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**The Re-Invigoration of Pan-Africanism: A critique of
Kwame Anthony Appiah's *In My Father's House***

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DECLARATION

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1. Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to show the drawbacks that African intellectualism has suffered under the banner of Pan-Africanism, and to attempt finding a common ground where Pan-Africanist nationalism can be redirected to a more critical discourse for African intellectualism. Using Kwame Anthony Appiah's *In My Father's House: Africa in the philosophy of Culture*, I will outline what Appiah stated in his work as the problems facing African intellectualism, and how those shortcomings can be rectified to redirect Pan-Africanism to a more critical discourse.

Pan-Africanism is a term that was first alluded to by W.E.B Du Bois when in 1897 he wrote a paper titled 'The Conservation of Races' where he coined the term 'Pan-Negroism'. In his paper, Du Bois described that "the differences among races were spiritual physical differences" (Appiah, Gates 1999: 1485). In 1900, a Trinidadian born Londoner by the name of Henry Sylvester Williams organized a gathering in London, where representatives from Africa and the diaspora gathered to discuss the state of the Negro race. It was here that the term Pan-Africanism was created.

In 1919 Du Bois organized the Pan-African Congress in Paris which aimed to once again bring together Africans and Africans in the diaspora to "promote the cause of African independence" (Appiah, Gates 1999: 1484). Du Bois and his contemporaries, the likes of Rev. Alexander Crummell and Wilmot E. Blyden were the first wave of Pan-Africanists, they were the founding fathers of Pan Africanism. In 1921 and in 1923 three more Pan-African Congresses were held in London, Brussels and Paris which were facilitated by Du Bois. In 1945, the fifth Pan-African Congress was held in Manchester, this time being facilitated by Kwame Nkrumah. It wasn't until 1947 that the sixth Pan-African Congress was held in Tanzania this time facilitated by Julius Nyerere.

The shift that Pan-Africanism took after 1945 is important. After 1945, African colonies were gaining independence, and "Pan-Africanism became an ideology through which relations among the newly independent states could be thought about... in the same period black intellectuals in North America were taken up with questions of civil rights" (Appiah, Gates 1999: 1487). It was during this time that the second wave of Pan-Africanists intellectuals were formed. It was the second generation, the likes of Aime Cesaire, Leopold Sedar Senghor and Molefi kete Asante, that took up the mantle of continuing Pan-Africanism. They aimed at instilling pride in their African heritage that had previously been degraded by Europeans. However, as I will show below, the first and second generation Pan-Africanists created an intellectual block that continuing generations needs to break.

This intellectual block is evident in the works of Senghor's Negritude and Asante's Afrocentricity, where the use of racial endowments characterises the capabilities of a whole race. This was a noble attempt at restoring the dignity of the African people, but in doing so, they created a discourse that was flawed and stagnant. It is, I think, the third generation Pan-Africanist intellectual that should aim to reinvigorate Pan-Africanism from its slumber.

It has become glaringly apparent that we live in a much smaller world than the first and second generation. We have seen how technology has made access to information easier and "the existence of global media means we can know about one another and global interconnections ... mean we can (indeed we inevitably *will*) affect one another. So now we really need a cosmopolitan spirit" (Appiah 2008: 88-89). The importance of reinvigorating Pan-Africanism, I think, lies in knowing how to go about creating a discourse that is robust and interactive. Pan-Africanism needs to rethink how it interacts with the world.

In My Father's House creates a space for this to happen, by critiquing Pan-Africanism Appiah manoeuvres through the intricate history of Pan-Africanism, and shows how its reliance on race and reactionary doctrines created a discourse that remained highly uncritical. Appiah criticises Pan-Africanist works for attempting to revert back how things were instead of progressing forward given the state of things. However, Appiah may have thrown the baby out with the bath water. The works of Bantu Steve Biko and Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, fellow second generation Pan-Africanists, have created a base on which to build onto for the third generation cosmopolitan Pan-Africanist intellectual.

I will begin by looking at the foundation of Pan-Africanism. I will examine how the works and attitudes of the founding fathers influenced the direction of Pan-Africanism. I will focus specifically on Rev. Alexander Crummell (1819-1898), Wilmot E. Blyden (1832-1912), and W.E.B Du Bois (1868-1963), as these are the three founding fathers mentioned by Appiah.

In chapter three I will discuss the role of Bantu Steve Biko's Black Consciousness and how it can conscientize blacks in Africa and the diasporas of the legacy of colonialism, Apartheid and the founding fathers.... In this chapter I aim to show that Pan-Africanist solidarity can be used without referring to dangerous racial connotations.

In the fourth chapter I will examine the work of Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and use two of his major books, namely, *Moving the Centre: Struggle for Cultural Freedom* and *Decolonizing the Mind*, and *The Politics of Language in African Literature*. I will be looking at the role of nativism, which Appiah criticized, and the role that language and the concept of the nation has played in building intellectualism in Africa. I will also examine how the challenge of universalism and particularisms has

influenced African intellectualism, and how nativism has prompted the African intellectual to search for a national culture that is progressive.

In closing, I will look at how African intellectualism can progress into a cosmopolitan world without losing any of its particularity. I will use Appiah's subsequent book *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers* to show that cosmopolitanism can be a viable progression for Africa in academic as well as cultural way.

2. Pitfalls of Pan-Africanism

In this chapter I aim to show that Africa's intellectual past did not only produce a racist Pan-African movement, it also created a plethora of inferiority complexes. The inferiority complexes created by the colonial experience were not only the doings of Westerners, the Negro played an important role in undermining the value and intelligence of his own people. Negroes like Wilmot Edward Blyden and Reverend Alexander Crummell had very low opinions of Africa, her people and cultures. Other intellectuals distorted Africa's past, intellectuals like Cheikh Anta Diop and Molefi Kete Asante created an unsubstantiated African (Negro) past of Egyptian dynasties. If African intellectuals are to look forward progressively, they must do so with healthy dose of scepticism and close critical reflection.

Appiah is very vague on the path African intellectualism should take towards the future in the book, *In My Father's House*. However, given his latter writing, *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*, it is probable that Appiah reckons that Africa should let go of nationalism and particularity and adopt a more cosmopolitan outlook. Cosmopolitanism, Appiah says "begins with the simple idea that in the human community, as in the national communities, we need to develop habits of coexistence: conversations in its older meaning: of living together, association" (Appiah 2006: xvii). This is a very admirable endeavour, but it is not a simple one, to further quote Appiah:

The challenge, then, is to take the minds and hearts formed over the long millennia of living in local troops and equip them with ideas and institutions that will allow us to live together as the global tribe we have become. (Appiah 2006: xi)

In order for Africa to join this global tribe, Africa must cleanse herself of all the misfortunes and hatred that once plagued her. For if Africa is to be looked upon as an equal in this global tribe, she must not have any distorting features and she must know her worth and value as an equal without any inferiority complexes.

