



The End of Black History

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Abstract

This work argues that the White Christian Western world ended Black history as a distinct form of system and social integration unfolding unto the world by integrating them into the dialectic of their (neo) liberal (Protestant) capitalist means and modes of production. This process, contemporarily, in postindustrial America, has led to the queerification and feminization of the so-called Black American community, which serves the imperial agenda of the White Western (Protestant) Christian world under American hegemony by promoting their neoliberal identity politics to the black diaspora and the African continent under the guise of neoliberal identity politics and capitalism.

Keywords: Black Church; African-Americanization; Racial Identity; Religiosity; Black Diaspora; Spiritualism; Phenomenological Structuralism

Introduction

The end of history thesis as adopted in the dialectical works of Hegel proposes a denouement of reason in the world culminating in the endpoint of humanity's sociopolitical and economic evolution and development through the synthesis of contradictions over time [1-5]. At which point, ideological history would end. For many post-Hegel scholars, the French Revolution and the regime of Napoleon represented that endpoint synthesis of equal rights and recognition touted by the values, ideas, and ideals of the Enlightenment. Contemporarily, made famous by postmodern thinkers, Alexandre Kojève, and Francis Fukuyama, the thesis in the postmodern position signifies the end to the modernist emphasis on linear history, grand metanarratives, and universal truth in favor of what is contemporarily known as neoliberal identity politics. In the Kojèveian sense, the move is away from the French Revolution and Napoleon's regime to emphasize the ideological struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union. Kojève posits that the capitalism

of the United States represented right-Hegelianism while the state-socialism of the Soviet Union represented left-Hegelianism. The end of history for Kojève is not the triumph of the latter over the former; instead, it is a triumph of a socialist-capitalist synthesis. For Fukuyama, the triumph of liberal capitalism over state-socialism, right-Hegelianism over left-Hegelianism, as highlighted by the postmodernist identity politics under neoliberal capitalism of the United States of America represents the endpoint of history where the regimes of rights and equal recognition has finally been established. In this work, using Mocombe's structurationist theory of phenomenological structuralism in refutation to Fukuyama's (right-Hegelian) position, which represents capitalist and liberal fascism in the form of neoliberal capitalism and identity politics, I want to argue that the White Christian Western world ended Black history, in the Fukuyama sense, as a distinct form of system and social integration unfolding unto the world by integrating them into the dialectic of their means and modes of production, capitalist neoliberal identity politics, which is the end point of



White Western civilization. This process, contemporarily, in postindustrial America, with its emphasis on reintroducing contradictions as personal narratives (postmodernity) against the metanarrative of modernity for the purpose of generating surplus-value through diversified consumerism, has led to the queerification and feminization of the so-called Black American (fictitious) community, which serves the universal and imperial agenda of the White Western Christian world under American hegemony by promoting White Western Protestant capitalist neoliberal identity politics to the black diaspora and the African continent under the guise of identity politics and diversified consumerism [6-9].

Hence, there is no Black American identity and community in America outside of their segregation associated with their relations to, and differentiation within, the American Protestant capitalist modes and means of production. Ever since their arrival onto the shores of America, so-called black identity and practical consciousness, in other words, have been determined by their actions and reactions, i.e., practical consciousnesses, to their interpellation and embourgeoisement by whites to the social class language games of the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism [10]. There are no sui generis Black American identity and community with its own form of system and social integration that is different from, or diametrically opposes, the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism of their white counterparts, which would emerge out of that historical relationship. Instead, the so-called Black American community is a fictitious community stemming from structural differentiation and reproduction associated with the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism of their former White Christian slavemasters. And at the end point of this form of system and social integration, neoliberal identity capitalism as highlighted by Fukuyama, Black identity and community has also finally ended serving as a simulacrum of the latter with its individual identity politics over a group solidarity (metanarrative) manifesting as a universal form of system and social integration in the annals of history, which diametrically opposes the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism [11,12].

