In Defense of Counterposed Strategic Orientations: Anarchism and Antiracism

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Abstract

Many antiracist theorists allege that antiracism suffers from a crisis of being unable to realize its goals and potential. The fact that we continue to experience racism in the 21st century and that contemporary antiracist movements are fragmented and dispersed is upheld as evidence of an antiracist failure. In light of such alleged shortcomings, Pierre-André Taguieff invites us to rebuild what he calls the "fragile ship" of antiracism, while Paul Gilroy urges us to abandon it altogether. Drawing on poststructuralism and the work of anarchists engaged in antiracist activism, I argue that the proclaimers of an antiracist crisis are unduly influenced by Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony. Gramscian influenced antiracism dismisses non-unified antiracist movements for being ineffectually engaged in, what Michael Omi and Howard Winant characterize as, "counterposed strategic orientations." This paper will briefly consider Gramsci's influence on antiracist theory, with a greater focus on Omi and Winant's racial formation theory. I turn to two case studies of antiracist anarchist movements, anarchist antifascism and Anarchist People of Color, in order to show that rather than being in crisis, antiracism today continues to struggle against racism outside of the logic of hegemony. I demonstrate that without recourse to such Gramscian "solutions" as political unity and intellectual leadership, social movements continue to deal with questions of race and racism and to mount significant opposition to racial hierarchies. In doing so, they constitute not Taguieff's fragile ship but what I identify as a *strategically flexible antiracism*.

Introduction

If, as Richard Day's provocatively titled work announces, *Gramsci Is Dead* (2005) then death must by extension also enshroud Michael Omi and Howard Winant's hegemonically-oriented racial formation theory and the various currents of antiracist thought that it informs. By orienting itself in poststructuralism, this paper aims to displace the Gramscian logic of hegemony in antiracism. I will do so by demonstrating that what Day calls the *hegemony of hegemony* (2005), which

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refers to "the assumption that effective social change can only be achieved simultaneously and *en masse*, across an entire national or supranational space" (8),[2] is endemic to antiracist theory at the risk of making it unable to keep up with antiracist social movements.

By *antiracism*, I have in mind actors who view their activism explicitly in terms of a principled opposition to racism. Although technically this includes liberal, policy-driven, state-based approaches developed by think tanks, commissions, councils, and non-profit organizations, preference in this paper will be given to radical, street/underground/grassroots-based, and autonomous activist collectives. It must be stressed early on that even among this more "focused" range of antiracist actors, racism is conceptualized in different ways. The non-unified, dispersed existence of these social movements invites us to consider that racism itself is, as Floya Anthias and Cathy Lloyd characterize it, "a fluid and shifting phenomenon which evades clear and absolute definition in a once-and-for-all type of way" (2002, 8). If racism only came down to fascist street level violence of groups like the Ku Klux Klan or Aryan Nations, then antifascism alone would suffice as an antiracist response. If racism was just colonialism, then Indigenist, Nationalist, and Third World anti-colonial movements would do. If racism was only about state control over immigration, migration, and refugee flows, anti-border movements, such us No One Is Illegal, would be the answer. And if racism boiled down to white supremacy and assimilation, then networks like Anarchist People of Color would constitute the right response. The fact is that all of these movements are with us right now because racism functions according to many logics. The response to racism is, unsurprisingly, as diverse as racism itself.

The significant distinction developed here is between *counter-hegemonic* and *strategically flexible* antiracist movements. The former aspire to bring about as much total change as possible, and as such they are much more likely to attempt to institute antiracism by working within, what John Holloway describes as, "the state paradigm" (2010, 12). The latter bypass this paradigm as they do not seek to universalize their aims and do not aim their political projects at anything like the complete transformation of the entire range of social relations; rather, following the logic of affinity, they are open to diffusion, fragmentation, and multiplicity. This paper demonstrates that the hegemony of hegemony has established a firm foothold in antiracist theory from where it identifies an impasse in antiracist social movements, effectively closing off or dismissing affinity-based antiracist projects. The impasse consists of what Omi and Winant call "counterposed strategic orientations" (1986, 102) – that is, of the fact that antiracist movements employ multiple, even contradictory, approaches in combating racism and generally suffer from "splintered political action" (1986, 102). In light of this "crisis," Omi and Winant's racial formation theory prescribes a counter-hegemonic solution that calls for antiracist movements to abandon

their multiple approaches in favor of a single, unified theoretically-sanctioned strategy that would "consolidate a new radical democratic politics with majoritarian aspirations" (Omi and Winant 1986, 140).

As such, I read racial formation theory as partaking in the counter-hegemonic longing for what Pierre-André Taguieff calls "a certain antiracism that still remains to be invented" (2001, 80). This paper takes a contrary position. Rather than rethink, like Omi, Winant, and Taguieff, about how to get back to the drawing board in order to create an adequate or correct counter-hegemonic antiracist theory with which we could direct and shape the movements (a project that imagines that it is necessary to go from theory to practice),[3] we ought to instead entertain the possibility that contemporary antiracist social movements – and specifically, affinity based movements – have outmaneuvered the drawing board and that what is required is that we pay greater attention to already existing social movements as potent reservoirs of antiracist theory. To this end, I will map out the strategic orientations of two contemporary anarchist antiracist movements, anarchist antifascism and Anarchist People of Color. My argument is that these movements bypass the hegemony of hegemony in antiracism by productively utilizing two contradictory strategies. Employing Taguieff (2001), I argue that antifascist anarchists orient their activism according to the strategy of *universalism* (based on an appeal to colorblind ideology), while Anarchist People of Color utilize the strategy of *differentialism* (based on an appeal to race-conscious or colourconscious ideology). However, where, along with Omi and Winant, antiracist theory identifies a limit of "two antiracisms with contradictory values and norms" (Taguieff 2001, 8), I propose to recast antiracist anarchism in terms of a *strategically flexible antiracism* that can only be grasped outside of the logic of hegemony.

Gramsci and Antiracism

A suspicion of Gramsci may at first sight seem unwarranted. His work certainly makes a number of significant contributions, if not advances, to Marxism and continues to play a substantial role in contemporary social movement theory. For one, Gramsci's contribution consists of a theory of history without guarantees. Drawing on Ernesto Laclau and Chantel Mouffe, we may say that Gramsci matters because in his work the "logic of necessity" gives way to "the logic of spontaneism" (1985, 12). This is to say, Gramsci abandons the materialist inspired laws of historical progression. He dispenses with the holdovers of vulgar Marxist history, which see a mechanistic unfolding of history that "does not allow for the possibility of error" (Gramsci 1999, 408). In addition, Gramsci complicates the dialectical materialist account of the social. His work does not rely on the familiar model of the base and superstructure, where the latter strictly functions as an ideological defense mechanism of the former; rather, for Gramsci the

superstructure itself develops according to its own historical trajectory and cannot be seen solely as something generated by economic conditions in the defense of those conditions. Politics develops in relationship to economics, but, and crucially, "it is also distinct from it" (Gramsci 1999, 140). Rather than seeing political parties (a superstructural element) as a "mechanical and passive expression of those classes" (Gramsci 1999, 227) whose interests they represent, we are offered a view that maintains that parties also "react energetically upon them [economic classes] in order to develop, solidify and universalise them" (227). Gramsci thus offers us an indeterminate account of history along with a relatively autonomous political sphere and civil society that act back on their own economic conditions.

