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To cite this article: Damariyé L. Smith (2021): Malcolm X and Africana Communication Theory: A Case Study of Ujamaa as Rhetorical Theory at the Founding Rally of the OAAU, Howard Journal of Communications

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10646175.2021.1871686>



Published online: 26 Jan 2021.



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Malcolm X and Africana Communication Theory: A Case Study of Ujamaa as Rhetorical Theory at the Founding Rally of the OAAU

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ABSTRACT

Through a rhetorical analysis of Malcolm X's speech at the founding rally of the Organization of Afro-American Unity, this essay attempts to illustrate how *Ujamaa* (Kiswahili for "familyhood" or "extended family"), an Africana communication theory, is rhetorically constructed in African American public address. This essay contends that attention to the rhetorical construction of *Ujamaa* is critical because it may foster appreciation of African discourses, help comprehend the ways in which African unity is rhetorically built, and shed light on the communicative realities and sensibilities of African people across the diaspora. Furthermore, *Ujamaa*, particularly as rhetorical theory, is vital for scholars to theorize human communication beyond the West's philosophical orientation. Finally, this paper presents a comparative analysis between Malcolm X's rhetorical articulation of *Ujamaa* and Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere's original political philosophy of *Ujamaa* to highlight the difference in both leaders' vision toward the creation of an African democracy.

KEYWORDS:

African American public address; African American rhetoric; Malcolm X; Ujamaa

As we have observed in the communication discipline, more and more emerging scholars of color have begun to vigorously push back against the persistence of the Westernization of communication/rhetorical theory. Two recent essays by Chávez (2015) and Flores (2018) do an exceptional job of putting the discipline on notice that, as Flores (2018) contends, "We—scholars of color, scholars of race—are tired" (p. 350). Stretching even further back, Chavéz and Flores' comments resemble much of the same arguments made by the founding members of the Black Caucus of the National Communication Association (NCA) in the late 1960s/early 1970s.¹ During this time, many of the Black scholars within the Communication discipline began to call out the field for its lack of interest in not only Black scholarship but also Black leadership within the professional association. Perhaps, Daniel (1995) illustrates this point of contention in a more robust fashion:

The initial SCABC (now the Black Caucus of the NCA) members did not want to simply add a speech by Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr., Marcus Garvey, Betty Shabazz, Coretta King, or Sojourner Truth to the public speaking course. We did not want to simply

add one African American student and/or faculty member to some of the graduate programs... We did not want to produce African Americans who could carry on the known SCA (now known as NCA) traditions. We were not trying to produce African Americans who could show [W]hite auditors the inner workings of [Black communication] ... we were not interested in developing African Americans who could “out coon” each other in academia. We wanted to change the very nature of the game called “speech communication” by making space for scholarship associated with the rhetoric of the African diaspora. (pp. 33–34)

With this in mind, the time is now for the discipline to “Move Beyond the West” regarding our engagement and tolerance of theory outside the scope of our Westernized understanding of communication. In order to move in this direction, this essay argues that attention to the rhetorical construction of *Ujamaa* (Kiswahili for “familyhood” or “extended family”) can help us not only appreciate African discourses, but also better understand the ways in which the notion of African unity, from an Africana perspective, is rhetorically built. Moreover, interrogation of the rhetorical construction of *Ujamaa* sheds light on the communicative realities and sensibilities of African people across the diaspora. To substantiate this article’s claim, attention to Malcolm X’s speech at the founding rally of the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) in 1964 to demonstrate how *Ujamaa* is rhetorically constructed to establish African unity.

Second, this essay offers a comparative analysis of Malcolm X’s articulation of an African democracy through *Ujamaa*ian rhetorical appeals versus past Tanzanian president, Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere’s philosophy of *Ujamaa* to offer ways in which an African democracy can be achieved. Such a comprehension may yield further insights into how African people across the diaspora can collectively foster a sense of unity, love, respect, and civic responsibility for the betterment of African people and other marginalized communities. Lastly, this essay contends that the continuous evasion of intellectual engagement with non-traditional theories will limit the involvement of scholars of color in the discipline and constrain the public’s understanding of the communicative behavior and rhetoric of African people, which may lead to more sociopolitical disruption. The proceeding sections provide a brief review of the scholarship on *Ujamaa* to foreground my theoretical approach to Malcolm X’s speech. This essay concludes by offering implications from this case study and further suggest how Black/Africana communication theories can facilitate a more nuanced understanding of human communication.

