

*Wangari Maathai: Visionary, Environmental Leader, Political Activist* (Brooklyn, NY: Lantern Books, 2014, pp.288, ISBN: 978-1-59056-451-6) by Namulundah Florence.

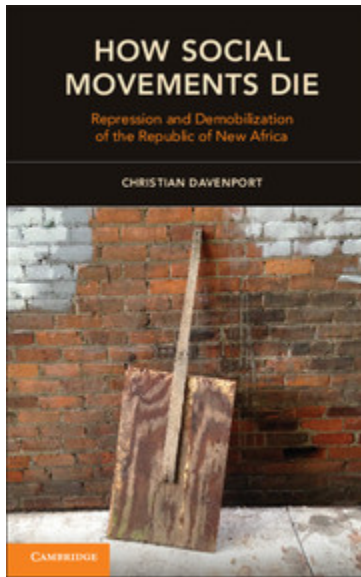
In this book, the author (a teacher at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York, born in Kenya) offers an expansive examination of Nobel Peace Prize laureate, fighter for democratic space, founder of the Green Belt Movement, and environmentalist Wangari Maathai (1940–2011) through the lens of feminist theory to unpack the social and political background of Maathai’s life and work and places her within the context of women’s struggles in Africa for self-determination and access to education and political power. And in so doing, Florence reveals the complexities and many dimensions of this fascinating and extraordinary voice for women in Africa and beyond.



*Anywhere But Here: Black Intellectuals in the Atlantic World and Beyond* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2015, pp. 270, 10 b & w illustrations, bibliography, index, ISBN: 978-1-62846-155-8) edited by Kendahl Radcliffe, Jennifer Scott and Anja Werner.

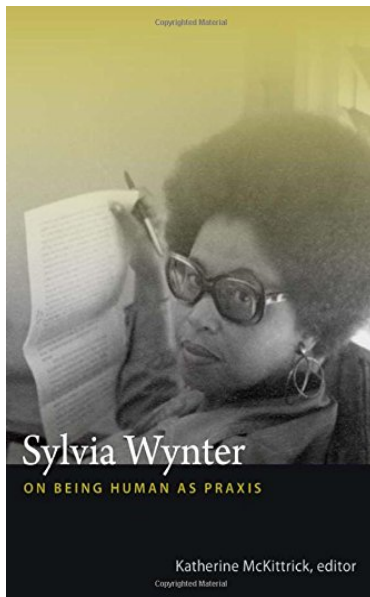
This book is concerned with the cross-cultural experiences of intellectuals of African descent since the eighteenth century. The book embraces historian Paul Gilroy's thesis in *The Black Atlantic* and posits arguments beyond *The Black Atlantic's* traditional organization and symbolism. These essays expand categories and suggest patterns that have united individuals and communities across the African diaspora that highlight the stories of people who, from their intercultural and often marginalized positions, challenged the status quo, created international alliances, cultivated expertise and cultural fluency abroad, as well as crafted physical and intellectual spaces for

their self-expression and dignity to thrive.



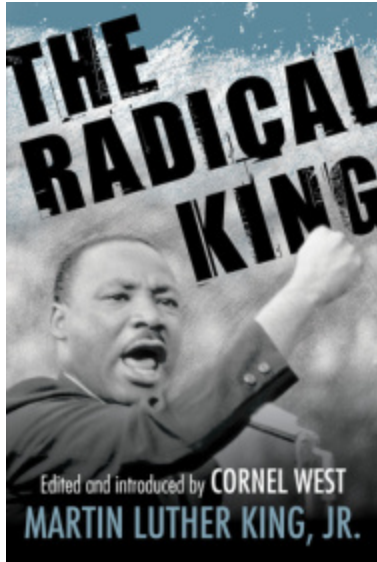
*How Social Movements Die: Repression and Demobilization of the Republic of New Africa* (Cambridge University Press, 2014, pp.352, ISBN: 978-1107613874) by Christian Davenport.

Drawing on organizational, as well as individual-level, explanations, the author (Professor of Political Science and Faculty Associate at the Center for Political Studies at the University of Michigan, as well as Global Fellow at the Peace Research Institute Oslo) argues that social movement death is the outgrowth of a co-evolutionary dynamic whereby challengers, influenced by their understanding of what states will do to oppose them, attempt to recruit, motivate, calm, and prepare constituents while governments attempt to hinder all of these processes at the same time. Thus, he employs a previously unavailable database that contains information on a Black nationalist/secessionist organization, the Republic of New Africa, and the activities of authorities in the U.S., the City of Detroit and state and federal authorities.



