

Preface

Black Studies emerged as both an intellectual field and a critical ideology during the 1960s. It has remained close to its roots and also made a broad and deep impact on scholarship in general by creating a fundamental shift in the way scholars pursue research and view human societies: Black Studies has made possible an awareness of the great contributions that Africans and those of African descent have made to the discourse of knowledge.

THE DIMENSIONS IN BLACK STUDIES

There are three dimensions in the evolution of Black Studies during the last few decades: (1) the organization of departments and programs, (2) the academic and administrative instruments dealing with the nature of the discipline, and (3) the preparation of scholars in graduate programs. Those who sought to create Black Studies were concerned with the obstacles that would be advanced to prevent the self-definition, self-determination, and intellectual liberation of those of African descent living in the Americas. This was a substantive issue because the history of American education had been against the extension of certain intellectual freedoms for Africans. Furthermore, before 1865 people of African descent living in the United States were not citizens and consequently were not African Americans but Africans. Since the 1990s, many people of African descent have used *African* to designate their cultural origin. This use of the term is not a reference to citizenship. The term *African* is being used here in a special sense to mean those who were enslaved and their descendants. Carter G. Woodson referred to this difficulty in his 1933 book *The Mis-Education of the Negro*. It was Woodson's idea that where the black person had been afforded the right to education, the process was often meant to further isolate the person from his or her cultural and historical background. The idea was to make the black

person a white person in thought, attitude, and behavior, to leave the person nothing but a black shell. Therefore, the creators of Black Studies understood that one of their key demands had to be control over the process of education.

Within a university structure, all power resides in departments and faculty members, not in programs and adjuncts or research assistants. The first objective of the movement was to secure departments of Black Studies. This was a major task because there had not been any such departments at major or minor universities. The best to emerge from decades of education, even in the black colleges and universities, were departments of history where individual historians—such as Chancellor Williams, Carter G. Woodson, William Leo Hansberry, John Henrik Clarke, John Jackson, Benjamin Quarles, and others—sought to demonstrate the role of Africans in world history. But some of them were often under severe pressure, criticized, ostracized, and hounded out of colleges seeking to express themselves as enclaves of whiteness in a sea of black students.

All of this history was available to the students of the sixties who understood that to avoid the mistakes of the black colleges they had to demand a Black Studies department where the courses would be taught from a *black perspective*. This was the operative term at the very beginning of the movement. It was translated erroneously by some to mean that only blacks could teach in the departments, but the initial impetus was not racist or racial but ideological. Those who taught in the departments of Black Studies had to understand and appreciate the black perspective.

Black Studies departments were established in several major colleges and universities, such as Ohio State, Louisville, San Jose State, Temple, Cornell, Pittsburgh, Wisconsin, San Francisco State, Harvard, SUNY Buffalo, and UC Berkeley. Other schools, such as UCLA, the University of Pennsylvania, Princeton,

Yale, Michigan, Wayne State, Michigan State, Michigan, and Illinois, chose the weaker program model and did not create such departments. Consequently, there has been a long debate over the field in these institutions that did not immediately move to organize Black Studies as a department. They have remained on the periphery of the discipline, often attracting high-powered intellectuals in the traditional disciplines and suggesting that they are Black Studies professors. Occasionally these professors repudiate both Black Studies and those who suggest that they are anything other than sociologists, historians, or literary critics. Immersed in their old disciplines and wedded to their old career paths, these professors have often used Black Studies departments as means for advancement in their original disciplines but not as professional arenas for their own work.

The academic and administrative instruments meant to secure the field include the establishment of research centers, journals, seminars, conferences, and a professional organization. Over the years, these instruments of the discipline have been articulated in more discreet ways. For example, instead of the *Journal of Black Studies*, *Black Scholar*, and *Western Journal of Black Studies*, the three most prominent journals that emerged out of the sixties and early seventies, scores of departments and centers have their own journals and newsletters. Black Studies is no longer a small affair in the American academy. The field is implicated in many national and international issues, and scholars from every corner of the globe publish in the journals. The *Journal of Black Studies*, a refereed journal that has set the standard for scholarship in the field, has more than 3,000 subscribers. More than half of the professors who have received tenure in the field of Black Studies have published in the *Journal of Black Studies*. In addition, over 75% of all Black Studies professors who are tenured have published in at least one of the three journals established concurrently with the field—the *Journal of Black Studies*, *Black Scholar*, and *Western Journal of Black Studies*.

Major research centers have been established at Columbia, the University of Michigan, and UCLA, as well as at other universities, with the aim of contributing to the evolution of scholarship in Black Studies. Grants have been made to scholars for the exploration of public policy, education, social welfare, and economic aspects of the lives of Africans living in

the Americas. In recent years, the tendency to define some areas of research as Diaspora Studies has gained momentum. The idea in the centers and some departments where this term is employed is that such studies must explore and expose the character of the experiences of African people in the Caribbean and South America. One could comfortably say, however, that there has never been a time in Black Studies when there was a prohibition of this sort of transcontinental understanding of the African experience. The field was at its very origin a pan-African enterprise.