The history of Ujamaa and its rhetorical tradition

Ujamaa’s concept is continentally associated with Maulana Karenga’s Kwanzaa celebration, an annual African American holiday tradition, which is celebrated from December 26–January 1. Within this week, African Americans observe each of the seven days to seven different principles (*Ujamaa* being one of them) to celebrate the *Nguzo Saba* (the seven principles of African heritage). However, *Ujamaa*’s origin is located within the political philosophy of past Tanzanian president Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere (Bangura, 2018). The word *Ujamaa* is a Kiswahili word meaning “familyhood” or “extended family.” According to Bangura (2018), Nyerere was the first to coin the term during his presidency from 1960–1985, signifying his socialist philosophy in Tanzania

during one of the country's most problematic times, politically and socially. The basis of Nyerere's philosophy incorporated not only socialism but also nationalism and Pan-Africanism (Nyerere, 1995).

Bangura (2018) summarizes Nyerere's political thoughts in a fruitful way that will assist in understanding *Ujamaa* from a communication perspective. According to Bangura (2018), *Ujamaa* can be broadly defined into four major components: (1) Socialism, (2) Nationalism, (3) Pan-Africanism, (4) Self-reliance (in political, economic, social and cultural terms). Bangura (2018) goes further by disentangling these four significant components into seven theoretical precepts for more clarification: (1) Self-reliance, (2) Leader and Masses as Equals (3) Kiswahili Guiding Principles, (4) African Socialism, (5) Neo-traditional African Democracy, (6) Contemporary African Revolutionary Thought, and (7) *Mazruiana* Theoretical Propositions. The first precept emphasizes utilizing the best ideas in the world in terms of self-determination without disregarding the subject-positions context. In other words, to be self-reliant does not mean to be ignorant of progressive thinking in favor of conservatism. Instead, to be self-reliant while also recognizing that other ideologies should not be the foundation of one's own realities and sensibilities. The second precept focuses on a horizontal structure in terms of leadership. The third precept focuses on the power of a common language in terms of uniting a community. In Tanzania, Nyerere emphasized the employment of the Kiswahili language as a centralized way to communicate political doctrine to unite a nation of difference (Nyerere, 1977a, 1977b).

The fourth precept concentrates on establishing a system of socialism that is rooted in African principles. As Nyerere (1995) explains, African socialism is not about rich versus poor, like European socialism; African socialism assures that all people, regardless of class, receive public assistance if needed. The fifth precept advocated for a one-party political system with an emphasis on consensus, rather than multiple political parties. For Nyerere (1995), a multi-party state would only increase difference and would inevitably lead to destruction. The sixth precept refers to Nyerere's belief that politics as an organization of consensus. It was focused on nation independence as a basis for African countries to get back to focusing on their traditional values regarding equalitarianism and humanism (Said, 1968). The final precept denotes Nyerere's belief that the peasant becomes a "new man," "efforts to unify diverse groups, and initiatives to promote self-reliance and human rights through the moral exhortation of *Ujamaa*" (Bangura, 2018, p. 74). In short, Bangura provides a more accessible way of comprehending *Ujamaa* as an African communicative theory.

Several scholars have also contributed to the understanding of *Ujamaa* as a philosophy and rhetorical formation. For instance, Shivji (1995) maintains that an *Ujamaa*ian philosophy is comprised of two fundamental assumptions, (1) Equality for all and (2) Developmentalism. Shivji's rendering of the philosophical conventions of *Ujamaa*, however, is confronted by Blommaert. Drawing from Finkelkraut (1987), Blommaert (2006) notes that the issue with *Ujamaa*'s philosophy is that it often exchanges productive thinking and realism in favor of simplism and homogeneity. More specifically, Blommaert (2006) asserts that *Ujamaa* theory adopts simplism because of its view of cultural dynamics and homogeneity because it ignores internal socio-cultural differentiation. Lal (2010) follows Blommaert's critique by articulating that *Ujamaa* also

“normalizes distinct gender roles and celebrate[s] a generic ideal of the nuclear family” (Lal, 2010, p.1). Likewise, *Ujamaa* discourse emphasizes that men are protectors and women as caretakers of the family (Lal, 2010). Blommaert and Lal’s assessments bring to the fore critical apprehensions about *Ujamaa*’s idealistic nature as a philosophy of equality and developmentalism. Their observations demonstrate that while *Ujamaa* attempts to promote impartiality and development, there are metaphysical inquiries that mandate probing. Still, *Ujamaa* is worthy of rhetorical attention due to its association with liberatory discourse.

