

Marvin X reviews the film Black Panther



Let me begin with praise to ancestor Sun Ra and his Myth-Science philosophy. Throughout watching Black Panther, I kept thinking of Sun Ra's film Space is the Place in which his space ship lands on earth and he deplanes dressed as an Egyptian god, or shall we say Supreme god Ra. I imagined how Sun Ra would have expressed his Myth-Science philosophy with the resources of Disney. But have no doubt Sun Ra would have much praise for the Afro-futurist mythology of Black Panther. He claimed he was from space via Egypt or Kemet. Black Panther was a myth-science film that clearly projected Ra's teachings, even to the point of the "Negro" (he was half Wakandan) Killmonger identifying with his maternal ancestors who refused to be victims of the European-American slave system, instead they jumped ship rather than suffer oppression. The Qur'an says, "Persecution is worse than slaughter!" Sun Ra used to say that Africans must pay reparations to North American Africans for selling us to Europeans. Killmonger's final statement redeemed him from his reactionary behavior, especially as a running dog for American imperialism. His body was covered with marks of his life as a killer for imperialism, aka, globalism. We recall a veteran Special Forces Marine who would not read my writings too long because my words made him angry for

all the killing he was forced to do throughout the world. He said America should be bombed every day for her murderous deeds throughout the world. Killmonger was a similar victim, although he becomes the villain whose main focus was to seize the throne in a succession struggle, after the old king killed his father in Oakland, of all places, although the Black Panther Party was born and died in Oakland after being labeled by the FBI as the number one threat to the internal security of the USA.

The film's focus on the struggle for succession tackles a constant theme of African or Kemetic culture and history, from the early days of Nile Valley culture. Chancellor Williams writes about struggle over succession rites as a chief reason for migrations when African kingdoms fell into chaos, along with invasions and ecological factors. Aside from being blessed with a precious metal, the above factors may explain the Wakandan xenophobia, or tribalism or narrow minded nationalism. Some critics have called the Wakandans reactionary because they were for themselves first and foremost, rejecting Pan Africanism outright, or any degree of internationalism. Although after the rebirth of King T'Challa, and his return to the throne, he attempts to change the political ideology of his nation.

Many or perhaps millions who have seen Black Panther and thoroughly enjoyed it as a Hollywood fantasy from the Disney world of make believe, do not want to hear any discussion of the deeper nature of Black Panther. After all, it's not a documentary. But Chairman Mao taught us all art is propaganda and reflects the values and mission of one class or another, either the bourgeoisie ruling class or the oppressed masses. Disney's Black Panther primarily gave us a film glorifying the African ruling class, a class many African revolutions fought to eliminate, especially for their role in the slave trade, in which they accumulated surplus capital along with the Europeans, not to leave out the Arabs. Even after independence, the African ruling class morphed into neo-colonialism. When the white man was called colonizer in Black Panther, the audience laughed. The Wakandans were never colonized but most African nations suffered colonization which morphed into neo-colonialism that Kwame Nkrumah told us was, "Colonialism playing possum."

While the film is a political disaster by projecting African royalty with its tainted past and/or present, those enamored of African culture will enjoy a boost of cultural

consciousness. We Africans are a beautiful people, a cultured people, a people of genius in science and technology. If Black Panther replaces sagging pants with Dashikis, surely, the film must be applauded. If it forces women to throw off their wigs as the woman did in the film, it must be applauded. The music, the chants, the communal dancing, the most colorful costumes and traditional ritual face makeup, should help Africanize a starving population of North American Africans. The technology seemed excessive although we need to see African people utilizing science, technology, artificial intelligence, time travel.

Again, the negative is that the only two North American Africans in the film were killed for reactionary behavior, suggesting Black Americans are villains or not "real Africans," which prompted a North American African woman to depart the cinema shouting "Killmonger for life!" I translate her statement as, "I'm a Nigga fa life!"

--Marvin X

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