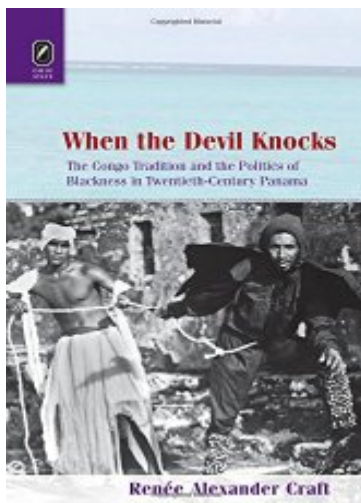
*Sylvia Wynter: On Being Human as Praxis* (Duke University Press, 2015, pp.304, ISBN: 978-0822358343) edited by Katherine McKittrick.

A critical genealogy of Jamaican writer and cultural theorist Sylvia Wynter's work, highlighting her insights on how race, location, and time together inform what it means to be human. The contributors explore Wynter's reconceptualization of the human in relation to concepts of Blackness, modernity, urban space, the Caribbean, science studies, migratory politics, and the interconnectedness of creative and theoretical resistances. The collection includes an extensive conversation between Sylvia Wynter and Katherine McKittrick (Associate Professor of Gender Studies at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario) that delineates Wynter's engagement with writers such as Frantz Fanon, W.E.B. DuBois, and Aimé Césaire, among others; the interview also reveals the ever-extending range and power of Wynter's intellectual project, and elucidates her attempts to re-historicize humanness as praxis.



*The Radical King* (NY: Beacon Press, 2015, pp.320, ISBN: 0807012823) edited by Cornel West.

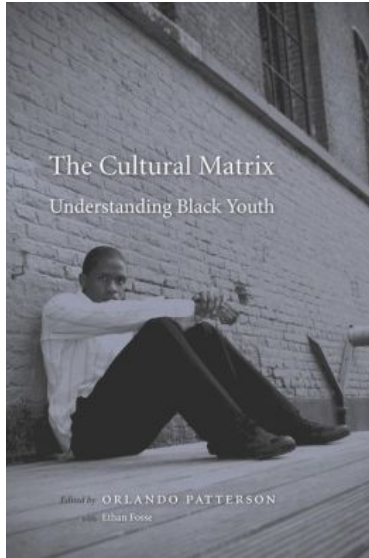
Arranged thematically in four parts, *The Radical King* includes twenty-three selections, curated and introduced by scholar-activist Cornel West (Professor of Philosophy and Christian Practice at Union Theological Seminary and Professor Emeritus at Princeton University), that illustrate King’s revolutionary vision, underscoring his identification with the poor, his unapologetic opposition to the Vietnam War, and his crusade against global imperialism. As West writes, “Although much of America did not know the radical King—and too few know today—the FBI and US government did. They called him ‘the most dangerous man in America.’”



*When the Devil Knocks: The Congo Tradition and the Politics of Blackness in Twentieth-Century Panama* (Ohio State University Press, 2015, pp.288, ISBN: 0814212700) by Renée Alexander Craft.

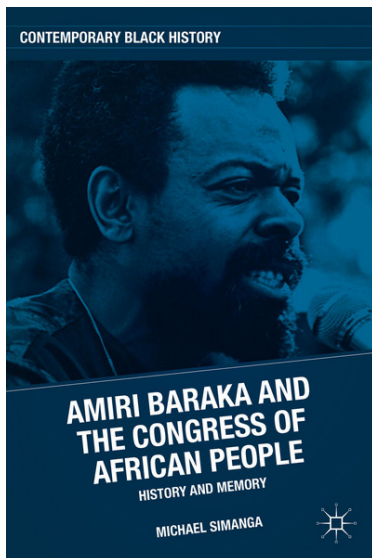
Despite its long history of encounters with colonialism, slavery, and neocolonialism, Panama continues to be an under-researched site of African Diaspora identity, culture, and performance. To address this void, Renée Alexander Craft (an assistant professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a joint appointment in the Department of Communication Studies and Curriculum in Global Studies) examines an Afro-Latin Carnival performance tradition called “Congo” as it is enacted in the town of Portobelo, Panama—the nexus of trade in the Spanish colonial world. Hence, in the book he draws on over a decade of critical ethnographic research to argue that Congo traditions tell the story of *cimarronaje*, charting self-liberated Africans’ triumph over enslavement, their parody of the Spanish Crown and Catholic Church, their central values of communalism and self-determination, and their hard-won victories toward national inclusion and belonging. *The work also* analyzes the Congo tradition as a dynamic cultural, ritual, and identity performance that tells an important story about a Black cultural past while continuing to create itself in a Black cultural present; and examines “Congo” within the history of twentieth-century Panamanian *etnia negra* culture, politics, and representation, including its circulation within the political economy of contemporary tourism.





