna Bontemps occupied several stations as poet and novelist (for example, his 1936 *Black Thunder*), but he was also a researcher and scholar. All of these people lived at a time when the artwork of Henry Ossawa Tanner enjoyed great notoriety in Europe and the Americas, the sculpture of Meta Warrick Fuller was critically acclaimed, and the artwork of Aaron Douglas was attracting ever-widening attention. Black film companies such as the Lincoln Motion Picture Company, established in 1916, and that of Oscar Micheaux, created in 1918, sought to counter the racist depictions of the film industry. Blacks in the theater and musicals included Paul Robeson's 1924 leading role in Eugene O'Neill's *All God's Chillun Got Wings*, and the 1921 debut of *Shuffle Along*, written and produced by Eubie Blake, Noble Sissle, Aubrey Lye, and F. E. Miller. All of these activities were enlivened by the music of the period, jazz (discussed in Chapter Eight). New York City, Chicago, New Orleans, Kansas City, and several other sites experienced the music, but Harlem as the focal point of concurrent movements was a most extraordinary place and certainly a cultural capital.

Paris was another. Blacks from the Americas came to the city, including North American soldiers who chose to remain in France at the end of the First World War. A number of musicians alighted as well, either passing through or electing to settle in the Montmartre section of the city, the center of the black American expatriate community. Paris, for much of the twentieth century, served as a refuge for black Americans seeking to escape virulent American racism, and it was a place where the appreciation of jazz allowed musicians to make a living. No doubt the greatest examples of this were Sidney Bechet and Josephine Baker. Bechet, a pioneer in a jazz form closely associated with New Orleans, went back and forth between the United States and France until he finally settled in the latter in 1950, only to die nine years later. In contrast, the dancer, singer, and actor extraordinaire Baker arrived

in Paris in 1925 and remained there for most of her life until her death in 1975, having acquired French citizenship in 1927 and later serving the French Resistance in the Second World War. In addition to Claude McKay, writers and intellectuals who spent significant time in Paris included Anna Julia Cooper (the first African American to achieve the doctorate at the Sorbonne), Langston Hughes, Jessie Fauset, Nella Larsen, Alain Locke, and Countee Cullen. Henry Ossawa Tanner was the most illustrious black artist living in Paris, but also studying in France was sculpturer Augusta Savage, known for her *Lift Every Voice and Sing*; Nancy Elizabeth Prophet, who worked in stone and wood, producing *Head of a Negro* and *Congolaise*; Hale Woodruff, perhaps best known for his *Amistad* murals in the Talladega College Library (Alabama); Palmer Hayden, whose paintings of everyday life are represented in *The Janitor Who Paints*; and Aaron Douglas, regarded as the "Dean" of black painters. His work graced the *Crisis*, as it also illustrated Johnson's *God's Trombones*. Douglas was deeply influenced by African art, and it was in France, ironically, that these artists were exposed to such art, source of cubism's genius. Like Paul Robeson, they traveled to Europe to either discover or develop a more intimate relationship with African culture.

Related to, yet independent of, the African American experience in Paris was the rise of *négritude*, a movement largely consisting of French-speaking and French-writing individuals who posited the idea that people of African descent throughout the world possessed an essence distinguishing them from non-Africans, a difference that was expressed culturally. Négritude writers sought to explain the reasons why blacks were nearly everywhere under European domination, and they found their answer in the idea of négritude or "blackness." Briefly, négritude maintains that the African-descended seek a harmonious rather than exploitative relationship with their environment; that they are warm, sensual, and artistically creative, and therefore susceptible to the ruthless. Needless to say, not all in Africa or the Diaspora subscribed to such views, and many rejected them outright. Nonetheless, négritude was an important concept whose influence remains discernible. A distaste for colonial rule was shared by students in Paris from Africa and the Caribbean, who began organizing when sisters Paulette, Jane, and Andrée Nadal of Martinique held weekly literary salons from 1929 to 1934. Persons from Africa, the Caribbean, and North America met (usually on Sundays) to discuss art and politics, and to dance. In 1929, Paulette Nadal and the Haitian dentist Leo Sajous started a monthly