Ujamaa does attempt to communicate hope and provide a vision for its adherents (Shivji, 1995). That hope and vision are grounded in a communal attitude toward resources for the betterment of society (Spalding, 1996). The adoption of communalism in an *Ujamaaian* frame encourages notions such as empowerment and popular participation among the community (Jennings, 2002). This phenomenon is perhaps why many nation leaders have demonstrated some favor toward an *Ujamaaian* style of rhetoric. Ibhawoh and Dibua (2003), conceive the rhetoric of *Ujamaa* as a “development[al] strategy, a path to social equity and distributive justice based on a self-reliant development strategy” (p. 78). In this way, *Ujamaaian* rhetoric seeks to progress its adherents by communicating the necessity for equity and justice for all, while simultaneously relying on a nationalist philosophy as a cultural basis.

Ujamaaian rhetoric has also been observed as a formidable linguistic tool for rhetorical invention for everyday people to actively participate in the public sphere on issues relating to economic, social, and political ethics (Hunter, 2008). The notion of every person being engaged in the body politic is normative to the classical African tradition. This idea gives rationale to Bwenga’s (2012) conclusion that *Ujamaa*’s purpose as a rhetorical strategy is to emancipate and empower the underprivileged and laborers, politically and economically. In this way, *Ujamaa* is also “a shared political language employed to articulate morality, belonging, and citizenship” (Fouéré, 2014, 18). Finally, *Ujamaa* is a humanistic rhetoric that advocates for each individual’s development, adopting egalitarianism as a socio-political philosophical base (Blommaert, 2014). It is both socialist and nationalist in scope, whereas, on the one hand, it promotes the equal production, distribution, and exchange of resources, and on the other advocates for self-interest, respectively (Blommaert, 2014). In short, the concept of *Ujamaa* has been observed not only as a philosophy but also as a form of rhetorical discourse.

Given the review of the literature on *Ujamaa*, this essay will survey the rhetorical characteristics of the speech by systematically determining and identifying various portions of the text that resemble a *Ujamaaian* philosophy. Rhetorical analysis or criticism is essentially a “qualitative research method that is designed for the systematic investigation and explanation of symbolic acts and artifacts for the purpose of understanding rhetorical processes” (Foss, 2017, p. 6). This methodological approach is suitable for this case study because public address is considered a symbolic act in which the speaker performs an *act* (e.g., the speech) that “is executed in the presence of... [an] intended audience” (Foss, 2017, p. 6). However, rhetorical approaches allow for scholars to revisit transactions to interpret the meaning of such symbolic acts. According to Foss (2017), rhetorical scholars tend to examine the artifacts or transcriptions of an act “[b]ecause an act tends to be fleeting and ephemeral” (p. 6), acknowledging the difficulty of

understanding a speech during the present moment. However, before diving directly into the speech, a brief review of the context and the text of this rhetorical moment is warranted.

The beginning of a new movement: el-Hajj Malik el-Shabazz and the OAAU

On June 28, 1964, Malcolm X, known at the time as el-Hajj Malik el-Shabazz, gave his first public address at the Audubon Ballroom in New York City to his newly formed OAAU. After leaving the Nation of Islam earlier that year after much controversy between himself and NOI leader Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm set his sights on forming a new organization that would incorporate a more Pan-Africanist objective and an emphasis on Black human rights. The OAAU represented a transition in the philosophy of Malcolm X from a pure nationalist view when he served as the national spokesman for the NOI to a Pan-African Internationalism perspective (Sales, 1994). While the NOI can be regarded as a nationalist group, one could make the case that a religious doctrine governs the Black Islamic movement as opposed to the OAAU, which is principally concerned with the self-determination of Blacks across the diaspora, irrespective of religion. Charter members such as renowned historian John Henrik Clarke, Albert Cleage, Jesse Gray, and Gloria Richardson, among others, helped crystalize Malcolm's new vision in the Black liberation struggle (Perry, 1991).