There has to be a bridge that connects African intellectualism to cosmopolitanism. There must be a re-invigoration of Pan- African intellectualism, a cleansing of inferiorities and a cleansing of reactionary African doctrines. By reactionary I mean doctrines that react to Western pedagogy in much the same way as the West has reacted to Africa. This bridge must be a systematic conscientizing of African people of their intrinsic value and worth. For this I will use Steve Biko's Black Consciousness (BC). Biko's BC is not a reactionary doctrine, it does not stress racial solidarity and allegiance, although it does call for racial solidarity, it avoids many of the negative connotations

of most Pan-Africanist writing. Black Consciousness will serve as part of the bridge. Black Consciousness will be the conscientizing project that African intellectuals and Africa need as a whole.

To further understand this, it is important to look at the foundations of Pan-Africanism and the trajectory of African intellectualism, and Appiah does an impeccable task in laying them out. He begins with the founders of Pan-Africanism. This is important because we see how their attitudes towards Africa were very much the same as most Westerners. Another important factor to note is that the founders were New World Negroes. By New World I mean Negroes who were exported out of Africa (mainly through the slave trade) and were born, bred and educated in the West. When Pan-Africanism takes form in Africa, and becomes the project of the native African or the Old World Negro, it takes a different form. Although the Old World Negro still reveres the New World founders of Pan-Africanism, they take more pride in their indigenous African roots, and this is due, in large parts, to the Old World Negro's intimate understanding of indigenous African traditions and culture.

Yet even with such an understanding, Old World Negroes also had some form of Western institutional training, and as such, they also fall prey to Western entrenchment, and it is their reaction to Western pedagogy that best reveals their own entrenchment.

In the next section I give an account of the New World Negroes that established the Pan-African movement. I attempt to show that their attitude towards their 'fatherland' was a negative and extremely shallow one, and even though they are still revered and respected as the founding fathers of Pan-Africanism, the legacy they left is one that crippled Africa and her intellectual prospects.

2.1. The Legacy of the New World

There is no absolute or essential superiority on the one side, nor absolute or essential inferiority on the other side. It is a question of difference of endowment and difference of destiny. No amount of training or culture will make the Negro a European; on the other hand, no lack of training or deficiency of culture will make the European a Negro. The two races are not moving in the same groove... but [are] on parallel lines... they are not *identical*... they are *distinct but equal*

-Wilmot E. Blyden

There is a certain ambiguity in Blyden's words in the quote above. In making a Negro a European, this requires training, but in making a European a Negro, this requires a "deficiency of culture". This on its own, summarizes the impact of New World Negro's relationship with the West and their attitude towards Africa. The West is portrayed as a place to be idolized whereas Africa is a place that needs to be trained and shaped with Western teachings. This attitude was brought into the creation and preservation of Pan-Africanism.

The attitude of most New World Negroes towards Africa was not one that embraced indigenous Africa. Although they sympathized with Africa and her colonial situation, they did not think Africa in her current state was adequate. New World Negro African nationalists had very elaborate strategies on how Africa would be saved and cleansed from her savage nature. Wilmot Edward Blyden, an African nationalist and founding father of Pan-Africanism, suggested that European colonialism was the most effective way of cleansing Africa of her barbaric ways. He praised European colonialism, claiming that 'the European project of colonizing Africa was an economic investment for it would determine "the continuation of the prosperity of Europe"' (Mudimbe 1988: 101). Blyden was under the misguided notion that European colonialism would trade with Africa, Africa would provide raw materials and Europe would in turn have "the philanthropic impulse to lift up the million of that continent to their proper position among the intellectual and moral forces of the world" (Mudimbe 1988: 100).

Blyden's naivety was short lived. After witnessing the atrocities of colonialism, he maintained that Liberia (and later Africa) should be colonialized, but not by Europeans, rather by New World Negroes. Europe and America would play an administrative role, to quote Blyden:

Let the Republic [Liberia and Sierra Leone] retain her Executive, Legislative and Judicial Departments. But let America take her under her wing for the time being. Let the British officers supervise the Customs and treasury Departments. Let the French manage the Frontier Force under Liberian financial responsibility. Let America appoint a high commissioner for Liberia – an experienced Southern man, if possible, surround him with the necessary white American officials to help. Abolish the American Legation at Monrovia, or put the white man at the head. The High Commissioner should review the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial decision before they are sanctioned" (Mudimbe 1988: 116)

Blyden placed no faith in a native African to be capable of the processes required for the administration of this 'civilizing' task of colonialism. He suggested that a southern or New World Negro man from the South should be appointed as high commissioner, and this is derived from Blyden's persistent insistence on the New World Negro colonizing Africa, along with this, a temporal administrative colonialism of the West. Blyden campaigned extensively for the immigration of the New World Negro from America and the Diaspora to his/her rightful place in Africa, to colonize Africa and embark on a civilizing mission in Africa.

The American Colonization Society as it was called, of which Blyden and Crummell were supporters, was a project undertaken by the New World Negro to escape white dominance and rule in the

Diaspora and retreat to a place where the Negro will self-govern. Blyden gave many justifications and motives for New World Negroes, “the motives were sometimes financial [and] sometimes psychological” (Mudimbe 1988: 104). Mudimbe goes on to quote from a letter Blyden wrote to the Secretary of the American Colonization Society giving his motivation for New World Negro immigration:

I would be glad if you point out to Africans in America these two facts:

- 1. There is great wealth in their fatherland of which if they do not soon avail themselves, others will get the first pick and perhaps occupy the finest sites.*
- 2. Only in connection with Liberia or a properly established Negro nationality can they even attain true manhood and equality. (Mudimbe 1988: 104)*

Blyden sees Africa as the ‘fatherland’ where other Negroes in the Diaspora can find equality and manhood. Africa, to Blyden, is the home of the Negro. This is misleading considering his attitude towards Africa, which is reflective of a lost wanderer finding a home, but a home that must still be tidied and cleaned before it is completely inhabitable. He finds no value in Africa aside from the value that those civilized by Western teaching are willing to bring. He sees potential in an Africa that is cleansed by the Western language, by Christianity or Islam and/or by a form of colonization.

New World Negroes would arrive with a sense of superiority and look down upon the peasants they were yet to cleanse with the New World tools that were to be looked at with admiration and longing. These attitudes have rippled through generations, in just as much the same way as Pan-Africanist’s intrinsic racism (which will be dealt with below) has rippled through from its founders to its successors. Africans have learned to look upon Western tools with a sense of longing and a sense of inadequacy in themselves and their indigenous cultures as well as their vernacular tongue. This is a factor that Ngugi Wa Thiong’o reflects on heavily, how the imposition of European languages places vernacular languages in a secondary or low position. Ngugi goes on to say “By doing so they make the acquisition of their tongue, a status symbol, anyone who learns it begins to despise the peasant majority and their barbaric tongue” (Ngugi 1986: 72). This sense of inadequacy is a prominent feature in African intellectualism as well as African life that has to be dealt with from the foundation upwards, and it is a major feature that is lacking in Appiah’s critique of Pan-Africanism.

