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Fall 2018



ENDARCH

**JOURNAL OF BLACK POLITICAL
RESEARCH**

A Publication of
The Clark Atlanta University
Department of Political Science and
Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library

Endarch

Journal of Black Political Research

About

Endarch: Journal of Black Political Research is a double blind peer-reviewed journal published by Clark Atlanta University Department of Political Science in partnership with Atlanta University Center Robert Woodruff Library. The journal is an online publication. *Endarch* seeks to reflect, analyze, and generate activity, which will lead toward the expansion, clarification, and edification of black political thought. We seek to publish high quality works regarding the experiences of African peoples relative to political activities which are investigated, critiqued and evaluated in a manner supportive of greater understanding and constructive developments, and we thereby contribute original scholarship to the field of political science.

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Statement of Purpose*

In a decade characterized by the complete atrophy of all struggle from the sixties and the defection of most of the former participants, the principal question must be, why? What has happened consistently to denature and distort incipiently progressive impulses that appear among Black people? That question must be answered if we are to build a movement, and it cannot be answered apart from careful analysis of the economic, political and sociological structures and functions of capitalism in all its national and international, social and existential mediations. It is time that the victims move seriously to grapple with Leviathan.

Endarch, as its name would suggest identifies with motion; not any haphazard or desultory movement but movement that is conscious of its origins and destinations. As an embodiment of aggregate but mutually consistent perspectives, this journal seeks to reflect, analyze and generate activity which will ultimately lead toward the expansion, clarification and solidification of Black political thought.

The conscious nature of movement is derived from a clear social and analytic methodology. An approach which views the world as a totality but also diaphanously understands that the components comprising this world are not of equal importance. With this in mind, and given Black peoples historical grounding in oppression and exploitation, Endarch sees of paramount importance those phenomena and groups of phenomena which operate in the system of oppression and exploitation. Recognition of such phenomena must lead to the discernment of those vital elements, the crucial essences of which define and condition the world. Our purpose is to expose those essences and through this explication illuminate the totality from the vantage point of a specific oppressed people. Such is the task of a conscious and critical black political thought imbued with the task of defining the black experience in politics. It is toward this goal that we aim.

- Reprint, Endarch, Fall 1974

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Baba Keita Siphon Thompson

Editor's Remarks

We are very pleased to present three informative and insightful articles in this edition of *Endarch*. The first two articles focus on enhancing the training and knowledge base of political scientists in order to increase the impact that they have on political developments in society. The aim of both of the authors is to present information that will lead to improvements in the rigor, depth and quality of work produced by students and practitioners of political science. The third article provides a thought-provoking perspective on the growth and maturation of one of the iconic leaders of the Black struggle for human dignity and self-determination in the 1960's.

Throughout his career Baba Keita Thompson has applied his artistic talents in numerous activities to bring hope and inspiration to many people. His article in the current edition of *Endarch* will help to bring the moving message of Malcolm X to a new generation. Thompson takes an innovative approach to frame the powerful transformative experience of Malcolm X. He uses to the concept of African ancestral spirits called Egun in the Yoruba tradition to dramatically evoke the voice of Malcolm X with regard to issues of concern in the Black community. The author explores how Malcolm X transformed his life as he moved through various stages from a starting out as a petty street hustler to eventually becoming a brilliant orator and an international voice for the aspirations of African people in the United States and beyond. He goes on to call for a renewal of the revolutionary spirit in today's African American community.

Dr. Peter presents a well-organized article explaining the importance of acquiring skills in interpreting quantitative data by students and practitioners of political science. Peter makes the observation that political scientists in Nigeria could enhance their work with the expanded use of the techniques of quantitative analysis. He argues that the preference for engaging in qualitative research by most students and scholars of political science is founded in a lack of familiarity with qualitative techniques which leads them to avoid studies that require such techniques. He has found that there is a need and a desire for more training in quantitative analysis techniques, and especially with the use of statistical software packages. Peter supports his argument with a survey of scholars and students at Federal University Lokoja in Nigeria. Dr. Peter makes a strong case that

increased training in qualitative techniques can lead to better insights into political phenomena by political scientists in Nigeria. The interpretation of statistical data describing political phenomena should not be left to computer scientists. It should also be noted that it is not only in Nigeria, but also in the United States students and scholars of political science could benefit from more collaborative efforts and greater familiarity with quantitative techniques.