The OAAU's charter emphasized Pan-Africanism and other vital principles, such as self-defense, education, politics, and economics. With a heavy influence of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), it can be argued that the OAAU's first order of business was to relieve Blacks of the internalization of oppression. This notion is not surprising as much of Malcolm's philosophy tended to call for Blacks to no longer perceive and experience the world through a White lens (West, 1993), but rather to employ their standards to life and no longer view themselves as victims of White supremacy. The second primary objective of OAAU was to establish educational centers that would engender a sense of agency for Blacks; this included boycotting American institutions (Sales, 1994). Furthermore, unlike the NOI, the OAAU desired for Blacks to play a more prominent role in American politics; this group appeared more eager to increase voter registration to influence elections. Finally, the OAAU was exceedingly interested in reconciling the antagonistic relationship between Malcolm X and the Civil Rights leaders in the South (Sales, 1994). In short, the OAAU was a representation of Malcolm's growth as a Black *international* leader and signified his yearning for a *Ujamaaian* approach to achieve freedom and liberation for Africans on the continent and the diaspora; an approach which is embodied in his speech at the founding rally.

Ujamaaian rhetoric in African American public address

Malcolm infers for the OAAU to adopt a self-reliant ideology by illuminating the tension between the Black community and the public education system in a narrative fashion. For example, Malcolm discusses how the education system has failed Blacks by not teaching them about their history. He remarks:

When we send our children to school in this country, they learn nothing about us other than that we used to be cotton pickers... Your grandfather was some of the greatest [B]lack people who walked on this earth... the textbooks tell our children nothing about the great contributions of Afro-Americans to the growth and development of this country.

Relevant here is not merely that Malcolm highlights this critical tension for the audience but instead *how* he conveys this message. By illustrating the crucial tension in a story-like fashion, Malcolm implicitly suggests a resolution that leaves his audience with limited choices, one of them being to educate their own to resolve this tension simply. In this way, *Ujamaaian* rhetoric is manifested in Malcolm's discourse by illuminating the tension for his audience through a narrative frame, offering the notion of self-reliance as a viable resolution to conclude the story. Despite efforts by other Black organizations (for example, the NAACP) at the time to integrate the school system, Malcolm's primary concern appears to take the next step further, that is, an emphasis on Black history embedded into the curriculum. While narration is not explicitly mentioned in the literature on *Ujamaa*, storytelling is one of the most profound features of the Black rhetorical tradition (Banks, 2010). Storytelling is a manifestation of *nommo*, "the generating and sustaining powers of the spoken word" (Smith & Robb, 1971, p. 1), and is observed as a rhetorical element typically found in African American discourse that seeks to bring about peace and harmony in the community. In this way, Malcolm draws upon *nommo* specifically utilizing storytelling/narration to bring about harmony in the Black community. Thus, the concept of *Ujamaa* is extended to include one of the traditional features of the Black rhetorical canon, storytelling. In addition to proffering a self-reliant philosophy, Malcolm also draws his audience's attention to the organizational structure of the OAAU.

While *Ujamaa* discourse claims to urge a horizontal structure of leadership, Malcolm, however, does not explicitly adopt this ideology. Instead, Malcolm amenablely accepts responsibility for the progress or detractions of the OAAU. He explains:

I'll tell you the top officer is the chairman, and that's the office I'm holding. I'm taking the responsibility of the chairman, which means I'm responsible for any mistakes that take place; anything that goes wrong, any failures, you can rest them right upon my shoulders.

Although Malcolm's acceptance of group failure is noble, one could argue that his response is antithetical to egalitarianism, a political philosophy in which *Ujamaa* privileges. The recurrent critique of egalitarianism, albeit debatable, is that it "implies that every member of a society should, under *all* circumstances, receive the same or equal treatment as any other member" (Ejeh, 2004, p. 43). This idea would suggest that if the OAAU were to succeed or fail, *praise* or *blame* should be given to all who make up the organization. In this way, Malcolm positing that the buck stops with him (regardless of the success or failure of the OAAU), gestures his desire for some type of hierarchical style leadership model. This notion does not necessarily constitute an immoral design of organizational structure; however, it does establish a departure from our current conception of *Ujamaaian* discourse. Even Temkin (2003) concedes, "Egalitarians come in many stripes. Too many, I'm afraid. Numerous, quite distinct, positions have been described as egalitarian" (p. 766). The variation of egalitarian philosophy comes at an exorbitant price since many egalitarians operate on convenient variability when applying this ideology to various contexts. Thus, in this particular speech, *Ujamaa* is communicated by advocating for a hierarchical leadership model.