With his theory of hegemony, Gramsci effectively challenges the long-standing idea in Marxism that contradictions alone assure the direction that history will take. In a move that removes economism from Marxism, he plunges political action and activism into the uncertain terrain of civil society and culture. Thus, not only does Gramsci present history as open and unpredictable, but his work also advances a theory of revolution without a *pregiven* revolutionary subject. No longer is the proletariat automatically the privileged agent of historical change in the capitalist epoch. Rather than constructing a theory of the agent, Gramsci presents us with a theory of the battleground, where the key actor emerges out of alliances established in the course of struggle itself. This means that the result of political struggles does not inevitably depend, for Gramsci, on any relationship between the forces of production and the relations of production but is contingent on the relationship between various political actors who struggle to achieve the "political articulation of dissimilar elements" (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 60). This is not to deny that capitalism contains certain contradictions; it is only to say that the outcome of those contradictions ultimately depends on "a strong activity of the will" (Gramsci 1999, 336) of political actors who variously form alliances as they seek to liquidate their opponents. Finally, it is important to note that to succeed, such alliances must attempt to consolidate a large, unified oppositional culture that, in turn, must "aim to replace" (Gramsci 1999, 340) the existing hegemony. Every counter-hegemony is successful to the extent that it becomes hegemonic.

Many social movement and antiracist theorists analyze social movements through the prism of Gramscian hegemony and the contours of Gramsci's theory I have just identified. Gayatri Spivak, for example, considers that any progressive social movement must face "the difficult task of counterhegemonic ideological production" (1988, 275) and that it is the task of theory to identify the way in which variously localized and dispersed movements can successfully do so. With rampant racism in its various forms – Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, systemic racism against people of colour, ongoing colonialism, and the reawakening of fascism – we may ask, is antiracism not after all in crisis, or,

following Spivak, at least badly in need of counter-hegemonic refurbishing? Many sociologists and antiracist theorists have done just that. For them, Gramsci holds out the possibility of a unified antiracist theory and a large scale, coherent movement that could deal a final blow to hegemonic racism. Gramsci informs the work of Cathy Lloyd, who frames the problem by asking, "[h]ow will the traditional themes of anti-racism – opposition to racial discrimination, representation of and solidarity with people who experience racism, and the attempt to establish an anti-racist common sense (or hegemony, in the Gramscian sense) – fit into the political discourses of the twenty-first century, marked by post-colonialism and globalization?" (2002, 61). Similarly, Himani Bannerji poses the problem in a Gramscian frame when she argues that "our hegemonic 'subsumption' into a racist common sense… can only be prevented by creating counter-hegemonic interpretive and organizational frame-works…" (2000, 120). Echoing her, Paul Gilroy likewise hopes to overcome inadequate antiracist counter-hegemony by appealing to "new bases for solidarity and *synchronized* action" (2001, 111-2, emphasis mine). The problem that is restated in this current of antiracism is one of turning dispersed minorities and their various movements into effective, which is to say unified, actors who seek to form a counter-hegemonic bloc.

For Gramscian inspired antiracist theory, a large diversity of movements presents itself as something to be overcome. This is to be accomplished by the active reorganization of disparate and unorganized political actors down to a manageable common core. It is in the sense of being dissatisfied with a non-unified diversity of social movement actors that antiracist theory can, in fact, be said to suffer from the hegemony of hegemony – that is, of the desire for large scale, unanimous, concerted action. As Lloyd observes, "[h]istorically anti-racism is associated with movements in support of decolonialisation, anti-fascism and struggles against deportation and for immigrants' rights" (2002, 63). This, however, is not good enough for her; in fact, it indicates a quandary. The desire for a common counter-hegemonic core, a large-scale collective refusal of racism, reasserts itself when, following this observation, she asks: "What are the links between these different aspects and do they make some kind of coherent whole which constitutes anti-racism?" (2002, 64). The problem of unity haunts her work and Gramscian inspired antiracist theory in general.

We encounter with full-blown vigor this "dilemma" and the proposed counter-hegemonic solution in the sociology of Omi and Winant. Their magnum opus, *Racial Formation in the United States* (1986), in its third edition as of 2013, provides a framework that is enjoying considerable popularity with many antiracists. As the editors of the recently published *Racial Formation in the Twenty-First Century* note, "the roots of racial formation continue to develop as scholars addressing topics from gender and sexuality to indigeneity and settler colonialism, and spanning from literary studies and American studies to

sociology, adapt the racial formation framework" (HoSang, LaBennett, and Pulido 2012, 19). Given that Omi and Winant draw on Gramsci,[4] their work introduces the hegemony of hegemony into antiracist theory. Keeping this in mind, let us consider in more depth how the direct Gramscian inheritance presents itself in their work in terms of a movement-state nexus, the necessity of a vanguard, and the identification of a central antagonism.

The Movement-State Nexus

Omi and Winant import Gramsci's political ontology, which privileges political action as occurring within a movement-state nexus. Their theoretical conceptualization of the battleground of political action as involving two distinct players – social movements and states – is a direct inheritance from Gramsci. Reflecting on historical victories, Gramsci notes:

> A study of how these innovatory forces developed, *from subaltern groups to hegemonic and dominant groups*, must therefore seek out and identify the phases through which they acquired: 1. Autonomy vis-à-vis the enemies they had to defeat, and 2. Support from the groups which actively or passively assisted them; for this entire process was historically necessary before they could *unite in the form of a State*. (1999, 53, emphasis mine)

While he did not explicitly address antiracist movements, any successful counter-hegemony presupposes, as the above formulation shows, that all movements must defeat enemies and create alliances in order to form states and exercise hegemony. This is precisely what is involved in a subaltern group becoming hegemonic.

The state-movement nexus and the formula of counter-hegemony seeking hegemony are firmly in place in Omi and Winant. They explicitly argue that "the trajectory of racial politics links… two central actors in the drama of contemporary racial politics – the racial state and racially based social movements" (Omi and Winant 1986, 82). For Omi and Winant, racial identities, racism, and antiracism must in fact be grasped in terms of what they call "movement/state relationships" (1986, 176n. 38). This is so because the way we see and understand race changes only by virtue of a change in the relationship between social movements and the state, as both engage in "*political contestation over racial meanings*" (Omi and Winant 1986, 69, emphasis in original). The crucial thing to keep in mind here is that while "social movements create collective identity" (Omi and Winant 1986, 83) and "pose new demands originating outside state institutions" (Omi and Winant 1986, 84), it is only by directing themselves toward the state that such movements can transform the racial order. *Racial Formation*, in fact, designates the historic equilibrium, the

horizon of racial meanings that make up our "common sense" or what we may call our common stock of racial knowledge. The racial categories and the identities they enable, the kinds of things we "know" about racial others, are all established and negotiated by state-movement relations. Racial formation theory thus imagines hegemonic common sense as arising primarily from "a complex system of compromises" (Omi and Winant 1986, 78) between social movements and states.