According to Langley, there were, however, New World Negroes that were not in support of Blyden’s emigration mission, and these were the likes of Fredrick Douglas and Martin Delany, and they were commonly referred to as the assimilationists. These Negro slave abolitionists fought for their right to citizenship in America, and to be integrated into America as citizens. “[Delany] criticized Liberia’s

dependence on the American Colonization society, which he suspected was an agent of slave interests – a view Blyden rejected” (Langley 1973: 20). The West was in support of the emigrationists, this interest was aimed at ridding themselves of overzealous and ‘radical’ Negro abolitionists that sought to start trouble. Delany and his assimilationists preferred to stay in America and fight slavery from American soil. In a letter Delany wrote to the African Civilization Society he said:

The African Civilization Society says to us go to Africa civilize the native, become planters, merchants, compete with the slave States in the Liverpool cotton market, and thus break down American slavery. To which we simply and briefly reply, ‘we prefer to remain in America’... no one idea has given rise to more oppression and persecution towards the colored people of this country than that which makes Africa, not America, their home. (Langley 1973: 21)

I think Blyden’s cause would have been a noble one if his objective was not to use the same colonization strategy used by Europeans. If his mission was of a trade, or exploration of cultures and not of a radical cleansing mission, that is no different than the French cultural assimilation process in Francophone colonies. These African Nationalist Negroes, had the same intentions as the Europeans: to gain wealth, to rule over a people that they sought to assimilate into a culture that they saw (due to their European education) as superior. They would teach the African native the European tongue, more especially, the English tongue, or what Blyden called “the language of conquest – not of physical conquest but of moral and intellectual conquest” (Mudimbe 1988: 102). English would introduce Christianity to Africa, but “he only regretted that on African shores, English, like other European languages, has come to the greater portion of the natives associated with profligacy, plunder, and cruelty and devoid of any connections with spiritual things” (Ibid).

For Blyden English and colonization would prompt the native to work and become productive:

The native African, like all Oriental or tropical people can see no reason or property in extra work, as long as he has enough to supply his wants. But he is imitative. And as the English language is diffused in his country, vivified by its domiciliation on the American continent. . . the native will be raised unconsciously; and, in spite of hereditary tendencies and surroundings, will work, not, then, in order to enjoy repose – the dolce farniente – but to be able to do more work, and to carry out higher objects. (Mudimbe 1988: 102).

This would be the miracle of English on the African continent, it would rid the native of his days of idle pleasant relaxation and prompt him/her to strive towards more formidable endeavours. This

attitude has within it a healthy dose of European influence. Being born, bred and educated within the European community, it is expected that both Blyden and his comrade Rev. Alexander Crummell theorized in much the same way as their European counterparts. As C. H Lyons rightly says “in seeking to answer the racists in their own terms, Blyden developed a theory of race which, while vindicating the black man, derived an uncomfortably large measure of inspiration from nineteenth-century European race-thinking” (Mudimbe 1988: 129). A Negro African nationalist was blindly fuelling the fire he naively thought he was fighting, “his racial theory was simply a relativization of the supposed superiority of the categories white, civilized, and Christian” (ibid). This is, however to be expected, given his Western training, as Appiah puts it:

It is tremendously important, I think, to insist on how natural Crummell's view was, given his background and education. However much he hoped for Africa, however much he gave it of his life, he could not escape seeing it above all else as heathen and savage. Every book with any authority he ever read about Africa would have confirmed this judgment. And we see how inescapable these beliefs were when we reflect that every one of the ideas I have traced in Crummell can also be found in the writings of Edward W Blyden... a man who was, with Africanus Horton (from the Old World) and Martin Robinson Delany (from the New World) one of three contemporaries of Crummell's who could also lay claim to the title of “Father of Pan-Africanism” (Appiah 1992: 21)

Their attempt at creating an African nationalism mimicked European nationalism. They were regurgitating what they learned from the “*Encyclopédie*”, which had, according to Appiah, negative misconceptions of natives as “idolaters, [who are] superstitious, and live most filthy; they are lazy, drunken rascals, without a thought for the future” (Appiah 1992: 22). And from this observation made by Europeans, Blyden and Crummell conjured up their opinion of Africa and her natives. Their fixation on the ‘cleansing’ of Africa from filth and idleness led them into murky waters. Blyden’s fixation with Islam as a vehicle to expand civilization as a second preference to Christianity led him to accepting the negative connotations that ran with Islam.

Both Blyden and Crummell revered Islam, but Blyden more so than Crummell. He saw Islam as Africa’s ticket out of paganism. Moslems were, according to Blyden, the superior African, “wherever the Moslem is found on this coast... he looks upon himself as a separate and distinct being from his Pagan neighbour, and immeasurably superior in intellectual and moral respects” (Mudimbe 1988: 121). Blyden admired the homogenous nature of Islam, which contrasted sharply with the rest of Africa’s diverse cultures and religions, “there are no caste distinctions among them, nor tribal barriers” (Mudimbe 1988: 114). Africa with her many languages and disparate cultures and

traditions was a sign of inferiority to Blyden, and even though Blyden was a slave abolitionist, he was impartial to 'Kaffir' enslavement. Blyden himself writes:

Slavery and the slave trade are laudable, provided the slaves are Kaffirs, but the slave who embraces Islam is free, and no office is closed against him on account of his servile blood.
(Mudimbe 1988: 114-115).

If Christianity would not facilitate civilization, Islam would, and any Kaffir willing to embrace the superior culture of Islam immunized themselves from the terror of enslavement. This, from a slave abolitionist is ambiguous. A further ambiguity is the practice of Islam and the use of the English tongue. English is a seldom used lingo in Islamic states, and the merger of the two would mean that those new English/Islamic states would wonder off on a tangent from established Islamic states in search of suitable amalgamation formula. From whichever vantage point, this would not leave the newly established Islamic states uncontaminated.

English was believed to be "the most suitable of the European languages for bridging over the numerous gulfs between the tribes caused by great diversity of languages or dialect among them" (Appiah 1992: 21). English would be the tongue that would civilize Africa, and "Crummell's use of the term *civilization* is characteristic of educated Victorian Englishmen or Americans" (Appiah 1992: 20). This opinion was shared by many Pan-Africanist New World Negros. Crummell and Blyden held to this opinion more vigorously.

