

# **Introduction: Warrior/Queen Dr. Frances Cress Welsing, A Legacy of Intellectual Brilliance and Perfect Love**

by

Jahi Issa, Ph.D.

jahiissa65@gmail.com

Editorial Board Member, *Africology: The Journal of Pan African Studies*

P.A. Newton, M.D., M.P.H., M.A.

Chief Executive Officer & Medical Director

Black Psychiatrists of America, Inc.

<http://www.bpaincpsych.org>

&

Nana Lawson Bush, V, Ph.D.

LBush2@exchange.calstatela.edu

Department of Educational Foundation & Interdiv Studies

California State University, Los Angeles

When the lines of academia and Pan-Africanism no longer run parallel, we, the editors of this current special edition, like Dr. Frances Cress Welsing, choose the path that appears to be in the best interest of Black people worldwide. It is from this space that we understand academia to be a tool and sometimes a fetter rather than a path or destination to achieve what is just and righteous. Thus, we are not tied or arrested in this academic journal to abstain from using a word and frame that is absolutely subjective and peculiar to these spaces which is *love*. We love our Mother and our Warrior/Queen Dr. Frances Cress Welsing and we venerate her as a Divine Ancestor (Nananom Nsamanfo).

Pushing our Pan-Africanist orientation and our love aside for moment, one of the chief aims of this current collection is to illuminate Dr. Welsing's contribution to the academic discourse. A deep examination of the body of literature concerning the system of white supremacy and related matters reveal that few have taken on the charge of conducting a comprehensive and longitudinal theorization of the collective and individual actions and behaviors of whites with respect to their relationship and systematic approach to people of color over space and time.

Her theoretical work known as “*The Cress Theory of Color-Confrontation and Racism (White Supremacy)*” offers an answer to a question that only a miniscule amount of erudite writings have even attempted to answer which is, why White Supremacy? Though controversial in some arenas, Dr. Welsing for well over 40 years was consistent and resolute in her contention that the system of white supremacy was means to ensure white genetic survival which was rooted at the level of the subconscious of whites. Her work has indeed been challenged; yet, again we underscore with few plausible counter explanations.

Returning here to Pan-Africanist orientation and our love, another aim of collecting this works is to protect her legacy. We are reminded of the time just after President Kennedy’s assassination when Elijah Muhammad asked that members of the Nation of Islam, including Malcolm X not speak on his death because his was a beloved figure. Dr. Frances Cress Welsing is and was a beloved figure in Black Nationalist, Pan-Africanist, African-centered, and many other communities. We would never suggest that any scholar’s work is above reproach. Yet, we take issue with, not necessarily what recent critiques have been about, rather, the timing of such attacks.

For instance, several of the attacks came from some well-known intellectuals. Even if they did not necessary agree with her theories, they should have at least waited until her family had buried her. From our perspective, the timing of such attacks are culturally unacceptable and run parapedicular to Pan-African values and basic Black home training. This behavior may point to a larger issue and or even *crisis* such as the one Harold Cruse posits in *Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* or what W.E.B. DuBois argues in his last speech in the United States to a group of Black school teachers where he in 1960 predicted that by the year 2000 African Americans would lose their culture as a righteous and ethical group and would struggle to regain their humanity.

“The American Negro has now reached a point in his progress where he needs to take serious account of where he is and whither he is going. Yet this situation is in sight and it brings not as many assume an end to the so-called Negro problems, but a beginning of even more difficult problems of race and culture. Because what we must now ask ourselves is when we become equal American citizens what will be our aims and ideals and what will we have to do with selecting these aims and ideals. Are we to assume that we will simply adopt the ideals of Americans and become what they are or want to be and that we will have in this process no ideals of our own? That would mean that we would cease to be Negroes as such and become white in action if not completely in color. We would take on the culture of white Americans, doing as they do and thinking as they think. Manifestly this would not be satisfactory. Physically it would mean that we would be integrated with Americans losing first of all, the physical evidence of color and hair and racial type. We would lose our memory of Negro history and of those racial peculiarities which have long been associated with the Negro.”

We think that passing of Dr. Frances Cress Welsing should have brought a pause for Black intellectuals to reflect not just on her great legacy, which is the point of this current themed edition, but also on where each of us stand at the crossroads of academia and what is in the best interest of African peoples worldwide. We should be asking such questions as where is my work headed, what I am pushing for, and who does it benefit? If nothing else, Dr. Frances Cress Welsing was clear with her answers of the aforementioned. She was a superb intellectual who may or may not have been perfect in her scholarship but she loved Black people perfectly.

This collection presented below represent a diverse group of thinkers in the Black community. Some are scholarly reprisals, while others are intellectual juggernauts on Dr. Welsing's theories, and all are an important first steps in understanding the depth of her life works, and the impact that she had on the world for over four decades.

## References

Cress Welsing, Frances. "The Cress Theory of Color Confrontation and Racism (White Supremacy)." *CressWelsing, The Isis Papers: The Keys to the Colors* (1970): 1-16.

Cruse, Harold. *The crisis of the Negro intellectual: A historical analysis of the failure of Black leadership*. New York Review of Books, 1967.

Du Bois, W.E.B, Herbert Aptheker (Ed.), *The Education of Black People: Ten Critiques, 1906-1960*, (Monthly Review Press: NY, 1973).