Background of the Problem

Since the 1960s, there have been two dominant schools of thought on understanding the origins and nature of Black American practical consciousnesses, the ideas, ideals, and values, i.e., practical consciousnesses, Black Americans recursively reorganize and reproduce in their material practices in the United States (US): the pathological-pathogenic and adaptive-vitality schools [13-15]. The pathological-pathogenic position suggests that in its divergences from white American norms and values Black American community life and practical consciousness are

nothing more than a pathological form of, and reaction to, American consciousness rather than a dual (both African and American) hegemonic opposing “identity-in-differential” (the term is Gayatri Spivak’s) to the American one [16-25]. Afrocentric Proponents of the adaptive-vitality school suggest that the divergences are not pathologies but African “institutional transformations,” Africanisms, preserved on the American landscape [26-35].

Contemporarily, both positions have been criticized for either their structural determinism as in the case of the pathological-pathogenic approach or racial/cultural (essentialist) determinism as in the case of the adaptive-vitality [36-39]. In directly or indirectly refuting these two positions for their structural and racial/cultural determinism, contemporary post-sixties and post-segregation era black scholars (Critical Race Theorists and Afropessimists) in the United States (US) attempt to understand black consciousnesses and communities by using post-structural and post-modern theories to either reinterpret W.E.B. Du Bois’s double consciousness construct as an epistemological (negative dialectical) mode of critical inquiry that characterizes the nature or essence of black consciousness, a la Cornel West and Paul Gilroy, or, building on the social constructivist work of Frantz Fanon, offer an intersectional approach to the constitution of black consciousnesses and communities, which, methodologically, using case studies and ethnographic research under the umbrella of exploring the lived-experiences of blacks, emphasize the diverse and different levels of alienation, marginalization, and domination, class, race, gender, global location, age, and sexual identity, by which black consciousnesses and communities get constituted, a la bell hooks and Patricia Hill Collins. The former, under the umbrella of critical race theory attempts to portray Du Boisian double consciousness as negative dialectic in order to convict the West for not identifying with their ideas, ideals, and values when they continuously discriminate (individually and institutionally) against black folks who recursively organize and reproduce these ideas, ideals, and values as their practical consciousness, i.e., the modernity of the black Atlantic, for the purpose of integration. In the latter position, Afropessimists take it to the extreme to suggest that blackness is an ontological paradigm of death with no political subjectivity, created by white structural violence, wherein the so-called black body is instrumentalized for intersectional (postcolonial, gay, feminist, etc.) agendas [40,41].

In this work, using Mocombeian phenomenological structuralism, which seeks to fix the problems of structure and agency that plagues the aforementioned approaches, I argue that all four positions are problematic in that there is no Black American identity and community to speak of in America, which renders all four positions problematic,

outside of their analysis vis-à-vis their relations to the modes and means of production constituting America's social structure [42-45].

In other words, the majority of Black American identity/practical consciousness, like their White American counterparts, has been determined by their relations to, and differentiation within, the modes and means of production of the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism under white oligarchical domination. Segregation and the embrace of the "other" terms and practices of blackness (improvisation, different concept of time, and rhythm grounded in their Afrocentrism or double consciousness), emerging from structural differentiation, highlighted by whites for black identity-in-differential to whiteness, is the sole basis for this talk about a so-called black American identity and community, which is a fictitious community as it does not offer an alternative form of system and social integration that is distinct from the systemicity of the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism. Instead, it is a product of black relations to the means and modes of postindustrial production, which, contemporarily, has decentered so-called blackness from the patriarchal nuclear family and the pathologies of the black underclass (created from their relations to the industrial mode of production) to generate surplus-value from emerging queered and feminized serial identities and identity politics. Hence, in this latter sense, afropessimists are correct to point out that so-called blackness is instrumentalized for intersectional agendas. There is no so-called black American community with political subjectivity attempting to manifest itself against the end point of White Western Christian (Protestant) neoliberal identity capitalism and history [46,47]. The end of black American history began in agricultural slavery when so-called black folks, dialectically, utilized the ideologies, ideological apparatuses, and communicative discourse of the White Western Christian world to convict them of not identifying with their values, ideals, ideas, as revealed by the practical consciousness of the black bourgeoisie, for the purpose of system and social integration. At which point so-called black folks, under industrial capitalism, in America in particular and the West in general, became a people without history adopting the discriminatory terms of their former white slave masters to constitute an "other" identity-in-differential to whiteness, which they reified, used, and discriminated against for the purpose of postulating a so-called black (bourgeois) history seeking equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with whites against their discriminatory effects due to the othering terms represented by the black underclass, which they (the black bourgeoisie) also discriminated against. Their end goal became highlighting the first Black to participate in the Protestant neoliberal identity capitalism of the White Christian West by recursively organizing and reproducing the practical consciousness of the society as