W.E.B Du Bois, however was not explicitly implicated in this, he was however a man who was very well acquainted with Victorian life. In an introduction to W.E.B Du Bois' book *Dusk of Dawn*, edited by Henry Lewis Gates, Gates described Du Bois as a man who "talked like an extraordinarily well-educated late Anglo American Victorian" (Gates 2007: xii). In the same edition, Appiah writes an extensive introduction describing Du Bois as "an elitist and a dandy" (Gates 2007: xxvii) who was so taken by Victorian swagger that "someone once suggested, only partly in jest, that his wife probably called him Dr. Du Bois even in bed. He was an elitist and a dandy, one who developed the notion that the African American community should be led by what he called the Talented Tenth" (Gates 2007: xxvii).

In his plea for the Talented Tenth, Du Bois begins by saying "The Negro race, like all races, is going to be saved by its exceptional men" (Du Bois 1903: 1). With himself as a prime example, these exceptional men would "be schooled in the colleges and universities of the land" (Du Bois 1903). Needless to say these institutions would be much the same institutions where Du Bois himself received his education. Booker T Washington criticized Du Bois' Talented Tenth, claiming that it is

elitist and only aims to produce educated Negroes who are only concerned with their own well-being and wealth. Du Bois responds by noting that in order for Washington to be the leader he is,

He has as helper the son of a negro senator, trained in Greek and the humanities, and graduated from Harvard, the son of a Negro congressman and lawyer trained in Latin and Mathematics, and graduated at Oberlin; he has a wife, a woman who read Virgil and Homer in the same classroom with me... indeed some thirty of his chief teachers are college graduates, and instead of studying French grammar in the midst of weeds, or buying pianos for dirty cabins, they are at Mr. Washington's right hand doing noble work (Du Bois 1903: 15).

Mr Washington's helpers optimize the calibre of men to be produced by the Talented Tenth, educated men who have read Homer, Virgil and trained in the arts and in Latin. The Talented Tenth would be educated, Du Bois seems to imply, in Victorian literature and European arts. It is worth noting, however, that Du Bois' theory of education is not as shallow as Blyden's or Crummell's. Du Bois had a more open-minded approach to education:

education should at least involve essentially three things: first, a critical knowledge of the past, that is, critical study of African as well as "world" history; second, questions of culture, "cultural study," as Du Bois put it, and critical cultural inquiry; and last, an understanding of present and future vital needs of not only continental and diasporan Africans but also of humanity as a whole (Rabaka 2003: 400).

Du Bois did not hold as much of a low conception of Africa as Crummell and Blyden did, but he did according to Appiah, foster a racist attitude within Pan-Africanism. Du Bois' definition of race is scientific, and as has been noted, even during Du Bois' time, defining race by the colour of one's skin and blood lineages was a mistake. The Enlightenment intellectuals used the scientific definition of race to encourage racialism, white superiority, colonialism, slavery and any other indignities suffered by the Negro race (and many other colonized states in the world). Yet we find Du Bois using that very definition to encourage Negro solidarity, he insists that even though there may be no scientific definition, there are certain differences that prompt the division of races:

At all times, however, they have divided human beings into races, which, while they perhaps transcend scientific definition, nevertheless, are clearly visible to the eye of the historian and sociologist. If this be true then the history of the world is the history not of individuals but of groups, not of nations, but of races... What then is race? It is a vast family of human beings, generally of common blood and language, always of common history, traditions and

impulses, who are both voluntarily and involuntarily striving together for the accomplishment of certain more or less vividly conceived ideals of life (Appiah 1992: 29).

Appiah's criticism lies in Du Bois use of 'common blood'. By claiming that race is based on common blood lineage, he does not, despite his best efforts, transcend the scientific definition of race. This, to Appiah, shows Du Bois' racist legacy within the Pan-Africanist philosophy. Du Bois' grouping of races into 'common blood' only awakens the Enlightenment myth of racial differences that had been silenced and throws it straight into Pan-Africanism.

Appiah does not only direct this criticism to Du Bois but to Blyden and Crummell as well. Their racist attitudes were forwarded into Pan-Africanist doctrines in Africa and the Diaspora, influencing Afrocentricity, Negritude and the Egyptianists. Blyden went as far as advocating for racial purity, excluding mulattos. Mudimbe captures this feature of Blyden's thought fittingly:

Blyden equated "purity" of race with "purity" of personality or blood. This accounts for his racist position about mulattos. He wrote, for example, against "the introduction on a very large scale of the blood of the oppressors among their victims" denied even the possibility of a union between "the pure Negroes and the mulatto" (Mudimbe 1988: 119)

This could suffice as a paragraph out of a Nazi eugenics program, and Appiah is correct in criticizing Pan-Africanism for adopting racist tendencies. To Blyden, Mudimbe says, "East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet" (Mudimbe 1988: 106). The future of Pan-Africanism should not be based on the same legacy left by the enlightenment. Prominent Enlightenment figures such as J.S Mill and Jeremy Bentham "advocated for colonization as the best means to economic and social improvement at home" (Mudimbe 1988: 101), and Blyden followed that trend, and here we see how he is, once again falling into the same mode of thought as those he thought he was against.

What is important to note, however, and Appiah outlines this well enough, are the differences between the racism exhibited in Pan-Africanism and the racism exhibited in Western oppression. Pan-Africanism has what Appiah called intrinsic racism:

Intrinsic racists are people who differentiate morally between members of different races, because they believe that each race has a different moral status, quite independent of the moral characteristics entailed by its "racial essence" racial essence being "members of [a certain] race [who] share certain traits and tendencies with each other that do not share with members of any other race (Appiah 1992: 14).

Intrinsic racism is associated with having a family bond with members of your own race, as Crummell holds, “[r]aces, like families, are the organisms and ordinances of God... The extinction of the race family is the extinction of a family feeling. Indeed, a race is a family” (Appiah 1992: 17). As romantic as this may sound it does have its own downsides. According to Appiah “intrinsic racism is... a moral error. Even if racialism were correct, the bare fact that someone was of another race would be no reason to treat them worse – or better – than someone of my race” (Appiah 1992: 18). Having a family feeling towards members of your race creates unnecessary and unsubstantiated biases, “the moral status of close family members is not normally thought of in most cultures as depending on qualities of character: we are supposed to love our brothers and sisters in spite of their faults and not because of their virtues” (Appiah 1992: 17).

On the other side of the spectrum, are extrinsic racists:

[Who] make moral distinctions between members of different races because they believe that the racial essence entails certain morally relevant qualities... the basis for extrinsic racist discrimination between people is their belief that members of different races differ in respects that warrant the differential treatment- respects like honesty or courage or intelligence, that are uncontroversially held... to be acceptable as a basis for treating people differently (13).