Furthermore, *Ujamaa* discourse seeks to unify the community through the explicit use of a common language. It is no surprise that Malcolm appeals to his audience through a Black nationalist rhetoric to proselytize advancement toward Black freedom and liberation. Malcolm asserts that “...in order to fight it (the system), we have to be independent of it. And the only way we can be independent of it is to be independent of all support from the [W]hite community.” He advances this notion by clarifying his point:

Now, if white people want to help, they can help. But they can't join. They can help in the [W]hite community, but they can't join. We accept their help. They can form the White Friends of the Organization of Afro-American Unity and work in the [W]hite community on [W]hite people and change their attitude toward us. They don't ever need to come among us and change our attitude.

In these two excerpts, Malcolm is perspicuously appealing to a Black nationalist ideology. Many scholars have concluded that Black nationalist rhetoric attempts to promote unity within the Black community by foregrounding self-interest and self-determination as a mechanism to achieve freedom and liberation (Campbell, 1971; Francesconi, 1986; Henderson, 1996; Robinson, 2001). In this case, it is through a Black nationalist language mode, which parallels *Ujamaa*'s doctrine, which seeks unification through a shared language. This notion supports Blake's (2011) contention that *Ujamaa*, as a rhetorical process, emphasizes utilizing a glorious African past as a foundation to build for an African identity that is constructed without the influence of those who are not part of the cultural lineage. Further, Smitherman (1986) adds that “a language reflects a people's culture and their world view, and thus each group's language is suited to the needs and habits of its users” (p. 196). In effect, Malcolm's strategic use of Black nationalist rhetoric is utilized to reflect his conviction toward achieving freedom and liberation for the Black community; that is, through self-interest and self-determination. In addition to employing a common language to encourage unity, much of Malcolm's address belabors a socialist agenda in some respects.

As mentioned earlier, Nyerere (1995) believed that African socialism was unlike European socialism in that it harped less on class struggle and concentrated more on communalism regardless of social status. In the speech, particularly in the section where Malcolm begins to discuss the social aspect of the OAAU, he articulates his socialist ideals that would promote racial pride and Black power. Malcolm explains to his audience that they must control their communities by utilizing their resources in a tribal fashion. Explicitly, he proclaims, “The people of the Afro-American community must be prepared to help each other in all ways possible.” He expounds on this idea by illustrating that there is a need to assist unwed mothers and create a guardian system for troubled youth, positive youth activities, charity work, and overall cultural development. For Malcolm, these ideas are deeply rooted in the African socialist philosophy, as expressed by Nyerere, that endorses tribalism as a mechanism toward social transformation.

What African socialism attempts to do is establish a sense of responsibility within each individual to the community. It is the obligation of the African to “not only [be] economically and politically free but also culturally independent” (Hellsten, 2004, p. 66). This idea is aligned with much of the Black Power ideology and rhetoric in the 1960s and 1970s. As many scholars have noted, Black Power attempts to affirm racial pride and support Black interests (Appiah & Gates, 2005; Ogbar, 2019; Scott & Brockriede, 1969). Black Power, like African socialism, maintains that “no individual would prosper

at the expense of society, and the society would not condone the stagnation of any of its individual members” (Hellsten, 2004, p. 66). It is the tribal mentality that would be the guarantor of the Black community’s social and developmental progress. Hence, Malcolm illuminates his commitment to an African socialist idea when he addresses the social nature of the OAAU.

The next major element in *Ujamaa* discourse is the notion of a neo-traditional African Democracy as a mechanism to achieve peace and harmony. While Malcolm employs Black nationalist rhetoric, he unpredictably does not overtly demonstrate support for a one-party system as Nyerere advocates. Malcolm explains to his audience that the OAAU intends to work with other groups to accomplish its mission. Malcolm contends:

... let’s you and me not be too hard on other Afro-American leaders. Because you would be surprised how many of them have expressed sympathy and support in our efforts to bring this situation confronting our people before the United Nations. You’d be surprised how many of them, some of the last ones you would expect, they’re coming around. So let’s give them a little time to straighten up. If they straighten up, good. They’re our brothers and we’re responsible for our brothers.

Malcolm furthers this idea by explaining:

And one thing that we are going to do, we’re going to dispatch a wire, a telegram that is, in the name of the Organization of Afro-American Unity to Martin Luther King in St. Augustine, Florida, and to Jim Forman in Mississippi, worded in essence to tell them that if the federal government doesn’t come to their aid, call on us.