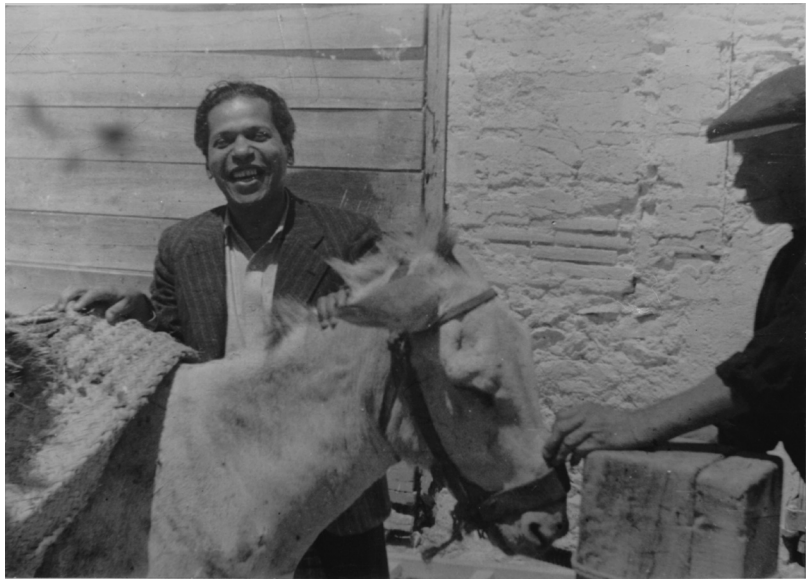

FIGURE 11. Nicolás Guillén, Afro-Cuban poet and editor of *Mediodía*, Madrid, Spain, September 1937. Photographs and Prints Division, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations.

publication in both French and English entitled *Revue du Monde Noir*, in which writers from all over the Diaspora and Africa were featured. The *Revue* folded in less than a year, but it was replaced by *Légitime Defense*, published by another group of students from Martinique. In 1935, students began the journal *L'Etudiant Noir*, and among them were those who would become leading intellectuals. Léopold Senghor, prolific writer and future president of Senegal, was a participant, as was Aimé Césaire of Martinique, who in 1939 published the highly influential *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* ("Notes on Return to My Native Land"), an anticolonial classic that also presented the concept of black cultural unity. Other négritude writers included Jacques Roumain, Léon G. Damas, Etienne Léro, and Birago Diop.

In tandem with négritude and the New Negro Movement, Spanish-speaking artists developed what was called *negrismo*. African Cuban poet, writer, and journalist Nicolás Guillén is a prominent example, whose works celebrate African beauty while depicting black struggle over the centuries. His 1929 collection of poems, *Cerebro y Corazón* ("Brain and Heart"), was a major contribution and signaled his lifelong

commitment to social and political change. Guillén was joined in the negrismo movement by poet Luis Palés Matos of Guayama, Puerto Rico, whose 1937 *Tuntún de pasa y grifería* ("Drumbeats of Kink and Blackness") also focused on race. That Palés Matos was phenotypically "white" drew criticism, and his subsequent poetry reflected different issues. African Cuban poet Marcelino Arozarena Ramos was a third major voice in the literary movement, but perhaps the quintessential artist of the period was the Cuban painter Wilfredo Lam. Born of a Chinese father and a mother of African, European, and indigenous ancestry, Lam's work developed an intense engagement with African themes, perhaps owing to both his background and his personal participation in santería.

Suggestions for Further Reading

Much of what is contained in this chapter is related to suggested materials for the previous two, as works often venture into multiple periods and subjects. In addition to these and to the numerous works referred to in the text, a good place to find more about migrations is Irma Watkins-Owens, *Blood Relations: Caribbean Immigrants and the Harlem Community, 1900–1930* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana U. Press, 1996), a book that also moves into early-twentieth-century Harlem and Marcus Garvey. It can be complemented by Winston James, *Holding Aloft the Banner of Ethiopia: Caribbean Radicalism in Early Twentieth-Century America* (London and New York: Verso, 1998). Concerning indentured Africans, see Monica Schuler, *"Alas, alas Kongo": A Social History of Indentured African Immigration Into Jamaica, 1841–1865* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins U. Press, 1980), and Maureen Warner-Lewis, *Guinea's Other Suns: The African Dynamic in Trinidad Culture* (Dover, MA: Majority Press, 1991).