Extrinsic racists differ in that they may at times use violent measures to enforce their ideology, whereas an intrinsic racist may not. Furthermore, if an extrinsic racist is shown sufficient evidence of the falsity of their racist claims, they should abandon their campaign, and see reason, and failure to do so is, in Appiah’s opinion a cognitive incapacity. This does not apply to intrinsic racists. Intrinsic racists with their ‘family feeling’ may not see any reason to not love their fellow brother, as Appiah mentioned above, “we are supposed to love our brothers and sisters despite their faults”. No evidence presented will sway them into thinking ill of their race. As innocent and perhaps, admirable as this may sound, racial solidarity based on intrinsic racism does leave room for a further regress into ethnic solidarity among the Negro race itself. Here we have a situation where people will share a ‘family feeling’ towards their tribesmen, creating the ever expanding problem of xenophobia and/or ethnic and tribal wars which are prevalent in African societies.

This is the crux of Appiah’s book. We see how Pan-Africanism was founded, under which conditions, and the legacy that has been left behind is a dispirited one. The works Pan-Africanism produced were a constant reaction to Western thinking. If the West was put on a spectrum, Eurocentricity would be on one end and Afrocentricity would be on the other. They would sit on opposite ends of

the same spectrum, they would exhibit the same behaviour, react to each other in much the same way and both their claims to validate their differences and their similarities among themselves would be the same. When we look at some early Pan-Africanist writings that followed from the founding fathers, we find that they are highly racial, nationalist, and prophetic.

In his highly influential book, *Afrocentricity*, Molefi Kete Asante describes Afrocentricity as “the centrepiece of human regeneration” (Asante 1988: 1). Afrocentricity is a response to Western oppression of the Negro race. It aims to “transform the whole of the African world and necessarily influence European and Asian thought. No longer are we looking whitely through a tunnel lit with the artificial beams of Europe, we are now able to experience the Afrocentricity that the great *prophets* Garvey, Du Bois, Fanon, Nkrumah, Muhammad, Malcolm and Karenga had predicted for us” (ibid).

Afrocentricity is more prophetic than intellectual, one of the ‘founders’ of Afrocentricity, Cheikh Anta Diop, claims that “[a]ncient Egypt was a Negro civilization... the moral fruit of their civilization is to be counted among the assets of the Black world. Instead of presenting themselves as an insolent debtor, the Black world is the very initiator of the “western” civilization flaunted before our eyes today” (Grinker et al 2010:45). His claim is that ancient Greek works like those of Pythagoras and Platonic idealism, were stolen from the ancient Egyptian (Negro) civilizations, and the “Black African reader [should] bring himself to verify this. To his great surprise and satisfaction he will discover that most of the ideas used today to domesticate, atrophy, dissolve or steal his “soul”, were conceived by his own ancestors” (ibid). This verification would, Diop had hoped, lead the Negro to a “general retrieval of himself; without which, intellectual sterility is a general rule” (ibid).

Diop’s made this claim in order to instil some form of racial pride in the Negro, which had been distorted by white supremacy. As part of my paper is dedicated to instilling of pride into the Negro mind, one would expect me to easily adopt this ideology, however, Afrocentric claims are unsubstantiated, and although they seem to infuse the Negro with some sense of pride, it is based on false and over exaggerated information. There may have been Negro dynasties within the Egyptian empire, but to posit that it was completely Negro is an exaggeration. Furthermore, this theory only focuses on Egypt and completely neglects the rest of Africa. The Negro should, according to Afrocentrics, be proud of their Egyptian accomplishments but what of the rest of Africa? Were there any feats there worth taking pride in, or do the Afrocentrics only see virtue in Egypt? I agree with Appiah’s criticism of Diop. Appiah argues that “he offers very little evidence that Egyptian philosophy is more than a systemized but fairly uncritical folk philosophy, [he] makes no argument that the Egyptian problematic is that of the contemporary African” (Appiah 1992: 101). If we want

to seek a basis to reinstall racial integrity and pride it should be based on concrete theories that have withstood the test of scrutiny and analysis, then only can a solid African consciousness be formed. Moreover, these claims do not serve contemporary Africa in any way, they simply arouse patriotic feelings derived from falsity, which serve no real purpose for contemporary African problems.

In an article titled *Europe Upside Down: Fallacies of the New Afrocentrism*, Appiah holds that “the most tiresome features of Afrocentricism, namely its persistence in what ... Paulin Hountondji has called “unanimism”: the view that there is an African culture to which to appeal... it is surely preposterous to assume that there is a single African culture shared by everyone from the civilization of the Upper Nile thousands of years ago to the thousand or so language-zones of contemporary Africa” (Grinker , et al, 2010: 50). Afrocentrics fail to see the diversity of the African continent, as Appiah puts it “[w]hatever Africans share, we do not have a common traditional culture, common languages, common religions, or conceptual vocabulary... we do not even belong to a common race; and since this is so, unanimism is not entitled to what is, in my view, its fundamental presupposition” (Appiah 1992: 26).

Followers of Afrocentricity, who follow from Diop, like Victor Okafor, criticise Appiah by claiming that Appiah’s work “[q]ualifies to be classified as a Eurocentric model for African/African American studies, in contrast to the Afrocentric model” (Okafor 1993: 210). Appiah responds by saying “Afrocentricism, which is offered in the name of black solidarity, has by and large, entirely ignored the work of African scholars other than Diop” (Grinker et al, 2010: 50). Appiah goes on to say that it is not him, but rather the Afrocentrics that fall into an upside down version of Eurocentricism, where they (Afrocentrics) share the presuppositions of Victorian ideologies against which [they are] reacting” (Grinker , et al, 2010: 48).

Afrocentricity is a predominately New World Negro endeavour. It is a way for Negroes in the Diaspora to reconnect with their African identity. To the New World Negro, so far removed from Africa, it is easy for them to view Africa as a country and not a continent with diverse stratification. It is easy for them to view Africa in a unanimous way. The influence of this unanimism has gone a long way in Pan-Africanism, and it is one of the biggest hindrances of Pan-Africanism. Old World Negroes like Leopold Sedar Senghor have also, due to their New World Negro influences, adopted unanimous stance, and he too fails to see the diversity in Africa and also reacts in much the same way to the West as his Afrocentric counterparts.

Negritude according to Senghor is the “rooting of oneself in one self, and self confirmation: confirmation of one’s *being* . . . the sum of the cultural values of the black world; that is, a certain

active presence in the world, or better, in the universe” (Grinker et al 2010: 477-478). Negritude emphasizes the differences the black man has, compared to other men, whereas the white man is scientific and calculating, the black man is emotional and one with nature. Negritude poetry proclaims that the Negro race should take pride in never being an inventive race, and rejoice in the “African mode of apprehending reality through the senses rather than through the intellect” (Coetzee Roux 2000: 45).