In these instances, one could deduce that Malcolm is open to the idea of a multi-party or various forms of leadership models to achieve Black liberation. This notion is quite distinct from Nyerere’s conception of a political system that attempts to achieve homogeneity. One of the challenges to *Ujamaa*’s political philosophy is that it is observed as an ideological hegemony, where its supporters are forbidden to challenge its authority (Shivji, 1995). Accordingly, Malcolm’s discourse resembles a more cosmopolitan approach to the liberation of Black people.

Here, one observes that Malcolm’s vision of *how* to achieve an African democracy versus Nyerere’s vision differs in that Malcolm recognizes the necessity of a multi-party governance in terms of establishing an African democracy. Because of the context in which Malcolm was situated in, there was already multiple Black leaders at the time who were also attempting to figure out ways to achieve Black liberation in America. The presence of other Black political leaders such as Dr. King, Elijah Muhammad, Stokely Carmichael, John Lewis to name a few, Malcolm had no other choice but to cooperate with other ideologies if he was to be successful in his mission to liberate Black people. This phenomenon was quite different than that of Nyerere who was deemed the sole leader of Tanzania and could mandate a one-party system. According to Molony (2014), Nyerere was highly critical of a two-party system, maintaining that:

where there is *one* party, and that party is identified with the *nation as a whole*, the foundations of democracy are firmer than they can ever be when you have two or more parties, each representing only a section of the community (p. 125).

In this way, Malcolm and Nyerere’s vision of *Ujamaa*, as a political philosophy, differs in that Malcolm embraces a more Afrocentric school of thought regarding African

democracy. Another critical component of Nyerere's political philosophy, *Ujamaa*, is the belief in Contemporary African Revolutionary Thought.

Contemporary African Revolutionary Thought is a precept within *Ujamaa* that ultimately seeks novel ways of achieving liberation. In this case, Malcolm's entire speech, while Black nationalist in nature, is arguably also concerned with the Afrocentric idea to ignite agency in his audience. Subsequently, *Ujamaa* seeks to restore agency in Africans throughout the diaspora, similar to an Asantean Afrocentric philosophy. The challenge for many Black rhetors and critics is differentiating the philosophies of Black nationalism and Afrocentricity. Ronald Jackson attempts to decipher this conundrum. Jackson (2003) comments that Black nationalism is ideological, activist, and separatist, while Afrocentricity, though ideological, is primarily pluralistic, non-exclusionary, and celebrates difference. At the heart of Jackson's analysis is that much of the confusion between Black nationalism and Afrocentricity is theorists' erroneous interpretations of Afrocentric thought. Likewise, for Jackson (2003), many criticisms against Afrocentricity are based on those misinterpretations of the philosophy.

Consequently, while in some ways Malcolm's speech can be regarded as Black nationalist when it comes to the assistance of White people, when dealing with other Black political leaders whose philosophy may differ, Malcolm's discourse can be regarded as Afrocentric. The lines between Black nationalism and Afrocentricity are murky indeed. However, Asante's (2003, 2011) primary concern with the Afrocentric project is one of the agency of Blacks toward freedom and liberation. Expectantly, the attempt to achieve freedom and liberation for the African must deal with White supremacy, and therefore, it is reasonable to see how a dialectical tension can manifest between Black nationalism and Afrocentricity. The question then becomes about *how* to achieve freedom and liberation; this dialectic is at the heart of this debate.

On the one hand, black nationalism argues for a separatist agenda, while Afrocentricity contends for the recovery of African history and philosophy to build up the consciousness of its descendants for the enablement of their agency. In this way, Afrocentricity is less concerned with the influence of White ideology and more focused on African philosophy's ability to enhance the agency of Blacks. The Afrocentric idea believes that the best way to become a social agent is through cultural centrality. This notion is quite different from a Black nationalist perspective, which claims that Eurocentric philosophy is inherently prejudicial for Black people. In sum, Malcolm advocates for a Contemporary African Revolutionary Thought, one that embraces a mixture of Black nationalism and Afrocentricity.

The final precept emphasizes the *Mazruiana* Theoretical Propositions, which primarily encompasses notions of personal transformation, unity, self-reliance, human rights, and morality. Throughout the entirety of the speech, Malcolm attempts to garner interest from his audience in joining the newly formed OAAU by touching on each of the *Mazruiana* Theoretical Propositions. Malcolm declares:

Drug addiction turns your little sister into a prostitute before she gets into her teens; makes a criminal out of your little brother before he gets in his teens drug addiction and alcoholism. And if you and I aren't men enough to get at the root of these things, then we don't even have the right to walk around here complaining about it in any form whatsoever.

