Radical Theory, Caribbean Reality: Race, Class and Social Domination. Charles W. Mills. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2010. ix + 284 pp. (Paper US\$ 30.00)

In this collection of essays, Charles Mills gives us insight into his intellectual socialization growing up in Jamaica, studying in Canada, and teaching in the United States. These experiences influenced his understanding of issues relating to class, race, and social domination, and the way these concepts are sanitized in the United States, to overlook the “centrality of racial domination.” Mills suggests that there are at least three uses of the term ideology in Marxism: “unequivocal and epistemic pejorative,” “univocal and epistemic neutral,” and “equivocal” (which is used in two ways, “as a pejorative and a neutral non pejorative sense”). He suggests that ideology used in the pejorative sense does not have the “theoretical scope” that is usually ascribed to it since it does not refer to class ideas in general but to “class ideas of an-idealist-sort” (p. 46). He then turns his attention to what factors determine ideology. Consciousness is influenced by four main variables: class domination, societal appearance, class interests, and class position. This is an important theoretical contribution since it constructs a causal sequence for consciousness recognizing the “distorting role of illusive appearance and mystifying ideologies,” yet allowing for the “possibility of a vertical insight into the characteristic of the social structure which is itself no less socially constructed” (p. 69).

With respect to race, Mills critiques M.G. Smith’s plural society thesis of the Caribbean and suggests ways to construct a Marxist theory of race and culture beginning with the historical legacy of slavery. His overall suggestion is to “elucidate within a class framework, why race, colour and culture have the significance that they do, even if these variables are themselves displaced from the theoretical core” (p. 94).

Mills also investigates the link between race and class in the works of Stuart Hall. He argues that Hall is firmly committed to the struggle against racial oppression, its legacies, and its connection to broader socio-historical factors. He notes that Hall’s approach is theoretically eclectic and that Hall’s evolution seems to prioritize culture over all else. If applied to the United States, for example, with the “emphasis on ‘narratives’ and inter-subjectivity,” it may have the tendency to “overstate the extent to which different patterns of racialization are possible” (p. 210).

Two chapters are dedicated to understanding the communist threat in Jamaica and Grenada. Mills notes that the history of Marxist political activism and the trade union movement in Jamaica has been deliberately ignored, with communists being portrayed as “ruthless killers, agents of foreign powers if not foreigners themselves, and exploiters of racial tensions in Jamaica” (p. 123). The chapter on Grenada is a critique of a dogmatic interpretation by some elites of Marxist theory. He notes three problems with using dogmatic Marxism, particularly in the Third World: (a) when revolutionary elites proclaim to have the “scientific truth” and therefore force conformity rather than having heterogeneity of thought; (b) “where the rightness or wrongness of actions is judged by their aptness to bring about specific consequences . . . the socialist revolution” (p. 141), and (c) class reductionism and race as they apply in the Caribbean context. Using these theoretical constructs he attempts to explain how the Grenada Revolution devoured itself. He summarizes it under the term “the phenomenology of vanguardism,” referring to the situation that occurs when activists try to put theory into practice. As such there is a tendency to “dismiss troubling phenomena” that do not fit into the theory. And since we form “epistemic communities,” we are reassured of the correctness of our beliefs; therefore “subjective feelings, beliefs, and cultural traditions of people can be ignored in a mechanical technical adjustment of a social problem” (p. 161).

The book’s most inspirational chapter, “Smadditizin” is a tribute to the Jamaican scholar Rex Nettleford, who describes “smadditizin” as the “struggle to have one’s personhood recognized in a world where, primarily because of race, it is denied” (pp. 165–66). Mills explores the foundation of this struggle in Western philosophy, which presents itself as “colourless, universalistic, and all inclusive,” with modernity being characterized as liberal global egalitarianism. This modernity, he argues, was created with Europe at the center and modern, and the periphery as traditional. Race becomes central for non-Europeans in this process since it denies their personhood and in the canon of western intellectual texts there is a “racialized logic of inclusion and exclusion . . . that is not usually noticed because of the inherited conceptual blinders that direct us to see them as general and universal” (p. 171). One cannot simply adopt European models and apply them to the Third World. Theory for “sub persons” must be different; “samadditizin” is a kind of “ontological self-engineering, a bootstrap-ting into being” (p. 175). It challenges the “official ontology, the official

memory, the prescribed epistemology, and the normative body, in which one's physical features are devalued, one's history denied, one's culture ostracized" (p. 176). As such, remedies to resolve social disadvantage must be collective. Since it is a response to "social dissing" it requires a "socially reorganized group personhood that cannot be achieved in a world where the structures of prestige remain colour coded" (p. 176). In the final analysis "samadditizin" involves resistance since it would involve groups whose interests rest on others' sub-personhood.

This book makes a contribution to understanding the role of ideology in social reconstruction and the relationship between ideology, social structure, and social action. It clarifies the importance of looking at multicausal models to integrate race and class analysis with the aim of transforming Caribbean society. What is missing from the analysis, however, are issues related to gender and sexuality. Though race, class, ideology, and history are important to understanding social domination in the Caribbean, gender and sexuality are also critical to understanding the phenomenon. Overall the book is an important contribution to Caribbean scholarship and others who approach the issue of social domination with the aim of changing it.

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