Negritude has been discredited by many African scholars, but it did, as Andrew Barnes noted, “create a space” for the existence of “autonomous African intellectual[s]” (Falola, 2002: 152). And this is an important point because in most early intellectual life in Africa, the works produced were a good starting point, but progress must be made, and more critical works need to be produced.

Both Afrocentricity and Negritude are the best examples of Pan-Africanist works that are reactions to the West. They are not geared towards progress for contemporary Africa, they tend to look back into Africa’s past and propose that Africa return there when African intellectualism should be looking forward. They react, as Appiah had said, to the West rather than create concrete works. Senghor himself admits that Negritude was written as “a response to the modern humanism that European philosophers and scientists have been preparing since the end of the nineteenth century” (Grinker , et al, 2010: 479).

The attitudes expressed in these works do have some residues of the ‘founding fathers’, their racial focus is one major aspect. Their intent focus on the Negro and his qualities and characteristics are imitations of Du Bois’ speak of ‘common blood’ and Senghor “celebrates Blyden as the foremost precursor both of Negritude and of the African Personality” (Mudimbe 1988: 98).

Their religious influence is also felt, the prevalence of Islam amongst New World Negroes is no coincidence or surprise. The influence of Pan-Africanist founding fathers rippled through from generation to generation, and throughout the Diaspora.

Although Blydens influence in promoting Islam was felt, Asante was not convinced of Islam’s relevance:

Adoption of Islam is contradictory to the Diasporian Afrocentricity as Christianity has been. Christianity has been dealt with admirably by other writer, notably Karenga; but Islam within the African –American community has yet to come under Afrocentric scrutiny. Understand that this oversight is due more to a sympathetic audience than it is to the perfection of Islam for African Americans. While the nation of Islam under the leadership of Elijah Muhammad was a transitional nationalist movement, the present emphasis of Islam in America is more

cultural and religious. This is a serious and perhaps tragic mistake, because apart from its historical contradictions, there exists monumental contradictions in its application. (Asante 1988: 2)

Asante claimed that Islam was indeed powerful and relevant, but not for the Negro because Islam is designed with the Arab in mind, the pilgrimage to Mecca is located where most Arabs are located, God speaks to Muhammad in Arabic, and not, as Asante says “in Swahili, Yoruba or Ebonics... if your God cannot speak to you in your language, then he is not your God” (Asante 1988: 4). Here we see a stark difference of ideas within Pan-Africanism, between Blyden’s and Crummell’s call for Islam and Christianity and Afrocentricity’s rejection of both.

It seems easy enough to assume that Asante is reclaiming what Blyden and Crummell gave away, reclaiming some pride for the African. But his work does no constructive work for Africa nor for African intellectualism. Colonialism had the specific intention of destroying African culture, or at least, distorting it. Egyptianists claim to be reclaiming that which has been distorted, by further distorting the facts. Negritude makes claims that seem to reduce the African to a single conception, which is also based on intellectual distortions.

The African is portrayed as either in need of saving (according to Blyden and Crummell) or in need of a “thinking class” (Langley 1973: 43) as expressed by Du Bois. None shared a positive and optimistic conception of Africa and this is the underlying cause of inferiority complexes in African intellectualism. It was not only the white colonial teachings that reduced African life to a perverted barbaric land, it was the Western teachings that were taught to Western Negro’s about ‘savage Africa’ that did the most harm. And in turn, those Negroes instilled the same attitude in the African intellectual, and the superiority complex of Western life was perpetuated by the apologetic attitudes of Negritude and Afrocentricity. Their constant reaction and need to find modes of being that were ‘equal’ to Western modes instead of folding into the ebb and flow of where African life was headed.

Appiah proposes that a way forward for Pan-Africanism is for it to avoid any racial connotations. It is for African intellectuals to acknowledge the invented states of Africa. In ‘Topologies of Nativism’, Appiah challenges nativism: “the claim that true African independence requires a literature of its own” (Appiah 1992: 56). He contends that African intellectuals should acknowledge the invented-ness of African states, they should acknowledge that when the Europeans came to Africa, they changed many things, including African life, and as much as nativists and Afrocentric particularists want to reclaim Africa to her pristine indigene state, they indirectly fall into universalism. To quote Appiah, “the very invention of Africa (as something more than a geographical entity) must be

understood, ultimately, as an outgrowth of European racialism; the notion of Pan-Africanism was founded on the notion of the African, which was in turn, founded not on any genuine cultural commonality but, as we have seen, on the very European concept of the Negro” (Appiah 1992: 62). When African intellectuals react to Western pedagogy they indirectly entrap themselves in the Western web, “the Western emperor ordered the natives to exchange their robes for trousers: their act of defiance is to insist on tailoring them from homespun material” (ibid). Given their arguments, the cultural nationalists do not go far enough; they are blind to the fact that their nativist demands inhibit a Western architecture” (Appiah 1992: 62).

Colonialism invented the Africa that is here today, and that, according to Appiah is an inescapable fact: “for us to forget Europe is to suppress the conflicts that have shaped our identities, since it is too late to escape each other, we might instead seek to turn to our advantage the mutual interdependencies history has thrust upon us” (Appiah 1992: 72). I agree, it is vital for the African intellectual to look at the African situation as it stands, and work from there to create a more promising African intellectual future. Appiah promises to give a more promising outline for Pan-Africanism, he promises that “[he] shall argue in Chapter 9 that various projects of African solidarity have their uses on the continent and in her diaspora, but these forms of “nationalism” look to the future not to the past” (Appiah 1992: 61), and to these forms, I will now turn too.

In ‘African Identities’ Appiah attempts “an exploration of ways in which Pan-African solidarity can be appropriated by those of us whose position as intellectuals – as searchers of truth – make it impossible for us to live through falsehoods of race and tribe and nation, whose understanding of history makes us sceptical that nationalism and racial solidarity can do the good that they can do without the attendant evils of racism –and other particularisms; without the warring of nations” (Appiah 1992: 175). Appiah attempts to show how solidarity can be formed without the ‘falsehoods’ of race and nation:

“Race” disables us, because it proposes as a basis for common action the illusion that black (and white and yellow) people are fundamentally allied by nature and, thus, without effort; it leaves us unprepared. Therefore to handle the “interracial” conflicts that arise from the very difficult situations of black (and white and yellow) people in different parts of the economy and of the world (Appiah 1992: 176).

As accurate as this may seem, Appiah elaborates very scarcely on the way forward for African intellectuals. He maintains that the future of a “re-invigorated Pan-Africanism” (Appiah 1992: 180) lies in Pan-Africanism being “the project of a continental fraternity and sorority, *not* the project of a

racialized Negro nationalism" (ibid). Appiah turns to organizations like the former Organisation of African Unity and Southern Africa Development Coordination Conference, claiming that these institutions would be the future for Pan-Africanism, where African intellectuals would gather to sort out African economic and interethnic conflicts that currently riddle Africa.