Besides hinging the social construction of racial identity on hegemonic relations, what we are presented with in racial formation theory is a political formula that maintains that antiracist movements can only succeed to the extent that they capture or merge with state power. Failure is conceptualized by Omi and Winant as the failure to penetrate the state, which occurs when "minority movements could not be consolidated as a permanent radical democratic political force" (1986, 141). We would do well to remember that all this emphasis on the state is justified because, for the theory of hegemony, it is the presumed primary locus of politics. The state, in other words, is the hub from which an antiracist common sense could be elaborated, the centre from which racial relations can be rearticulated. Thus, when Omi and Winant argue that "[t]he state provides a political framework for interest concertation" (1986, 176n. 39), they refer precisely to its capacity, in the Gramscian sense, of universalizing the particular perspective of antiracism as the hegemonically articulated common sense perspective of civil society itself.

The Vanguard

Having identified the political terrain in terms of the movement-state nexus, the theory of hegemony "supposes an intellectual unity" (Gramsci 1999, 333) as a necessary component of successful social movements. Intellectual unity has the presumed advantage of clarifying the task at hand. Such unity identifies the enemy and provides a single, univocal answer to the pressing question, "what is to be done?" Where, we might ask, would social movements achieve such unity? The answer is from a fundamental group that is made up of organic intellectuals who can step in to lead social movements as the "organisers of a new culture" (Gramsci 1999, 5). Gramsci is not shy about the elite status of this group. He argues that any successful counter-hegemony requires strong leadership that would be separate from the masses:

> Critical self-consciousness means, historically and politically, the creation of an *élite* of intellectuals. A human mass does not "distinguish" itself, does not become independent in its own right without, in the widest sense, organising itself; and there is no organisation without intellectuals, that is without organisers and leaders, in other words, without the theoretical aspect of the theory-

> practice nexus being distinguished concretely by the existence of a group of people "specialised" in conceptual and philosophical elaboration of ideas. (Gramsci 1999, 334)

Gramsci, as such, envisions political struggle taking place on the terrain of culture where an intellectual vanguard, the movements it leads, and the state with which they clash for supremacy, are the vital components of the theory of hegemony.

Incorporating this, Omi and Winant presuppose that "[r]acial movements come into being as the result of political projects, political interventions led by 'intellectuals'" (Omi and Winant 1986, 80). In the Gramscian tradition of championing organic intellectuals, they open the category of the intellectual to include such actors as "religious leaders, entertainers, schoolteachers" (1986, 173 n.11), along with presumably professional intellectuals like Omi and Winant. The assumption in their work is that leaders are clearly needed for what racial formation theory calls the "rearticulation" of racial meanings:

> *Rearticulation* is a practice of discursive reorganization or reinterpretation of ideological themes and interests already present in the subjects' consciousness, such that these elements obtain new meaning or coherence. This practice is ordinarily the work of "intellectuals." Those whose role is to interpret the social world for given subjects… may on this account be "intellectuals." (Omi and Winant 1986, 173n. 11, emphasis in original)

The intellectuals are mandated by racial formation theory with the task of finding and formulating the coherent whole of the antiracist movement in order to be able to lead and manage it. Their separation from the masses and assigned task of cultural rearticulation is in Omi and Winant true to Gramscian form.

The Central Antagonism

Despite developing an indeterminate theory of social change, for Gramsci the economy remains the most important site of conflict. Like a good Marxist, he never abandons the presupposition of a central economic contradiction or the base and superstructure model; rather, Gramsci introduces the terrain of culture and civil society in relationship to the economic base. The former may well be read according to the Althusserian logic of being determined "in the last instance" by the latter, which plays the role of what Peyman Vahabzadeh calls *ultimate referentiality* – "a presumed ultimate ground" that is said to manifest itself socially and from which in-turn we claim to derive our knowledge of the social (2009, 458). The economic base, in other words, is the "point of ultimacy…

that justifies an entire theoretical approach" (Vahabzadeh 2009, 458) we call Marxism, just as one might regard patriarchy as the point of ultimacy for radical feminism or the psyche as a point of ultimacy for psychoanalysis.

Omi and Winant, similarly, conceive of a central antagonism upon which they pivot social movements and the vanguard. The Gramscian import here is oblique, however, as the economy no longer occupies the central place, as it does in Marxist theory; only the idea of a central antagonism is retained. Omi and Winant abandon the economic base as a central antagonism while preserving all the other basic features of Gramsci's theory. Thus, we have Gramsci's frame without, specifically, Gramsci's Marxism,[5] or it could be said that we still have ultimate referentiality but with a shift in the grounds of ultimacy.

The political universe of Omi and Winant posits race as ultimate referentiality. For them, race serves as a fundamental, deterministic category. As they boldly proclaim, "[c]rucial to this formulation is the treatment of race as a *central axis* of social relations which cannot be subsumed under or reduced to some broader category or conception" (Omi and Winant 1986, 61-2, emphasis in original). Furthermore, for Omi and Winant, race "suffuses" (1986, 90) social relations and "pervade[s] US society, extending from the shaping of individual racial identities to the structuring of collective political action on the terrain of the state" (1986, 66). Omi and Winant thus, to draw on Todd May, produce an image of the "world as a set of concentric circles, with the core or base problematic lying at the centre" (1994, 10). All major problems can be reduced to the privileged ultimate ground of race that in their theory is conceptualized "as a fundamental *organizing principle* of social relations" (Omi and Winant 1986, 66, emphasis in original). Placing all their bets on the ahistoric structuralist horse of foundationalism, they announce that "[r]ace will *always* be at the center of the American experience" (Omi and Winant 1986, 6, emphasis in original), and, in what amounts to sidestepping the particular national histories of various nation-states, that "[e]very state institution is a racial institution" (Omi and Winant 1986, 76).

All the elements discussed are, of course, interrelated, and it was only for the sake of conceptual clarity that I separate them. The theory of hegemony tells us that what really matters is a complete transformation of the entire social structure on the basis of a central antagonism. Given that there is a central antagonism in the form of racism,[6] a vanguard of organic intellectuals are, as May puts it, "peculiarly well placed to analyze and to lead the resistance" (1994, 11). Success in this formulation can only be achieved when the vanguard leads the social movements in capturing or modifying state power. The theory of hegemony is thus offered as the solution to the crisis of fragmented, leaderless movements that, as I will show next, are strategically held to be at odds.