an "other," and against the other practices of their so-called community, as opposed to offering an alternative form of system and social integration. Contemporarily, under post-industrial neoliberal capitalism, however, they (the black bourgeoisie) embrace, as opposed to warring against them as was done in previous modes of production, the othering terms and practices by which they were discriminated against for the purposes of individualism (glorification of the self), diversified consumerism, and equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution.

Theory and Method

Mocombeian phenomenological structuralism posits that societal and agential constitution are a result of power relations, interpellation, and socialization or embourgeoisement via five systems, i.e., mode of production, language, ideology, ideological apparatuses, and communicative discourse, which are reified as one of two types of social structure (the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism or the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism), or what Mocombe calls a "social class language game," by persons, power elites, who control the means and modes of production in a material resource framework. Once interpellated and embourgeoisied by these five systems, which are reified as a social structure and society (social class language game), social actors, for their ontological security, recursively organize, reproduce, and are differentiated by the rules of conduct of the social structure, which are sanctioned by the power elites who control the means and modes of production, language, ideology, ideological apparatuses, and communicative discourse in a material resource framework. Hence, societal and agential constitution are both a duality and dualism: a dualism given the reification of the social structure (social class language games) via the five systems; and a duality given the internalization of the rules of the five systems, which become the agential initiatives or praxes of social actors differentiated by the rules of conduct that are sanctioned based on the economic mode of production. Difference, or alternative social praxis, in Mocombe's structuration theory, phenomenological structuralism, is not structural differentiation as articulated by traditional structurationists such as Bourdieu, Sahlins, Habermas, and Giddens; instead, it is a result of actions arising from the deferment of meaning and ego-centered communication given the interaction of two other structuring structures (physiological drives of the body and brain; and phenomenal properties of subatomic particles that constitute the human subject) vis-à-vis the mental stance of the ego during the interpellation and socialization or embourgeoisement of social actors throughout their life span or cycle in the dominant social class language game or social structure, which produces alternative praxis that is exercised at the expense of the

threat these practices may pose to the ontological security of social actors in the social structure or society, which, as previously mentioned, is of two types (the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism or the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism). This difference, however, becomes structural difference or differentiation in the structurationist sense once it is (dialectically, negative dialectically, and antidialectically) interpellated in the language, ideology, ideological apparatuses, and communicative discourse of those who own the means and modes of production in a material resource framework in order to control and direct the alternative praxis towards structural functionalism and equilibrium. Hence, True difference, difference, is practice associated with one of the two forms of system and social integration operating in, and against, its opposite counterpart for social change. For in the latter sense, the social praxis of the social actor is permanently differentiated, marginalized, and incommensurable within the praxes of the alternative social class language game it is operating within [48,49].

From this perspective, there is no black American identity and community, for their practical consciousnesses are not constituted as an alternative, and permanently incommensurable, social class language game to that of the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism as in the case of the Africans of Haiti who reproduced their Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism in the mountains and provinces of the country following the Haitian Revolution; instead, they (black America) are a structurally differentiated group, created by whites and their relations to the means and modes of production, whose practical consciousness emerges from their segregation based on, and embrace of, the structurally differentiated othering terms and behaviors incorporated in the social class language game of their former white slavemasters [50]. In which case, their integrative push for equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution into the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism of the White West has brought about the end of anything resembling a black American (metanarrative) history from their original position upon which they encountered White agents of the Protestant Ethic as we find amongst the African Haitians who sought to reproduce the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism in the mountains and provinces of the island [51].