I think this is insufficient. His conclusion is vague and inadequate, throughout the book, Appiah seemed to be heading towards a more concrete and progressive solution to African intellectual re-invigoration. However, he turns his attention away from intellectualism towards the economic plight of African states. His focus on former organizational institutions as the saviour of Pan-Africanism is unexpected. Although Pan-Africanism contributed to the formation of these organizations, Appiah does not elaborate as to how these organizations are to rid African intellectualism of intrinsic racism and how African intellectualism is to create a more critical discourse through these organizations.

Appiah does, however, hint towards his intention, though it is not vividly expressed in his book. Appiah concludes his chapter by saying "African solidarity" can surely be a vital and enabling rally cry; but in this world of genders, ethnicities, and classes, of families, religions and nations, it is well to remember that there are times when Africa is not the banner we need' (Appiah 1992: 180). This leads me to think that Appiah has a broader scope of Africa, a cosmopolitan scope, one that encapsulates African intellectualism into a global sphere. In his epilogue this is made even clearer, in his description of his father's funeral where his Nigerian in-laws, American friends and Ghanaian governmental officials and citizens were in attendance, Appiah notes that "all the identities [his] father cared for... encapsulated in the complex patterns of social and personal relations around his coffin – [which] could capture the multiplicity of our lives in a postcolonial world" (Appiah 1992: 191).

It is true that an African identity cannot continue to remain as shallow and tedious as the works that have been produced by some Pan-Africanist intellectuals. Africa may not have set off in search of new worlds like her colonizers did, but the world did descend upon Africa. As such, Africa is no longer afforded the consent of isolating herself from the world. A progressive integration into the world is vital in order for Africa to progress. Even if one identity cannot be forged, the common link among Africans in Africa and the Diasporas must not be taken for granted. Africa suffered a tremendous injustice, and it was necessary for Negroes and those who witnessed these injustices to stick together to find a solution in those dire times of racial injustice.

Now, however, Africa needs to unite for a different cause, and this is not to say that racial injustice has been eradicated, but with freedom came a new set of problems, not only economic, but the African intellectual now has the task of undoing many knots tied in the psyche of the African.

It is very important to note that it is not only the Negro who requires substantive conscientization, but also other races which were also fed inaccurate propaganda about other races outside their own. Just as much as the Negro has to deal with inferiority complexes, the European has to deal with superiority complexes, a balance must be obtained. It is not as easy as integrating the Negro into the cosmopolitan world, certain mental blocks must be eradicated.

This brings me to my next chapter, where I aim to show how the works of two Pan-Africanist intellectuals serve this very purpose of conscientizing. Through a systematic conscientizing of African culture, life and spirituality, African intellectuals can produce works that are conducive and practical to contemporary Africa. I will be examining Bantu Steve Biko's Black Consciousness Movement to show how he aims to liberate the 'Black' mind whilst avoiding any dangerous racial connotations. I will also be examining Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's book *Decolonizing the Mind: the Politics of Language in African Literature*. This book is relevant in examining the role of language as a factor that distorts and devalues African intellectualism, through consistent devaluing of indigenous Africa languages and appraisal of European language as a mode of teaching and everyday life in Africa.

3. Black Consciousness

There is a fundamental flaw in Appiah's work: he is in too much of a hurry to incorporate Africa into the "one race we all belong" (Appiah 1992: 27). In order for Africa and Africans to thrive within the human race as equal counterparts, she must acknowledge her drawbacks and deal with them effectively. Appiah seems to overlook the deep penetration of colonialism and oppression within the African mind. He has drawn attention to the draw backs Pan-Africanism has inflicted on African intellectualism, but he has not paid enough attention to the underlying forces colonialism left behind.

Appiah is looking for a futuristic solution to Africa's problems, and that is admirable, he is looking for a Pan-Africanism that is removed from racial and nationalistic tendencies and I agree. Some Pan-Africanist work, such as those of Egyptianists like Cheika Anta Diop are unsubstantiated and serve no productive purpose in African intellectual growth. Appiah bases the growth of Pan-Africanism on the development of organizations Like the former OAU and SADCC to "mediate regional conflicts" (Appiah 1992: 180). According to Appiah, Pan-Africanism should be "the project of a continental fraternity and sorority *not* the project of a racialized Negro nationalism" that is the only way Pan-Africanism "can be a progressive force" (ibid).

Appiah is not too forthcoming on his conclusion of the re-invigoration of Pan-Africanism. Though he alludes to giving a promising conclusion of the reinvigoration of Pan-Africanism, Appiah is very vague as to what exactly is to be done to reinvent it. He does however hint towards Africa accepting her place in the world and accepting the cards with which she was dealt, and learning to work with and not against her misfortunes.

Appiah's suggestion is that Africa must learn to use Western tools as a positive instead of reacting to them with resentment and anger. This is admirable, Africa should be looking towards incorporating herself into the rest of humanity, and Appiah being the cosmopolitan that he is, is completely right in suggesting this. But Appiah does not provide a framework in which Pan-Africanism can go about doing this. And if he had a framework, he would acknowledge how deep those 'mutual interdependencies' go.

Colonialism was not merely a project of physical servitude, it was a project of cultural assimilation and cultural genocide. It would be a grand mistake on the part of Africans to venture wide-eyed into the bright future of cosmopolitanism without first dealing with the mental bars history has thrust upon the mind. Not just the Negro mind, but it is very important to also realize the false

interpretations the world has been given of the Negro, and the false interpretations the Negro has been taught to believe, to quote Frantz Fanon on this point, “colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the natives’ brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures and destroys it. This work of devaluing pre-colonial history takes on a dialectical significance today” (Fanon 1967: 169).

Appiah neglects this aspect, and it is tragic because as successful as his project is in pointing out the failures of Pan-Africanism, it fails to come up with a solution to these problems, and even worse, it fails to recognize Pan-Africanist work that has been productive and non-racial. Two such Pan-Africanists that have produced admirable work in Pan-Africanism are Bantu Steve Biko and his Black Consciousness Movement, and Ngugi Wa Thiong’o and his plight for marginalized (African) languages.