Toward a Strategically Flexible Antiracism

The hegemony of hegemony looms large in Omi and Winant. While their work has the advantage of offering a coherent and tightly bound theory of, and for, antiracist social movements, it runs against a number of severe limits that a poststructural critique makes clear. As Day argues, the theory of hegemony imagines that only large-scale social change is effective, that the goal is one "of a final event of totalizing change" (2005, 9). The limit here is that in privileging this goal, the hegemony of hegemony blocks alternative interpretations of antiracist social movements that dispense with vanguards; that refuse to see race/racism as a fundamental, central antagonism; and that do not measure success in terms of the capacity for movements to penetrate the state. All of this is to say that racial formation theory allows us to think of movements only in terms of their capacity for counter-hegemony. It evaluates them according to this counter-hegemonic standard. In so doing, it subsumes social movements to the state, potentially bureaucratizing the former. Operating under the hegemony of hegemony, racial formation theory cannot account for social movements outside of the trajectory it proscribes for them: "Racially based political movement as we know them are inconceivable without the racial state" (Omi and Winant 1986, 80). Racial formation theory thus inhibits our ability to think of antiracist social movements according to a more suitable non-hegemonic logic – a logic that Day designates as the *affinity for affinity* (2009), which denotes "non-universalizing, non-hierarchical, non-coercive relationships based on mutual aid and shared ethical commitments" (8). In short, racial formation theory only accounts for counter-hegemonic radical social movements, while dismissing and ignoring non-hegemonic forms of antiracism.

Furthermore, by conceiving the terrain of resistance in terms of hegemony, racial formation theory runs the risk of legitimizing only one type of antiracist strategy, variously ignoring or dismissing the complexity of strategies already in use. Omi and Winant impose such a limit to the extent that they identify as the goal an antiracism that utilizes the concept of race to wrest concessions on behalf of racial minorities. Reflecting on past social movements, Omi and Winant observe that the Civil Rights movement was limited initially by seeking "black integration" (1986, 19) premised on "rhetoric [that] often explicitly appealed to the ideal of a 'race-free' society" (1986, 92), whereas they regard "[t]he real accomplishment of cultural nationalist currents… in unifying and promoting collective identity among the oppressed" (1986, 44). Omi and Winant, as such, deny post-racial society as a goal and privilege the differentialist antiracist use of racial identity. As they openly state, "[t]he central argument of this work… cannot be addressed by 'colorblind' theory or policy" (1986, 143). Taguieff, as a counterexample, takes the opposite side in favor of a colourblind, race-free society. He identifies the antiracist goal as one of "clear[ing] the horizon of the opiated fumes exhaled by the fetishism of

difference" (Taguieff 2001, 310). It is important to note that just like Omi and Winant, Taguieff also operates under the hegemony of hegemony in that his work blasts the triumphant tones of a wide-reaching global antiracism. However, unlike Omi and Winant, who see racial identity simply as "difference" or "community," Taguieff identifies it as a handmaiden to cultural nationalism and to the "the reign of pure violence" of 20th century totalitarian systems (2001, 306). To get away from racial classification, which for him is in itself problematic, he proposes a rethinking of "founding universalism, which forms the basis of an effective antiracist position" (Taguieff 2001, 305). Taguieff thus advocates universalist antiracist strategy as *the* strategy, while Omi and Winant promote differentialist antiracism.

The above-mentioned theorists are not alone. Many antiracists operate under the shadow of Gramscian hegemony and engage in the fatal business of choosing the absolute best strategy for antiracism. Echoing Taguieff, Gilroy claims universalist antiracism as the clear choice of strategy when he argues that "action against racial hierarchies can proceed more effectively when it has been purged of any lingering respect for the idea of 'race' " (2001, 13). Assuming the stance of the intellectual *qua* the vanguard, he stresses that marginalized "groups will need to be persuaded very carefully that there is something worthwhile to be gained from a deliberate renunciation of 'race' as the basis for belonging to one another and acting in concert" (Gilroy 2001, 12). The hegemonic commitment to universalist strategy becomes evident when antiracists reject the race concept as "an intellectual error" and conclude that "enabling people to express their own racial identity and to be accorded equality, and rights, *as races* is problematic" (Bonnett 2000, 7, emphasis in original) or when they, in the same vein, argue that "the most significant… social movements have undermined the viability of the concept of 'race' " (Farrar 2004, 219).

At its core, universalist antiracism eschews racial categories and identities on the grounds that these are the tools with which racists carve up and establish racial hierarchies. For Taguieff, Gilroy, Bonnett, and Farrar, all racism begins with a fundamental, essential difference that is attributed as a "natural" property of the social construct we call race. To be sure, their position is certainly informed by the history of racism. Take, for example, 19th century scientific racism which employed anthropology, anthropometry, craniometry, and other disciplines, in order to construct typologies that supported the classification of human populations into physically discrete human types. We could say that simply differentiating people into various racially defined categories (white, Asian, black, Indigenous, etc.) is an invitation to racism. Judging from racist social movements such as Eugenics, and apartheid states such as pre-Mandela South Africa or Jim Crow era United States, it appears that race is the currency of racism, and it follows that any use of racial identity only lands us deeper into

peril. Racial identity, as the lifeblood of various racist movements and states, compromises any antiracism that bases itself on it. For this universalist antiracism, resistance to racism must, therefore, aim at humanist, colourblind, and post-racial horizons.

On the other side of the antiracist divide we may observe an unwavering commitment to differentialism. This current of antiracism often manifests itself in arguments for the retention of essentialist markers of difference (variously in the defense of "particularity" or "diversity"). To be sure, differentialist strategy does not naively uphold racial identity as a biological essence or as something that occurs naturally. As Agnes Calliste and George J. Sefa Dei carefully note, "we operationalize the race concept as a social-relational category defined by socially selected real or imagined physical, as well as cultural, characteristics" (2000, 20-1). Differentialist strategy recognizes that even as a social-relational category race essentializes; however, for differentialist antiracism "the risk of essence" (Spivak 1993, 3) is worth taking since racism can only, or best, be overcome when "political movements mobilize around particular forms of identity" (Calliste and Dei 2000, 28). Such an "oppositional political project differs from… post-racial perspectives" (St. Louis 2002, 652) of universalist antiracists in that it regards "race… [as] a conceptual abstraction *with* material effects" (St. Louis 2002, 666, emphasis in original). It follows here that given the real social effects (i.e. racism) of what is admittedly a social construct (i.e. race), we are compelled to utilize, or at least recognize, racial identity. This current of antiracism takes the social construction of race seriously enough that it is unwilling to part with race solely on the grounds that it is a scientifically invalid concept. Most of the theorists that I have grouped under the differentialist banner share a suspicion around the easy dismissal of race precisely on the grounds that even as alleged "fictions," racial identities function. Others question the necessary racial privilege involved in being able to sidestep racial identity altogether (Gallagher 2003).