Labor movements are covered in such works as Robin D. G. Kelley, *Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists During the Great Depression* (Chapel Hill: U. of North Carolina Press, 1990), and Joe William Trotter, Jr., *Black Milwaukee: The Making of an Industrial Proletariat, 1915–1945* (Urbana: U. of Illinois Press, 1985). Trotter has also edited a useful volume on migration in *The Great Migration in Historical Perspective: New Dimensions of Race, Class and Gender* (Bloomington: Indiana U. Press, 1991). Relating labor and political developments in the United States through the mid-twentieth century is Penny M. Von Eschen,

Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937–1957 (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell U. Press, 1997). In *Freedoms Given, Freedoms Won: Afro-Brazilians in Post-Abolition São Paulo and Salvador* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers U. Press, 1998), Kim D. Butler provides insight into both labor developments and African-based religions in her discussion of Brazil. This can be read together with Philip A. Howard, *Changing History: Afro-Cuban Cabildos and Societies of Color in the Nineteenth Century* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State U. Press, 1998), and Michael G. Hanchard, *Orpheus and Power: The Movimento Negro of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, Brazil, 1945–1988* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton U. Press, 1994).

There is a lot of literature on the Harlem Renaissance. One can begin with Arna Bontemps, ed., *The Harlem Renaissance Remembered* (New York: Dodd Mead, 1972); Nathan Huggins, *Harlem Renaissance* (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1971); and David Levering Lewis, *When Harlem Was in Vogue* (New York: Knopf, 1981). Regarding négritude, see Janet G. Vaillant, *Black, French, and African: A Life of Léopold Sédar Senghor* (Cambridge: Cambridge U. Press, 1990); Femi Ojo-Ade, *Leon Gontran-Damas: The Spirit of Resistance* (London: Karnak, 1993); and Léopold Senghor, *Négritude, arabisme et francité: réflexions sur le problème de la culture* (Beirut, Lebanon: Éditions Dar al-Kitab Allubnani, 1967). Tyler Stovall's *Paris Noir: African Americans in the City of Light* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1996), although primarily concerned with black Americans in Paris, also discusses négritude, as does Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard U. Press, 2003).

One could focus on any number of influences in the Harlem Renaissance, and the Garvey phenomenon was certainly one key. Edited by Amy Jacques-Garvey, *Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey*, 2 vols. (New York: Arno Press, 1968–69) is a classic distillation of his views. For context, see Tony Martin, *Race First: The Ideological and Organizational Struggles of Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association* (Dover, MA: Majority Press, 1986), and Rupert Lewis, *Marcus Garvey: Anti-Colonial Champion* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1988). Robert A. Hill has edited primary documents relating to the Garvey movement in *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers*, 9 vols. (Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1983–). For a work linking Garvey with related movements in the Caribbean, see Horace Campbell, *Rasta and Resistance: From*

Marcus Garvey to Walter Rodney (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1987). An excellent work on the Nation of Islam is Claude Andrew Clegg III, *An Original Man: The Life and Times of Elijah Muhammad* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997).

Women played major roles in the Garvey movement, along with other formations. See Ula Yvette Taylor, *The Veiled Garvey: The Life and Times of Amy Jacques Garvey* (Chapel Hill: U. of North Carolina Press, 2002); Barbara Bair, "Pan-Africanism as Process: Adelaide Casely Hayford, Garveyism, and the Cultural Roots of Nationalism," in Sidney Lemelle and Robin Kelley, eds., *Imagining Home: Class, Culture and Nationalism in the African Diaspora* (London and New York: Verso, 1994); Adelaide M. Cromwell, *An African Victorian Feminist: The Life and Times of Adelaide Smith Casely Hayford, 1868–1960* (Washington, DC: University Press, 1986); and Gerald Horne, *Race Woman: The Lives of Shirley Graham Du Bois* (New York: New York U. Press, 2000).

Regarding W. E. B. Du Bois, see Arnold Rampersad, *The Art and Imagination of W. E. B. Du Bois* (New York: Shocken Books, 1990); Manning Marable, *W. E. B. Du Bois: Black Radical Democrat* (Boston: Twayne, 1986); and David Levering Lewis, *W. E. B. Du Bois: Biography of a Race, 1868–1919* (New York: Holt, 1993). On C. L. R. James, see Anthony Bogues, *Caliban's Freedom: The Early Political Thought of C. L. R. James* (London and Chicago: Pluto Press, 1997), and Paul Buhle, *C. L. R. James: The Artist as Revolutionary* (London and New York: Pluto Press, 1988).

Works that bypass the nation-state in their analyses of anticolonial struggle include the foundational W. E. B. Du Bois, *The World and Africa: An Inquiry Into the Part Which Africa has Played in World History* (New York: International, 1965); C. L. R. James, *A History of Pan-African Revolt* (Washington, DC: Drum and Spear, 1969), 2nd ed., revised; Cedric J. Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (Chapel Hill: U. of North Carolina Press, 1983); and P. Olisanwuche Esedebe, *Pan-Africanism: The Idea and Movement, 1776–1963* (Washington, DC: Howard U. Press, 1982).