Discussion and Conclusion

In other words, within Mocombe's phenomenological structuralism, the understanding is that the ideologies and rhetoric of pathological-pathogenic, adaptive-vitality, Afropessimism, and critical race theory capture the nature of black practical consciousnesses as determined not by their own agential initiatives from an alternative form of system and social integration, but by their relations, differentiations,

and reactions to different modes of production in the capitalist world-system. The adaptive-vitality and pathological-pathogenic positions emerged (1619-1970) between the aporias of agricultural and industrial modes of production, respectively; and the postmodern and post-structural positions of critical race theory and afropessimism emerging (1980-2023) between the aporias of industrial and postindustrial productions.

Put differently, all four theories, regarding the constitution of black practical consciousness, are ideologies of different modes of production within which black American practical consciousnesses were interpellated, constituted, embourgeoised, and differentiated. The pathological-pathogenic and adaptive-vitality positions emerged between the aporias of a declining agricultural mode of production and an emerging industrial production. In the case of the former, adaptive-vitality position, black identity-in-differential, i.e., communalism, single female-headed households, improvisation, language, musical inclinations, and food choices witnessed in slavery and highlighted by whites in their language, modes of production, ideologies, ideological apparatuses, and communicative discourse as othering terms, were viewed as Africanisms, i.e., adaptive African behaviors to the processes and vagaries of agricultural slavery. The former, pathological-pathogenic position, viewed, given the assumption that the total institution of slavery deculturalized the African, these latter adaptations as pathological-pathogenic practices adopted from poor white culture—which emerged out of agricultural slavery and were perpetuated in the urban ghettos as blacks adapted to the industrial mode of production—which stood in contradistinction to the nuclear family traditions of the white and black bourgeoisies. Contemporarily, in post-industrial America, black American practical consciousness is associated, given the epistemological attacks against metanarratives, as highlighted by the postmodern and post structural positions of critical race theory and afropessimism, with the glorification and commodification of black queer, transgender, feminine, and underclass practices of the ghettos, narcissism, and improvisation highlighted by their musical styles, and identity politics as it stands against the nuclear and bourgeois rhetoric of the pathological-pathogenic position emerging out of the industrialism of the 1960s [52-55].

The majority of black wealth in America, contemporarily, is contingent upon rent with no true productivity value, just consumptive value. White rentier oligarchs ascertain wealth via finance, insurance, and real estate, which they in turn invest in sports and other entertainment industries where black millionaires, "the my niggas," become millionaires and billionaires who drive the consumptive taste of the black poor through the commodification and celebration of their

underclass hip-hop, gender, sexual, athletic, and youthful identities, which emerged from their integration in the social structure of postindustrial capitalism, which both transmogrified and constituted their communities, families, and identities as the by-product of intersectional (age, sex, sexual orientation, class, and race) standpoints within (Protestant) capitalist relations of production as opposed to nuclear family ideologies of the pathological-pathogenic position of the industrial decades. Critical race theorists, such as Cornel West and Paul Gilroy, see the former as the “Souls” of black Folks, and the basis upon which they should integrate the West in general and America in particular by convicting the latter for not living up to the values when they discriminate against black folks, who, although different, “other” (because of their improvisational styles, music, etc.), nonetheless, partake in the humanism of the West and America. Afropessimists interpret these processes as the instrumentalization of the so-called black body to promote (identity) political agendas [56].

For me, these positions, from the adaptive-vitality to Afropessimism, speaks to how so-called black folks in America have been interpellated and socialized in the socioeconomic processes of the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism of the West and America, and represents an end to their history emanating from the duality associated with the means and modes of production as constituted in Africa. In the agricultural, and the beginning of the industrial, age, between 1880-1960, married households traditional nuclear families raising children, dominated the so-called black American family structure, unfolding in the annals of human history, against the adaptive-vitality imageries and circumstances of the agricultural mode of production (1619-1880s). Post the 1960s, and the advent of deindustrialization, criminalization, mass incarceration, and post-industrialization of American inner-cities, the out-of-wedlock birth rate began emerging as the dominant black family structural form, which was 25% among black people. Post the Moynihan report, which examined the link between black poverty and family structure that number rose to 70% as of 2018. The result in postindustrial American capitalism where identity politics and the glorification of the self and its standpoints are commodified by finance capital for capital accumulation by the white power elites, rentier oligarchs, the celebration of single-female headed households and same-sex couple family structures would emerge, via the ideology of identity politics, as the dominant family forms in black America post the 1960s. Given the criminalization, mass incarceration of black males, and their absence in the homes as a result of legislation associated with the processes of deindustrialization, postindustrial inner-cities would be dominated by black single-female headed households, and gay male and female family structures (the latter one can surmise emerging from homosexual behaviors, which