Here too we encounter historic grounds for asserting identity, for retaining it as an antiracist resource, and for demanding the recognition of difference. While examples like scientific racism, Eugenics, and apartheid may readily spring to mind when we consider the history of racism, we would also do well, as this current of antiracism reminds us, to consider that racism also operates by absorbing, including, incorporating, and assimilating difference – in short, by speaking the humanist, colourblind language of universalism. What used to be called "Canadianization" operated precisely according to this dimension of racism in Canada. Duncan Scott Campbell, the Canadian Deputy Minister in charge of Indian Affairs from 1913 to 1932, demonstrated this logic when he stated that the goal of residential schools was "to kill the Indian in the child" (in Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 2012, 81). Residential schools were, according to Campbell to "continue until there is not a single Indian in

Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic, and there is no Indian question, and no Indian Department" (in Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 2012, 12). Today's settler states abide by the logic of universalist racism in adhering to the ideology of meritocracy and in upholding what sociologists call "systemic racism."[7] Unlike differentialist racism, which wants to know the other in order to distance the other, universalist racism wants to know the other in order to erase the problematic signs of their otherness. Universalist racism entertains the fantasy of removing the particular, communitarian markers of Indigeneity and, as Campbell illustrates, violently recoding them with markers of an undifferentiated Canadian sameness. Given such forms of racism, the counter-hegemonic commitment to differentialist antiracist strategy, thus, objects in principle "to the use of universal groupings" (Mohanty 2003, 25) that would subsume difference under a colourblind, post-racial humanism. Instead, it argues for particular racial identity as "as a source of knowledge and a basis for progressive mobilization" (Mohanty 2003, 6).

As I have shown, many antiracist theorists who ground themselves in the hegemony of hegemony can be placed along differentialist or universalist strategies from where they contest racism while unduly regarding other antiracists with suspicion. My argument is that the choosing of an absolute antiracist aim on the basis of a single antiracist strategy makes sense only within the terms of hegemony itself. After all, if the central antagonism is presumed to be universalist racism (a racism that ignores differences and aims to integrate everyone into a white, but "colourblind," society), it makes perfect sense to propose that movements can only succeed to the extent that they articulate differentialist antiracist aims. To get there it follows that a vanguard is needed to step in and correct the poor analysis of existing movements, to unify fragmented movements, and lead them in struggle against a state. If, on the other hand, the central antagonism is presumed to be differentialist racism (a racism that stresses racial difference, creates racial identities, and aims to segregate/exterminate racial minorities), the same requirements, in terms of a vanguard and engagement with the state, remain in place. My goal, however, is not to argue which strategy is ultimately the correct one but to show that both strategies, when stripped of the hegemony of hegemony, have their place in confronting the various manifestations and symptoms of racism. If we allow that both types of racism can coexist – that states, corporations and other hierarchical institutions and practices, variously embody colourblind and colourconscious racial ideologies – it follows that the choice of strategy ultimately depends on context or on the nature of the racism one is contesting in one's particular location. I am here thus in agreement with Spivak[8] that "strategy suits a situation; a strategy is not a theory" (1993, 4). The choice of antiracist strategy must be made by movements themselves as they adapt themselves to diverse circumstances; it does not lie in any kind of hegemonically oriented theory we may wish for vanguards to impose on social movements.

At this point it becomes necessary to account for strategic flexibility. What exactly is meant by strategy itself, and how is it different from tactics? Let us tease out the difference by way of considering what contemporary social movements mean by the curious phrase "diversity of tactics." The concept designates a value among social movement actors. By it, they hint at an open attitude toward the various tactics that actors use in pursuit of social justice. From peaceful assemblies that involve the waving of banners, displaying of signs, and chanting of slogans; to militant barricades that involve black bloc confrontations with state and corporate power; to the subverting of advertisement, which clutters urban landscapes; to the construction of community centres and cooperatives, the diversity of tactics approach opposes the preferential, hierarchical ranking of any of these means of resistance. In the toolbox of the activist *bricoleur*, we find a vast range and combination of such tactics – that is, of means for disrupting and resisting various forms of oppression. Strategy, on the other hand, designates the mode by which such means are arrived at.

I mean by strategy something along the lines of what Michel Foucault means by *discourse*, what Tomas Kuhn means by *paradigm*, and what Karl Mannheim means by *ideology*. I propose that a strategy is an organizing framework that fixes the boundaries of perception and logic toward a certain goal. A strategy is always oriented toward a goal, and it presents us with an overall aim by delimiting the frontiers of intelligibility with that aim in mind. A strategy, strictly speaking, is not a discourse, as it does not join power and knowledge in order to construct subjects (Foucault 2003); nor is it a paradigm, as it does not provide a model for a coherent scientific tradition (Kuhn 1996); nor is it ideology, as it does not designate the underlying political motives and social interests of actors, parties, and movements (Mannheim [1936] 1985). A strategy, however, traverses them all. A strategy is possible only as discourse, or only within a certain type of discursive formation, and a strategy is also a model (in a loose unscientific sense) that like ideology articulates and contains underlying motives and interest, but it is not any one of these things alone. Rather, a strategy "involves a unitary analysis" (May 1994, 10)[9] that delineates the possible range of tactics toward a predefined aim. Thus, when I argue for a strategically flexible antiracism, this is not the same thing as arguing for a diversity of tactics. It is instead an argument in favor of a wider range of frameworks from which tactics are elaborated and from which they receive their tenor. Lastly, drawing on Jacques Derrida, *strategy* in strategically flexible antiracism is non-teleological; it orients tactics only as a "strategy without finality" (1982:7). In this sense it is compatible only with the non-hegemonic affinity-based principles that characterize contemporary anarchist antiracist movements. As I will show in the next section, these movements, in renouncing hegemony as a goal, renounce finality. They do not chase 19th century chimeras such as freedom, emancipation, and revolution. Without

aiming for the complete, total institution of a new world, they work for the radical transformation of the relations in which they find themselves, knowing that all that is possible is a transformation that will land them into new arrangements of power. As such, they are engaged in the potentially endless task of challenging and undoing racism, wherever and in whatever form it may arrive.