The creation of the doctoral program at Temple University in 1988 was a defining experience for Black Studies. For the first time since the emergence of the field 20 years earlier there would be the possibility of Black Studies conferring the terminal degree on a candidate. The doctoral program was greeted with tremendous anticipation by the scores of young scholars who would benefit from it in ways that could not even be imagined. The first master's and Ph.D. class at Temple University, during the autumn of 1988, was comprised of 37 students. At this time, there have been more than 125 doctoral graduates at Temple University. They occupy positions in departments and programs in the United States as well as in other nations. The first student to receive the doctorate in African American Studies was a Nigerian, Adeniyi Coker; the first African American student to receive the doctorate in African American Studies was Mark Hyman; the first white student to receive a doctorate in African American Studies was Cynthia Lehman; the first Chinese student to receive a doctorate in African American Studies was Yuan Ji; and the first Japanese student to receive a doctorate in African American Studies was Suzuko Morikawa. These Black Studies scholars and those who follow them will be building on the work of those of us who had to train in other disciplines because Black Studies did not yet exist. Therefore, the objective of each graduate program in Black Studies must be to prepare its students to apply their greater conceptual and disciplinary education to enriching the discipline. At the present time, there are departmental doctoral programs at Temple, UC Berkeley, and the University of Massachusetts Amherst; there are interdepartmental doctoral degree programs at Harvard and Michigan State.

The *Encyclopedia of Black Studies* has brought together the work of nearly 200 scholars with the

objective of securing a baseline for the establishment of a canon of the field. Our intention has been to convey a sense of the research activity, conceptualization, and pedagogy of Black Studies scholars. Thus, we have created an encyclopedia that is conceptually driven rather than personality driven; that is, the ideas and concepts of the field are thrust into the forefront and create the context within which individuals' contributions are acknowledged.

The *Encyclopedia of Black Studies* fills a serious need for professionals in the field, but it also has value for those who are interested in the cultural production of the black community apart from the general public output in popular journals and magazines. The intent of the encyclopedia is to provide more than a state-of-the-art account of the field—it is to give the reader substantial information that might be used to develop state-of-the-art accounts in the field. Thus, we were eager to make sure that scholars, researchers, and students could refer to the encyclopedia for trustworthy accounts, common definitions in the field, and disciplinary protocols. Students in many fields, including but not limited to African American Studies, history, sociology, and anthropology, will find the encyclopedia of use in their researches. Serving as a source for the most used ideas and concepts in the field of Black Studies is a principal goal of this encyclopedia. Often individuals have used concepts such as *Afrocentricity*, *Africology*, *double consciousness*, *patriarchy*, and *Kawaida* without knowing what the average user of such terms in Black Studies means by them. We hope that the *Encyclopedia of Black Studies* will be a guide from which to have meaningful discourse.

THE VIEW OF BLACK STUDIES

We take a broad view of Black Studies. This is only natural because the originators of the field took a broad view. More important, however, is the fact that the position the early scholars took is absolutely correct in terms of how most people in the field view the work that we do as professionals. Black Studies implies in its name the idea that the study is concerned with people who are identified as or define themselves as black people. This identification transcends national and continental boundaries. African American Studies reduced the reach of the term *Black Studies* and made it more American. This was the trend during the 1980s. However, by the early 1990s the trend was once again

reversed so that many departments claimed that the name African American or Afro-American was too limiting. Some sought to use the term *Africana* to represent black people in the Americas, Africa, and the Caribbean. The term has gained acceptability through its use by the Cornell University Institute for Africana Studies and the *International Journal of Africana Studies*, which is published under the auspices of the National Council for Black Studies. The term *Africana* was also taken up by the *Encarta Africana* encyclopedia of African culture.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ENCYCLOPEDIA

The entries in this encyclopedia are organized alphabetically. They are cross-referenced to aid the reader in making associations between entries. Furthermore, we have prepared a Reader's Guide in which the entries are grouped according to a series of key topics, allowing the reader to read all of the entries on a particular theme, such as Organizations, Culture, or Resistance.

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We could not have achieved this monumental project without the thinking of our colleagues and our graduate students. Many of them helped us with entry development and gave us much encouragement when academic and organizational obstacles seemed insurmountable. We never underestimated the amount of work that would be needed to secure contributors who were knowledgeable on the subjects of the entries we thought it necessary to include. We probably underestimated the amount of time it would take to pull all of the entries together on time. Nevertheless, we are

happy to say that the *Encyclopedia of Black Studies* was produced within the time frame given by the publishers. This was due in large part to our able assistant, Sekhmet McCallister. She was extraordinary in her ability to use all electronic means to assist us. We could not have done this job without her steadfastness. She is a remarkable person and we are very grateful for her assistance.

We especially want to recognize the members of the editorial board who lent their names and reputations to this project and gave their input generously when necessary. Some of them worried that we would not be able to pull this project off because we did not

have external or university funding. Yet the editorial board members gave us their support, believing that if this project could be done, we could do it. So for us they are the real keepers of the field of Black Studies and we greatly appreciate them.

Both of us thank our families profusely for their understanding, generosity, and patience. We therefore express our gratitude to Dr. Garvey Lundy and Ana Yenenga, the most important people in the world to us, for their ability to listen to our complaints about deadlines and difficulties. They endured and we endured.

—*Molefi Kete Asante and Ama Mazama*