In this instance, Malcolm is calling for a social transformation by appealing to his audience that to eliminate drug addiction, sex trafficking, and alcoholism, they must

attack the root cause of the lives of their brothers and sisters. Similarly, Malcolm also stresses the need for unity. He explains that “the purpose of the Organization of Afro American Unity is to unite everyone in the Western Hemisphere of African descent into one united force.” Therefore, Malcolm’s purpose is to move his audience’s attention away from different matters to a more cohesive disposition. Moreover, self-reliance is a significant theme of Malcolm’s address. As noted, Malcolm believes that the liberation of Blacks can only commence when they become self-sufficient. He contends, “It’s beyond the ability of the United States government to solve it. The government itself isn’t capable of even hearing our problem, much less solving it. It’s not morally equipped to solve it.” Accordingly, Malcolm advocates for his audience to no longer depend on the government to liberate the community.

Next, it is clear for Malcolm that the OAAU’s objective is to gain human rights for Blacks in the Western hemisphere. Malcolm explains that the mission of the OAAU is not only to gain citizenship in Harlem but in other parts of the world. He utters:

when we say Afro American, we include everyone in the Western Hemisphere of African descent... everyone in South America of African descent is an Afro-American. Everyone in the Caribbean, whether it’s the West Indies or Cuba or Mexico, if they have African blood, they are Afro Americans. If they’re in Canada and they have African blood, they’re Afro Americans.

In this way, Malcolm views the objectives of the OAAU to stretch far beyond the United States, demonstrating that his mission is a human rights issue, not just an African *American* issue. Finally, Malcolm’s message is an engagement in morality and ethics.

Malcolm is not only attempting to garner interest in the OAAU to his audience, but instead, he is also engaging in a discourse of morals and ethics. Karenga (2003) contends that the classical African rhetorical tradition is a communal and ethical practice that seeks to bring good into the community. In this case, Malcolm is confident that for peace and harmony to be brought in America (and other places in the Western hemisphere), Blacks needed to rebuild their moral consciousness, one that went beyond the scope of the United States. For Malcolm, Blacks’ ability to build up their nation, independent from the United States, would be the start of a productive environment for Blacks to reach their maximum potential. In short, by utilizing these tactics, Malcolm can offer his audience a compelling case as to why they should join the OAAU. At this point, the have thoroughly analyzed Malcolm’s address under an *Ujamaaian* frame.

Moving toward communication theory beyond Western conceptualizations

This essay’s principal drive was to discover how *Ujamaaian* principles are rhetorically constructed in African American public address. In addition, through a rhetorical analysis, this essay also aimed to draw a comparison between Malcolm X’s implicit articulation of *Ujamaa* and Nyerere’s political philosophy of *Ujamaa*. Given the analysis, *Ujamaa* is employed in several significant ways that are worthy of rhetorical consideration. First, concerning self-reliance, *Ujamaaian* discourse is framed in a narrative arrangement to illuminate situational tensions and resolutions. Phelan (1996) accurately denotes that what makes narratives work as rhetoric is its progressive nature in which tensions arise within the story, encouraging the audience to pursue resolutions. Often,

these resolutions are answered by the rhetor, thus making the narrative function rhetorically. In this fashion, self-reliance and narrative formation are linked for a *Ujamaaian* rhetorical process to function properly. Second, in this case, Ujamaa's discourse seeks to contrive a hierarchical form of leadership. Ensley et al. (2006) maintain that some of the benefits of a vertical leadership model (where there is a single leader), particularly in new organizations, are that the organization can benefit from a more explicit vision, direction, goals, and structure. In this case, while other scholars have concluded that *Ujamaa* supports a horizontal structure of leadership, this study contests this notion by illuminating the relationship of *Ujamaa* and hierarchy. This phenomenon is partially due to the newness of the OAAU. The assassination of Malcolm leaves us with several unanswered questions about the leadership potential of the OAAU. For instance, perhaps the OAAU would have moved into a more horizontal organizational structure as the group progressed. Nonetheless, in this speech, Malcolm clearly states that a hierarchy was essential for the progression of the OAAU.