Given this, a strategically flexible antiracism defends what Omi and Winant identify (if only in passing) as the problem of "counterposed strategic orientations." Where the hegemony of hegemony privileges only either universalist or differentialist approaches because it recognizes only a single racial antagonism, a strategically flexible antiracism is open to a deeper complexity, to the bewildering possibility that racism itself functions according to contradictory strategies and that any contest with it will necessarily embody contradiction. Following poststructural analysis of the social as "a borderless realm of competing and overlapping organization schemes" (Dumont 2008, 18) implies that we recognize the strategic flexibility of racism itself and refuse the reductive interpretation, popular today, of racism solely as a strategy of colorblindness or colourconsciousness. Poststructuralism demands that we abandon the idea of racism as a single structure that can be overcome when we locate its "centre" with recourse to ultimate referentiality. What the plethora of non-unified and non-totalizing antiracist movements designates is not a crisis of a lacking antiracist core but the fact that racism is too complicated to be reduced to a single, central antagonism. In the face of multiple modalities of racism, contemporary affinity-based antiracist movements must be approached, to draw on Foucault's insights on power, as "a plurality of resistances" (1990, 96). The single choice of strategy, therefore, has to be rejected along with the absolute foundationalist grounds that it is predicated on. With Franklin Adler, strategically flexible antiracism identifies a "false choice… between the particularism of the one side versus the universalism of the other" (1999, 493). It also cannot help but reject the preference, characteristic of the hegemony of hegemony, for strong leaders and intellectual elites. I next turn to case studies of anarchist antifascism and Anarchist People of Color in order to demonstrate how such movements exercise affinity and strategic flexibility, thus bypassing the hegemony of hegemony in antiracism.

Anarchist Antifascism as Universalist Strategy

Anarchist antifascist collectives confront groups that identify themselves as white supremacist, fascist, nationalist, or racist. Drawing on a rich history of antifascist resistance during World War II, antifascism designates the activism of North American and European groups such as Anti-Racist Action, Anti-Fascist Action, Arm the Spirit, Antifa, and Red Action. These groups operate on a consensus or affinity model in that they are decentralized and leaderless, and they bypass

the state as they directly engage in antifascist action. Contemporary anarchist antifascists employ a tactic that activist K. Bullstreet calls a "physical-force policy" (2001, 3). This entails physical confrontations that sometimes result in hand-to-hand fighting with fascists in the streets. Antifascist groups may therefore show up to rallies, convergences, and other functions of fascist movements in order to disrupt them. As one of Anti-Racist Action's "points of unity" announces, "[w]e go where they go: Whenever fascists are organizing or active in public, we're there. We don't believe in ignoring them or staying away from them. Never let the nazis have the street!" (South Side Chicago Anti-Racist Action 2010, 1). The goal of confronting fascism extends to preventing fascism from developing. As Bullstreet reasons, "[b]y crushing the fascists at an early stage I think it is reasonable to assume that Anti-Fascist Action (AFA) has prevented numerous racist attacks and even saved lives. For if the fascists were given the chance to freely march, sell their papers, and appear as a respectable political force they would just grow and grow" (2001, 1).

Antifascist movements may, as such, be thought of as counter-movements. Their goal is to dismantle already existing movements before these grow and seize the state. It should be pointed out that antifascist activists are aware that, as activist Larry Gambone states, "there is no sort of fascist virus hovering about in contemporary society" (2000, 18) that would see white supremacist groups like the Aryan Nations or the World Church of the Creator seizing state power anytime soon; nonetheless, anarchist antifascists are also aware that fascism emerges out of the same circumstances that engender progressive social movements. It is to the prevention of such a fascist emergence that they dedicate themselves. One could say that they have taken to heart Walter Benjamin's observation that "[b]ehind every fascism, there is a failed revolution" (quoted in Fabry 2012, 39) and that it is the failure of their own movement, and of the Left in general, that will allow fascism to succeed.

For anarchist antifascists, the confrontation with fascism is not solely physical. A considerable amount of their work involves analyzing fascism and prefiguring an antifascist culture. Aside from putting on concerts, visiting local schools to give presentations, and distributing flyers at community events, antifascist activists publish numerous pieces that detail the dimensions of their struggles and offer insight into contemporary forms of fascism. Such analyses are not elaborated by organic intellectuals, party members, or any of the other figures associated with counter-hegemonic movements; they are the work of countless activists themselves who participate on the ground and in front of the computer screen. Antifascists articulate their views in pamphlets, discussion documents, and internet websites, which emerge as participants reflect on their activism. As one series of documents states, stressing the unending nature of analyzing and contesting fascism, "[t]he essays presented here should be taken as part of an ongoing, evolving talk within the movement" (Xtn 2002, 1). Judging from the

large quantity of such documents, it can be said that rather than needing intellectual guidance, the movements themselves act as their own intellectuals. Seeking neither to take over/get concessions from state power, nor to lead/unify other movements under a broader antifascist umbrella, anarchist antifascism requires no intellectual elite to lead the cadre.

In terms of strategy, antifascist analyses occupy the space of universalist antiracism. The consensus here is that fascism is a racism that is driven by the need to categorize and hierarchically rank human beings along biologically defined scales of difference. As the activist Don Hamerquist argues, "[t]he physical and social separation of people along racial and ethnic lines is crucial to the fascist worldview" (2002, 62). From his perspective, racism is a deeply divisive practice. It requires the construction of racial categories and our participation in a worldview that maintains that races really do exist. In opposing such a formulation of racism, antifascists understandably adopt a humanist, and even colourblind, perspective. As one pamphlet by a group called Anti-Fascist Forum puts it: "We are acting as citizens to rebuild the ideological and philosophical basis for the liberation of humanity across all borders" (2000, np). In the face of the fascist belief in the "incompatibility of races," the group Anti-Racist Action reacts by upholding a colourblind position: "There is only one 'race' – the human race" (ARA Network 2004). Such a strategy extends to the organizational dynamics and tactics of anarchist antifascist groups, which downplay racial distinctions and present themselves as "multi-racial" crews in composition (The Anti-Racist Action Network 2009).

While the opposition to fascism might form what we could call the "centre" of this current of activism, and while anarchist antifascism operates according to what I identify as universalist antiracist strategy, antifascist activists understand that the struggle against racism must take place along many axes of oppression. That is, anarchist antifascism does not treat racism as a central antagonism. As Xtn of Chicago Anti-Racist Action explains, "[t]aking the fight to fascism – whether in its white supremacist form, in a crypto-fascist fundamentalist variety or perhaps even in forms we have yet to see – cannot be sidelined for the larger struggles, or vice versa" (2002, 13). Xtn thus establishes that antifascism should not be dismissed by radical social movements for "diverting energy away from anti-capitalist struggle" (Xtn 2002, 9) and neither should other struggles be seen as less important by antifascists. Rejecting the centrality of any form of oppression, but specifically of economic oppression as the central oppression from which racism derives, antifascist activists see their work as addressing the need "to develop a more complex analysis and, to be blunt, dump workerist notions that there exists a united proletariat against the bosses" (Xtn 2002, 10). In fact, antifascism is premised on an intersectional and interlocking sensibility that displays an affinity for a non-unified plurality of struggles. Neither class nor race are treated by antifascist activists as central axes of social relations, and fascism

is not considered the only form of racial oppression worth contesting. As the activist Hamerquist observes, "[w]e can't allow a concrete opposition to *the entire range of oppression*, national, sexual, and gender… to be subsumed into a generalized and abstract opposition to a common enemy…" (2002, 63, emphasis mine). Such an orientation, as these activist voices show, removes the need for a single, overarching antiracist approach in favor of strategic flexibility.