Mack Jones was one of the pioneers of the systematic study of Black politics in the United States. He is a founding member of the National Conference of Black Political Scientists and he organized the PhD program in political science at Clark Atlanta University – only one of two Historically Black Colleges and Universities to have such a program. One of the themes found in his impressive body of work is the responsibility of Black political scientists toward advancing the concerns and interests of the Black community. By both his leadership and his incisive writing he has exemplified excellence as a political scientist and as a scholar committed to principled advocacy for the benefit of the Black community. His life and work have served as an inspiration for two generations of African American political scientists. For those with a serious interest in the study of Black politics the book *Knowledge, Power and Black Politics* by Mack Jones is required reading.

The article by Mack Jones is a reprint of an article first published in *Endarch* in 1976. The article raises some profound points that we would still be wise to take heed of some five decades later. The article is usable as a primer for students on some of the fundamental concepts of the philosophy of science, and the application of social science methods to the condition of marginalized people, and most especially to the condition of Black people in the United States. The production of quality work by political scientists requires that they occasionally take out some time from their busy schedules to carefully think about their thinking. That is we should give some consideration to what makes for a valid scholarly argument. What are the underlying assumptions and basic values that guide our inquiries? What is the cultural worldview which frames our research questions and which shapes how we interpret phenomena and then draw conclusions from our work? These questions belong to the subject area of the philosophy of science which generally receives less attention than other subject areas for social scientists. But, as

Jones suggested if we as social scientists are to think seriously about the problems faced by Black people then we must first think seriously about how we classify, define and approach those problems.

What is most striking about Jones's article first published more than fifty years ago is that it still seems well-timed and squarely aimed at clarifying current confusions – What are the root causes of the perpetual economic marginalization of the masses? What is to be done about the persistent subordination of Black political interests? How can we move beyond ideological squabbles among those groups claiming to have answers to the problems we face? Indeed if one were to simply replace the names of bygone personalities and organizations – Roy Wilkins, Amiri Baraka, the Congress of African People – with the current crop of organizations attempting to address the condition of Black people in America – the Black Lives Matters Movement, the New Black Panther Party, the National Black Unite Front, etc. – then the article could have been written yesterday. The last sentence of Jones's article now seems almost prophetic, "...until we begin to define terms clearly and precisely and include operational definitions to link our concepts to the empirical phenomena which they purport to represent, we are doomed to wander in the well beaten circular, non-cumulative path of civil rights frustration with our peregrination marked only by instant yet unrewarding conversion to the newest ideology." A host of novel ideological fancies and intellectual fads have popped up over the last fifty years. Yet, the overall socioeconomic condition of the Black majority has remained basically unchanged. At this point there are almost no personalities left, of a national stature, who aim to speak forthrightly to the collective needs and interests of African Americans as Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr. once attempted to do. Black politicians as a group have been wholly absorbed into the major political party machines, and they are mostly inclined to assume the role of representing the interests of their party sponsors to the masses, rather than representing the interests of the Black masses before the political system. Most of the well-funded advocacy groups have abandoned any effort to mobilize the masses of Black people for anything other than occasional get-out-the-vote campaigns. The major established institutions have taken racial integration, with the Black masses being 'integrated' at the bottom of the heap, to be a fait accompli.

Black activism no longer has the visibility it once had in the 1960s and 1970s, but the spirit of committed activism has not gone away. There is a spirited and creative movement among various grassroots organizations and local groups including many small independent Black schools, some African-centered cultural organizations, a few militant Black self-defense groups, all along with a multitude of entrepreneurial ventures launched by race-conscious proprietors that prioritize addressing collective needs and concerns. There is also a particularly dynamic discourse about the political, economic and social conditions of African Americans taking place on some social media outlets. Additionally, there are still Black social scientists who remain deeply committed to producing work that is of some benefit to the Black community. We can all learn from the recommendations of Dr. Peter on improving our quantitative skill sets. Also, all of us can benefit from the deep insights offered by Jones on the relationship between social science approaches to problem solving and the cultural worldview of the people whose problems are to be solved, and the importance of developing well-defined and empirically-based concepts necessary for making convincing scholarly arguments. And we may all be inspired by the perspectives offered by Baba Keita Thompson on the transformational leadership of Malcolm X.