Third, *Ujamaa* is rhetorically constructed with a Black nationalist overtone to sway its adherents that nationalism is a prerequisite for *true* freedom and liberation. While legally Blacks were "free" at the time of this speech, Malcolm made it apparent that what Blacks were undergoing was not *true* freedom. Thus, Malcolm appealed to his audience, blending *Ujamaa* discourse with Black nationalism. Fourth, *Ujamaa* discourse is initiated by appealing to socialist ideals that advocates that each member of the community has a moral obligation to each other, instilling a sense of racial pride and cultural power. Fifth, *Ujamaa*, in this study, is open to various forms of external leadership regarding Black liberation. While Malcolm expresses a vertical form of organizational structure in the OAAU, he does not preclude other organizational leaders from assisting his group with accomplishing its mission. This notion represents a departure from Nyerere's political conception of *Ujamaa*, where he maintained that a one-party system would be more beneficial not only for Tanzania but also for Africa. Thus, Malcolm's belief in a collective approach toward Black liberation is vastly associated with an Afrocentric ideology (Asante, 2003, 2011). That is, there can be multiple efforts to accomplish the same overall objective.

Furthermore, this case study also illuminates that *Ujamaa* is constructed with a mixture of both Black nationalism and Afrocentricity. While previous studies have not explicitly linked *Ujamaa* discourse with Afrocentric thought, this study demonstrates a connection between the two concepts, underscoring a new relationship to extend our current conception. The link between *Ujamaa* and Afrocentricity addresses Ujamaa's limitations that were brought to the forefront by Blommaert (2006) and Lal (2010). Because Afrocentricity is humanistic, celebrates pluralism, and does not discriminate based on sex, gender, class, or religion, *Ujamaa* is thus more robust as an appropriate form of communication in this conception. Finally, *Ujamaa* is constituted by promoting self-reliance, unity, personal development, fundamental rights, and ethics to organize individuals to progress toward freedom and liberation collectively. With this new understanding of the rhetorical construction of *Ujamaa*, the relationship between Malcolm and Nyerere's understanding of *Ujamaa* also presents noteworthy implications.

Ujamaa, based on the rhetorical construction of Malcolm's speech, is essentially grounded in Afrocentric philosophy that embraces pluralism as a mechanism to achieve

African democracy. This inference suggest that Asante's Afrocentricity may be the way to actualize a democracy that will benefit African people throughout the diaspora collectively. Asante's (2003, 2011) primary objective with Afrocentricity, is for Africans, wherever they are, to be properly located by placing African culture at the center of their worldview. Afrocentricity allows for diverse African epistemologies to be acknowledged amongst other African cultural understanding. In other words, it is possible to embrace diversity within different variation of African culture because ultimately it is African and like all cultures, is a system that is developed for the benefit of its people. Thus, the employment of such rhetorical appeals as *Ujamaa* would be a step in the right direction in terms of Africans placing their own language mode at the forefront of their communicative practices. While *Ujamaa* is primarily a political philosophy based in Tanzania, it is still part of what Asante (2011) calls an African Cultural System that benefits African people. In short, an African democracy is imaginable if African people are culturally located and start with their own cultural understanding as they participate in their respective environments.

In conclusion, this study extends the work of other Communication scholars who have explored the discourse of Malcolm X from a multitude of perspectives (Benson, 1974; Condit & Lucaites, 1993; Hoerl, 2008; Hopson, 2011; Novak, 2006; Terrill, 2000, 2001, 2007, 2010; Yousman, 2001) by applying an Africana communication theory to the rhetoric of Malcolm X. *Ujamaa* offers a novel way of examining and understanding African American public address and communication beyond continental conceptions of the culture's discursive practices. The coupling of an international theory with a Western phenomenon brings to the fore one of the most critical takeaways from this study: the usefulness of applying non-Western communication theories to gain novel insights into continental rhetorical transactions. As a final note, what this paper has attempted to demonstrate here by utilizing *Ujamaa* as a rhetorical approach is a way forward for the Communication discipline to "Move Beyond the West." Such an endeavor may influence Blacks and other scholars of color to remain committed to the growth of the discipline because of the philosophical, theoretical, and methodological inclusivity that centers marginalized epistemologies and allow for a deeper and more critical reading of rhetorical artifacts. While the fight for inclusivity in the Communication discipline remains at-large and must be consistently attended to; this essay offers a step in the right direction. It is through this effort that we can better understand the communicative practices of African people on the continent and assess other modes of communication that may be useful in the dismantling of an oppressive system in hope of living in a world in which we all deserve to be in.

Note

1. See Jack L. Daniel's (1995) *Changing the Players and the Game*, for more information on the history and development of the Black Caucus of the National Communication Association.

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