Anarchist People of Color as Differentialist Strategy

Anarchist People of Color (henceforth APOC) is not a single group, but a collectivity "created to address issues of race, anti-authoritiarianism [sic], and people of color struggle politics [sic] within the context of anarchism, and to create/increase political safe spaces for people of color" (Anarchist People of Color n.d.). What started as an email list in 2001 by activist Ernesto Aguilar grew in the U.S. into "a loosely organized network of individuals, collectives, and cells" (Anarchist People of Color n.d.). The name APOC, as such, can designate "an individual identity, and a movement. Anyone who is such can claim the acronym apoc" (People of Color Organize! 2011).

Just like anarchist antifascism, APOC is best described in terms of the affinity for affinity. APOC eschews centralization in favor of direct action tactics, which seek neither state power nor to negotiate with it. Direct action marks the preference of APOC to take things into their own hands as they disrupt the flows of state and corporate power and confront racism in its various manifestations. For some APOC, this means standing in solidarity with immigrant workers who are denied services or threatened with further loss of status; for others, it implies opposing racial profiling by the police. The loose organizational structure of APOC means that it can extend like a rhizomatic network into other movements. We can account for this by considering that APOC emerged as discontent mounted over the antiracist approach of the anarchist group Bring the Ruckus. For former members Heather Ajani and Ernesto Aguilar, Bring the Ruckus made their antiracism too dependent on "the participation of white folks, and… [refused] to consider the reality people of color worldwide already understand: masses of whites won't give up their privileges" (2004). Dissatisfied with the way in which Bring the Ruckus made the struggle against racism contingent on the abolishment of whiteness, APOC splintered away; it did so not as a single group, but as a tendency in anarchism itself.

Unlike anarchist antifascism, APOC demonstrates that racism can also be challenged by a differentialist antiracism. To this end, APOC utilizes a highly colourconscious logic – a logic that makes appeals to, rather than downplaying, identity and difference. "There is only one human race" is not a useful rhetorical tactic for APOC. This is because for APOC racism is not only about labeling and dividing people; racism also assumes a liberal-democratic, colourblind tone that

neglects "institutionalized, systematic, and historical oppression" of racial minorities (People of Color Organize! 2012). We can therefore say that APOC opposes not divisive but unifying practices of racism, which variously seek integration and assimilation. Its focus is not so much on fascist and nationalist inspired racism as it is on the racism which operates without any easily identifiable racists. I have in mind the racism which marginalizes non-whites in subtle, indirect, and covert ways as it includes them in corporate hierarchies, government bureaucracies, and, even, social movements. It makes sense, as such, that given that there is a racism which pretends not to be racist, or stated differently, that there is a racism which can be experienced without being easily seen, the experiences of people of colour are valued by APOC.

Without recourse to a vanguard and in line with differentialist strategy, APOC draws on what the activist freelark describes as "the epistemic privilege of the oppressed" (2010). That is, APOC privileges "the unique knowledge that an oppressed group has" (freelark 2010) of its own racial subordination. Just as women may recognize the day-to-day experience of sexism, and gays and lesbians have firsthand understanding of homophobia, APOC maintains that people of colour have insights to offer about the everyday, inner-workings of racism. Accordingly, APOC websites and documents are rich in firsthand accounts about what it is like to be a person of colour in a white supremacist society. The differentialist antiracism of APOC implies that identity, even if created by racial discourse, cannot be simply dismissed as a social construct (Law 2010). Instead, racial identity, which operates in a racialized world, is the basis from which radical politics can be elaborated, especially against universalist racism.

As Aguilar observes, "the anarchist movement is a long way from being egalitarian" (2003). From my reading, some of the most progressive work performed by APOC involves challenging racism *within* the anarchist movement itself. Drawing on the epistemic privilege of the oppressed, APOC present a serious challenge to anarchist organizing that goes beyond simply noting that the movement is dominated by white people or that anarchism places whiteness (even as the thing to be abolished!) at the centre of antiracist projects. To this end, APOC has developed micropolitical critiques of the relations of oppression as they play out within the organizational dynamics of radical social movements. In doing so, APOC can be seen to be providing "specific analyses of concrete situations of oppression" (May 2011, 41). Many APOC activists have noted, as activist Bridget Todd observes, that racism within social movements "exists as a kind of pathological denial of the privilege in which white progressive activists are actively rooted" (2011). Self-identified white antiracist activists perpetuate white privilege, as APOC analyses indicate, by "*fetish*[*izing*] people of color struggles" (People of Color Organize! 2011); *tokenizing* people of colour by asking them to join movements in order to make

them more diverse (freelark 2010); *expecting to be educated* by people of colour on racism while reveling in white guilt (Toi 2012) and *acting on behalf* of people of colour without obtaining their consent (People of Color Organize! 2011). All of this points to the fact that anarchist movements replicate the very structures of oppression they seek to contest, and that "favoritism toward whites" within social movements (Olson 2012, 50) needs to be contested. To be sure, APOC have challenged white privilege in such movements as Occupy, Bring the Ruckus, Love and Rage, and CrimethInc. When anarchist groups are confronted by the fact that "many people of color do not feel comfortable in almost all-white spaces" (Law 2010), the reactions, as APOC literature attests to, range from *discomfort* and the eventual shifting of topics towards class oppression (freelark 2010); to the *denial* that "anything can be done about POC members feeling unsafe" (Toi 2012), or that white activists are responsible for colonialism (People of Color Organize! 2011); to even *outrage* at what white anarchists perceive as "divisiveness" (Olson 2012, 50) and "reverse racism" (Toi 2012) within the movement.

While "Euro-centric anarchism" (People of Color Organize! 2011) seems to be alive and well, we would do well to end the discussion by noting two promising developments. The first is the emergence of a body of knowledge which, as a result of the work of groups like APOC, provides much needed information on racism and white privilege within the anarchist movement. Although, APOC literature indicates that white anarchists still have a long way to go, we at least have a starting point for how to act in solidarity – that is, for how white and non-white anarchists can work together. It seems the starting point is the willingness to recognize the structural privileges of whiteness. Being able to see that whiteness implies that whites cannot not be racist (at least not while residing in European and white settler societies) is the precondition for further developing anarchist relations across the colour line. The second positive development consists of the very fact that APOC emerged. Historically, such a group designates a new phenomenon on the anarchist scene, creating openings for others like it. With its emergence we finally witnessed APOC conferences and other events organized as "people of color only" spaces, as well as the much needed continuation of resistance against colourblind racism within, and outside of, the anarchist movement.