N. Welchel
Editor-in-Chief Endarch
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About the Authors:

Abraham M. Peter, PhD specializes in Political Economy. He bagged his PhD from the Department of Political Science, University of Nigeria, Nsukka in 2012. Dr. Peter is interested in Research Methodology. He has been teaching courses in Research Methodology, Political Economy, Comparative Politics, Methodology of Conflict Resolution, Politics of Development, and Nigerian Foreign Policy since he took up a lecturing job in 2010. Dr. Peter has published extensively in reputable local, national and international journals. He participated in the 2013 edition of the Training the Trainers Workshop on Research Methodology organised by the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), Dakar, Senegal. Dr. Peter has also participated actively in research related workshops including; Workshop on Research Grant Proposal Writing, held at University of Maiduguri, from 16th to 17th April, 2013 and Grantsmanship for Academics organized by the Centre for Research Development and In-House Training (CREDIT), University of Ilorin, Nigeria, from 21st to 23rd March, 2017. Dr. Peter is a public speaker on development issues and currently teaches Political Science at the Federal University, Lokoja, Nigeria.

Currently retired as Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Political Science at Clark Atlanta University, Professor Jones was born in Oakdale, Louisiana and attended public schools in that community. After two years at Southern University, Baton Rouge, La., he graduated from Texas Southern University in 1962 with a baccalaureate degree in political science. He earned the M.A. and Ph. D. degrees in political science from the University of Illinois in 1964 and 1968 respectively.

Professor Jones has had a distinguished career in higher education beginning as an assistant professor at Texas Southern in 1967. Since that time he has served on faculties at Atlanta University, Southern University, Howard University, Kentucky State University, Prairie View A & M University, Clark Atlanta University, Mississippi Valley State University, and Ahmadu Bello University in Nigeria, West Africa. He was a Fulbright lecturer at the latter institution. As chair of the political science department at Atlanta University from 1969 to 1983, he was responsible for developing the doctoral

program in political science that became the largest producer of African American Ph. D. in the field. He also served as the director of the Delta Research and Cultural Institute at Mississippi Valley State University.

He is co-author of a popular text, **African Americans and the American Political System** now in its fourth edition. In 2014 SUNY Press published a collection of his essays entitled **Knowledge, Power, and Black Politics**. His articles have appeared in a wide cross section of edited collections, scholarly journals, and magazines including, **Daedalus, National Political Science Review, Social Science Quarterly, The Annals of the Academy of Social and Political Science, Review of Black Political Economy, Indian Political Science Review, and the Journal of Social and Behavioral Sciences**

He has held official positions in a variety of professional organizations including the National Conference of Black Political scientists of which he was the founding president.

Baba Keita Siphon Thompson has now retired from the music business. Over the years, as a singer-songwriter, keyboardist and producer, he has performed all over the world and worked with such artists as Philip Bailey of Earth, Wind and Fire, Kenny Lattimore, Keith Martin, Boyz II Men, Denise Williams and most importantly, his grandson, hip-hop artist, King Issa. Baba Keita, an ordained minister, has written hundreds of songs, directed choirs and performed as a Praise Team lead singer and worshipper. One of his most rewarding experiences was his performance for President Bill Clinton. Looking back on his experiences as a missionary, Baba Keita has mixed emotions. Understanding the permanent and severe damage that white missionaries and other religious groups did (and are still doing) to African people all over the world, he is ashamed that he participated in such evil. However, as his heart is now, it was then—filled with love for the Africans. If it had not been for the missionary work, he would most likely never have been able to visit such magnificent destinations as Dominica, West Indies, Angola, West Africa, and Tembisa, South Africa. Unforgettable. Baba Keita has a history of *summa cum laude* achievements with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Management, Masters in Business Administration, and upon completion of his current work at Clark Atlanta

University will also have attained a Masters in African American Studies and a Ph.D in African American Studies. Also a native Washingtonian, as a musician growing up in DC, Baba Keita has a very unique perspective on the workplace, life as an African born in America, the significance of being a man of integrity, a husband to his beloved Adora, a loving father, grandfather and great grandfather. Additional soon to be published works include: *Ain't Nobody Else—Sho Ain't You!*, *Madvleh the Chief*. *The Seven Adventures*, and *7, Taco, Kuji & Nzinga: The Quest for Leadership Volume I*.