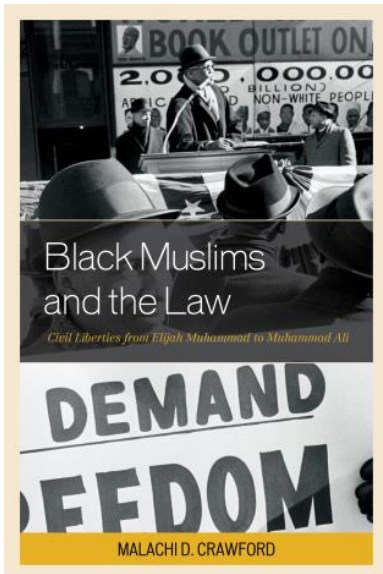
*The Cultural Matrix: Understanding Black Youth* (Harvard University Press, 2015, pp.688, ISBN: 0674728750) edited by Orlando Patterson.

This volume seeks to unravel a uniquely American paradox: the socioeconomic crisis, segregation, and social isolation of disadvantaged Black youth, on the one hand, and their extraordinary integration and prominence in popular culture on the other. Despite school dropout rates over 40 percent, a third spending time in prison, chronic unemployment, and endemic violence, Black youth are among the most vibrant creators of popular culture in the world. To understand this conundrum, the authors bring culture back to the forefront of explanation, while avoiding the theoretical errors of earlier culture-of-poverty approaches and the causal timidity and special pleading of more recent ones. This interdisciplinary work draws on all the social sciences, as well as social philosophy and ethnomusicology, in a concerted effort to explain how culture, interacting with structural and environmental forces, influences the performance and control of violence, aesthetic productions, educational and work outcomes, familial, gender, and sexual relations, and the complex moral life of Black youth.



*Amiri Baraka and the Congress of African People: History and Memory* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, pp. 208, ISBN: 9780230112155) by Michael Simanga.

The Congress of African People was an important Black Power organization formed in 1970 and led by activist poet Amiri Baraka. It made significant contributions to the Black Liberation Movement throughout the 70s as a leading organization in the National Black Political Convention, the National Black Assembly, African Liberation Day, the African Liberation Support Committee and the Black Women's United Front. The organization also became active in the new communist movement as the Revolutionary Communist League. This first-hand narrative of Congress of African People is a part of a movement to document and analyze Black Power in the African American Freedom Movement from the 1950s through the 1970s. Some of the topics in the work are: Black Power, the founding of the Congress of African People, the emergence of Amiri Baraka as a political leader, the Black Arts Movement, ideology and ideological development, Maulana Karenga and Kawaida theory, and women in the Congress of African People.



*Black Muslims and the Law: Civil Liberties From Elijah Muhammad to Muhammad* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2015, pp.184, ISBN: 978-0-7391-8488-2) by Malachi D. Crawford.

This book by the assistant director of African American Studies at the University of Houston in Texas examines the Nation of Islam's quest for civil liberties as what might arguably be called the inaugural and first sustained challenge to the suppression of religious freedom in African American legal history. Borrowing insights from A. Leon Higginbotham Jr.'s classic works on American slavery jurisprudence, this book reveals the Nation of Islam's strategic efforts to engage governmental officials from a position of power, and suggests the federal executive, congressmen, judges, lawyers, law enforcement officials, prison administrators, state governments, and African American civic

leaders held a common understanding of what it meant to be and *not to be* African American and religious in the period between World War II and the Vietnam War. The work also raises basic questions about the rights of African descended people to define god, question white moral authority, and critique the moral legitimacy of American war efforts according to their own beliefs and standards.