Conclusion

The antiracist anarchist movements that I have identified here – anarchist antifascism and Anarchist People of Color – are indicative of a displacement of the hegemony of hegemony. Along with poststructural theory, they reveal a way out of Gramscian-inspired antiracism by challenging the idea that racism is the fundamental problem or that there is only one kind of racism; that intellectual vanguards with well-developed analyses are needed to lead social

movements; and that the state is the most important site for the contestation of racism itself. In their affinity based prefigurative practices, anarchist antiracist movements show us that resistance to racism can be carried out according to a number of strategies. Affinity in antiracism, as I have shown, is thus best conceptualized in terms of strategic flexibility. Utilizing what, following Taguieff, I identify as universalist strategy, antifascist anarchist groups oppose colourconscious racist practices, while along the lines of differentialist strategy, APOC brings attention to colourblind racist practices. Both movements, as such, can be seen as operating on the basis of a strategically flexible antiracism that refuses to privilege either strategy as *the* strategy.

The fact that the hegemony of hegemony is firmly in place in antiracism today means that racism cannot be adequately contested or, at least, identified and known in academic theory and analyses. The way that actually existing antiracist social movements engage in strategic flexibility is sidelined in favor of developing "theoretical clarity about racial dynamics" (Omi and Winant 1986, 102). As long as antiracists continue to theorize only from the perspective of differentialist or universalist strategy, mischaracterizations will be reproduced in antiracism. Such mischaracterizations manifest themselves, for example, in a tendency to denounce colourblindness in the United States. The focus for the majority of contemporary American theorists of antiracism seems to be on resisting what they identify as colourblind or post-racial perspectives. To draw on Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, "this new ideology has become a formidable political tool for the maintenance of the racial order. Much as Jim Crow racism served as the glue for defending a brutal and overt system of racial oppression in the pre-Civil Rights era, color-blind racism serves today as the ideological armor for a covert and institutionalized system in the post-Civil Rights era" (2006, 3). What Bonilla-Silva misses, however, is that both racist and antiracist discourses can make use of colorblindness even in the post-Civil Rights era. By directing our attention solely to colourblind or universalist forms of racism, as American sociology and antiracist theory is wont to do, we lose sight of the complex ways in which racism manifests itself also according to colourconscious strategies, and, equally, how our own antiracism also maintains, and relies on, certain racial myths. The temptation to relegate to the past certain ideologies and strategies of racism, on the basis that these belonged more securely to another era, fails us as such an approach cannot take into account the discontinuities, accidents, and cul-de-sacs of history. A hegemony of hegemony in antiracism, as such, prevents us from considering that it is not a matter of wishing away or using racial identity but, as anarchist antiracist movements show us, of knowing when to use identity in an adequately antiracist way and when to abandon it.

Rather than seeking a coherent antiracist whole, we would do less violence to antiracism if we approached social movements in their already existing complexity. We need to learn to see that by being flexible and employing

"counterposed strategic orientations," antiracist anarchists are, in fact, extending the front against racism, and they are doing so precisely by avoiding counter-hegemonic unity. It seems we are, as such, not in need of a unified antiracist theory; what we do need is a lot more of what we already have – that is, non-unified, decentralized, leaderless movements that bypass the need for a single response or a single strategy against racism.

Endnotes

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[2] Day's witty coinage of "hegemony of hegemony" denotes hegemony becoming hegemonic. The phrase must be read in the twofold sense of a preference for the large scale revolutionary transformation of the entire social order that has itself become large scale within social movement theory.

[3] The injunction becomes explicit in Floya Anthias and Cathie Lloyd's, *Rethinking Anti-racisms: From theory to practice*. Its aim, the editors tell us, is "to consider new ways of thinking about anti-racism and how they impact on anti-racist political practice" (2002, 1).

[4] The debt is acknowledged openly: "In our view, the concept of hegemony, through which the dominant social forces acquire the consent of the subordinate ones, in itself presumes and autonomous civil society and a limited capacity for state 'intervention' into the realm of 'micro-politics,' since this 'consent' is not given stupidly or blindly but because the needs, interests and ideas of the subordinate groups are actively incorporated and taken into account in the organization of society" (Omi and Winant 1991, 170 n.22).

[5] It is for this reason that we may prefer to characterize the antiracism of Omi and Winant as "Gramscian influenced" as opposed to "Gramscian."

[6] As we shall see, Omi and Winant also identify only a particular type of racism as the central antagonism. We may deduce that a vanguard is needed to not only identify the centre (racism) of their political universe but to also specify its nature.

[7] Systemic, or institutional, racism is a kind of racism that takes place in institutions (police departments, colleges and universities, places of employment, etc.) that, while appearing to be inclusive and equal, end ups privileging and preserving the interests of the dominant group. Systemic racism has the distinct quality of not looking like racism at first sight. In fact, it works better if those who practice it are not even aware of their role in it. Consider, for example, the current Canadian debate concerning the Parti Québécois' proposed Charter of Quebec Values. In the alleged interest of secularism, the Charter would ban civil servants and public employees from displaying "ostentatious" religious symbols while on the job. To familiarize us with their plan, the party produced a helpful poster that includes illustrations of prohibited expressions of faith. In the interest of being fair, they have included in the poster, along the veiled Muslim woman and Turban-wearing Sikh man, a picture of a chest bearing a large Christian crucifix. On the surface, the Charter seems to fairly target all major religious

groups while its systemic racism is obvious when we consider that the ban would not actually affect Christians (other than, of course, Christian monks who actually do wear large crucifixes but who are not likely to apply for jobs in the public sector), but it would adversely affect Muslims and Sikhs. Again, there is nothing blatantly racist about this, and this is the point: systemic racism works best when the employees and party members who institute it are not committed racists but are simply interested in fairly applying the rules to all.

[8] Spivak develops one of the most well-known accounts of the progressive essential uses of identity. She argues in favor of what she calls *strategic essentialism* that pertains to "[t]he strategic use of an essence as a mobilizing slogan or a masterword like *woman* or *worker* or the name of a nation" (Spivak 1993, 3, emphasis in original). Given that she understands that strategic essentialism is only an elaboration of a strategy that is not "good for all cases" (Spivak 1993, 4), I do not place her – despite the fact that she explicitly orients herself in terms of Gramscian hegemony – as a hegemonic proponent of differentialist antiracism. She is, to be sure, under the sway of the hegemony of hegemony, but her nuanced account of strategy falls under my notion of strategic flexibility. Perhaps with Spivak my own argument encounters a limit, or perhaps it is the case that we already have in Spivak a less-than-fully realized contestation of Gramscian hegemony. The fact that she "believe[s] in undermining the vanguardism of theory" (Spivak 1993, 15) certainly should give us cause to consider the latter possibility.

[9] I am deliberately misreading May here who speaks of strategy only in terms of *strategic political philosophy*, which unlike me, he does not attribute to theoretical traditions that he defines in terms of *tactical political philosophy* and *formal political philosophy* (1994). To be clear, I accept May's definition of strategy, but I reject his grouping of only certain traditions under this "strategic" heading. For an in-depth critique of May's taxonomy, see Nathan Jun's *Anarchism and Political Modernity* (2012).

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