occurred in prison and post-incarceration amongst black males; and the rise of lesbianism due to the lack of men in the communities). Amidst the 70% single-female headed households, as of 2010, 32.9% of children in the US were raised by same-sex black male couples compared to 6.2% raised by white male same-sex couples; 46.7% were raised by black female same-sex couples compared to 23.1% for white female same-sex couples; and as of 2015, 24% of all black men married outside of their race compared with 12% of black female newlyweds, which is on the rise. Hence, blackness, due to its social relations and differentiations within industrialization and post-industrialization, lacked any subjectivity as posited by afropessimists; instead, it (their practical consciousnesses that emerged from their social relations and differentiations vis-à-vis the industrial and post-industrial modes of production) was instrumentalized for post-structural neoliberal identity politics and intersectional jargon, becoming a model community of, and for, the latter (intersectional) by negative dialectically convicting Western society for its (individual and institutional) continual discriminatory effects against the serial, reified, and commodified identities utilized by finance capital for capital accumulation. This latter position represents the theorization of critical race theory, which highlights the continual effects of institutional racism, sexism, transgenderism, etc., on preventing black folks from achieving equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with their White counterparts. The response of white Western (Protestant) Christian capitalists who have declared that (neo) liberal democracy as embodied by the American nation-state is the end-point of human history, is to reconcile the contradictions of the continual effects of their discriminatory practices against serial identities through identity politics and representations of the other as a Protestant capitalist neoliberal other, i.e., professional queer agents of the Protestant Ethic seeking to constitute queer nuclear families, the same for transgenders, blacks, etc., within their language, modes of production, ideologies, ideological apparatuses, and communicative discourses [57,58].

Hence, in the end, the so-called Black community in America has always been a construct of whites with their agential initiatives determined by their relations and reactions to, and differentiation within, the modes and means of production of the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism. Instead, of constituting an alternative rational form of system and social integration (the Vodou Ethic and the spirit of communism) with its own mode of production, language (i.e., Black English Vernacular), communicative discourse, ideology, and ideological apparatuses from that of their white counterparts, unfolding on the stage of human history, which would have made them permanently unable to integrate the social class language game of the

Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism; initially, under the leadership of the black bourgeoisie, i.e., the best of the house servants, mulattoes, and free Blacks in the north, they recursively organized and reproduced the latter as social actors with black skin and all of the othering terms of the social class language game for the purpose of system and social integration, which they have achieved through the identity politics of post-industrial capitalism. Contemporarily, they embrace the othering terms and practices of the structurally differentiated black queer, transgender, and underclass as the (diverse) cultural and communal practices of the so-called black community for the glorification of the self and diversified communism in post-industrial finance capital. At this point, given the dialectical intimacy between Black American and White Western Protestant capitalists, we have reached the endpoint of a universal black history unfolding in the annals of history alongside and against the neoliberal democracy of the West; instead, so-called black American (serial) people (black women, transgender, queers, etc.) have come to serve as a paragon of the endpoint of Western neoliberal democracy and identity politics utilized, contemporarily, by the white power elites, rentier oligarchs, of the West as a model community of the postmodern and post structural condition to interpellate and embourgeois the so-called black diaspora and Africa to the black serial identities, black queers, transgenders, underclasses, etc., of the post-industrial West whose universal history as culminated in neoliberal (Protestant) identity capitalism is the ultimate end of human history where all practical consciousnesses are permissible within Western White neoliberal democratic history as other Protestant agents of the spirit of capitalism [59-66].

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