3.1. Steve Biko and Black Consciousness

“[Black Consciousness] works on the knowledge that ‘white hatred’ is negative, though understandable, and leads to precipitate and shot-gun methods which may be disastrous for black and white alike” – Steve Biko 1976

The Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) is a movement for black people. By black, Biko does not mean the Negro, rather black is defined as “those who are by law or tradition politically, economically, and socially discriminated against a group in the South African society and identifying themselves as a unit in the struggle towards the realisation of their aspirations” (Biko 2004: 52). Being black, Biko continues, illustrates two things:

1. *Being black is not a matter of pigmentation – being black is a reflection of a mental attitude*
2. *Merely by describing yourself as black you have started on a road towards emancipation, you have committed yourself to fight against all forces that seek to use your blackness as a stamp that marks you out as a subservient being (ibid).*

The relation between black and white is not one of pigmentation as Appiah accuses Pan-Africanist doctrines, they are mental states. Biko uses the Hegelian theory of dialectic materialism, claiming “that since the thesis is a white racism there can only be one valid antithesis, i.e., a solid black unity

to counterbalance the scale” (Biko 2004: 55). For his own purposes, Biko uses BC towards white racism (and by white, no pigmentation is also implied, white is representative of a system, the apartheid system), but BC as a movement is applicable towards any oppressed group which chooses to stand for a cause. In Anti-Semitism and homophobia, Jews and gays would fall under the category of being ‘black’.

This means that in the struggle towards the realisation of Negro liberation, there can be Negro people who will not fall under the black rubric, as Biko notes, the definition of black he has provided is “not all-inclusive; i.e. the fact that we are *not white*, does not necessarily mean we are all *black*... Black people – real black people – are those who manage to hold their heads high in defiance rather than willingly surrender their souls to white people.” (Biko 2004: 52). Lewis Gordon explains the relation between white and black tastefully in an essay titled *A Phenomenology of Biko’s Black Consciousness*:

Whiteness in itself is never white enough except in its relation to its distance from blackness, which makes this domination a form of dependency. Blackness is always too black except in its relation to its distance from itself, which means one is always too black in relation to white but never white enough. Colored, Asians and browns function as a degree of whiteness and blackness. The slipperiness of these categories means a system of unceasing conflict, the subtext of which is a teleological whiteness. Biko’s notion of Black Consciousness demands shifting such a telos. To aim at being black undermines the legitimacy of whiteness, but it does so with an additional consideration. Whiteness... works on the presumption of purity. Blackness, however is a broad category which includes... A mixture (Gibson et al 2008: 85)

This is of vital importance, this means that by matter of pigmentation, Negro’s, Caucasians, Indians and Coloureds can gather for a cause, and in this instance, it is a gathering of ‘blacks’ against white racism. With Black Consciousness being a non-racial unity, it recognizes that there will be Europeans, Negros, Indians and Coloureds who will gather together with the aim of ending white supremacy. However, there are divides within Black Consciousness that aim to perpetuate superiority and inferiority complexes. Because of the intricacies of the apartheid system (White system), division and stratification was the goal, keeping the whites at the top, Indians and Coloured in the middle and Negros at the bottom. This stratification found its way into the Black Consciousness movement.

The black man in Africa has undergone much trauma, and constant attempts at cultural assimilation and continual dismissal of African cultures. Being white has been hailed as the ultimate goal, making the black man “a shell, a shadow of a man, defeated, drowning in his own misery, a slave, an ox

bearing the yoke of oppression with a sheepish timidity” (Biko 2004: 31). The purpose of the Black Consciousness Movement is “to infuse the black community with a new found pride in themselves, their efforts, their value systems, their culture, their religion and outlook to life” (Biko 2004: 53). To do this, the black person in Africa must be conscious of every influence he/she is facing,

The first step, therefore, is to make the black man come to himself, to pump life back into his empty shell; to infuse him with pride and dignity, to remind him of his complicity in his crime of allowing himself to be misused and therefore letting evil reign supreme in the country of his birth. This is what we mean by an inward looking process. This is the definition of Black Consciousness (Biko 2004: 31)

Being black is riddled with negative connotations, and BC aims to rectify that. BC “seeks to give positivity in the outlook of the black people to their problems. It works on the knowledge that ‘white hatred’ is negative though understandable, and leads to precipitate and shot-gun methods which may be disastrous for both black and white alike” (Biko 2004: 33). Once these negative connotations are cleansed and the inferiority complexes are cleared from a black man’s mind, only then can he be better prepared to look upon the cultures of the world with clear perspective.

If African intellectualism is to “borrow and refine the methods of Western philosophy and apply them to the analysis of the conceptual problems of African life” (Appiah 1992: 91) as Kwasi Wiredu and Appiah suggest, BC would be the ultimate refinement tool. When Africans are rid of the negativity brought upon them by colonialism and ironically, by fellow New World Negro who refused to see any good in indigenous Africa, only then can they look upon Western tools and use them with utmost confidence in themselves. Only then can the African intellectual use these Western tools positively without any inferiority complexes or apologetic attitudes like those present in the likes of Blyden and Crummell.

The racialism found in Pan-African movement founders is one that not only carried Negro solidarity, but also many other negative connotations which have been explained in the previous chapter. Given the position of the Negro at the time, who was faced with immense oppression and white domination, Negro solidarity may have seemed like the best thing to do. But there were better ways to go about it. Biko did not deny that solidarity was required given the situation of the black person at the time in South Africa, “white racism ... is the force against which we are all pitted. It works with unnerving totality, featuring both on the offensive and in our defence. Its greatest ally to date has been the refusal by us to club together as blacks because we are told to do so would be racist” (Biko 2004: 54-55).

Although Appiah may be correct in that solidarity may have its pitfalls, there are situations and circumstances where unity of a people with a cause is required regardless of skin colour. If the problem was (and in most cases still is) white racism, black people need to stand together because, as Biko continues to say “while we [may] lose ourselves in a world of colourless-ness and amorphous common humanity, whites are deriving pleasure exploiting the minds and the bodies of the unsuspecting black masses” (Biko 2004: 55). Before blacks can lose themselves into “a world of colourless-ness and amorphous common humanity” they must ensure that they do not find themselves in a position where they are still inferior, in social status, and in moral and intellectual capacity.

It is unfortunate, but the Negro shares a gruesome common history of oppression and dehumanization, and this history has not passed without leaving a mark. Black Consciousness aims to rectify this, because “there is always an interplay between the history of a people i.e. the past, and their faith in themselves and hopes for the future” (Biko 2004: 57). There have been deliberate attempts by whites and Negroes alike to distort the value of indigene Africa; “we are aware of the terrible role played by our education and religion in creating amongst us a false understanding of ourselves” (ibid). We have seen this being done by African nationalists, bombarding Africans with Christianity, and so called methods of civilization, and this all stemmed from the education those Negroes received from their Western masters.

Biko is not saying that Africans should revert to the past; that would be counterproductive. He is arguing that education and religion should not be so focused on cleansing, but must focus on bringing a more productive message. This is the goal of Black theology.

3.2. Black Theology

The Christianity of Crummell and Blyden created a negative starting ground for the introduction of Christianity. Biko does not suggest that Christianity be discarded from Africa, but rather that it should serve a more positive purpose than to spread inferiority. To quote Biko:

What of the white man’s religion – Christianity? It seems the people involved in imparting Christianity to the black people steadfastly refuse to get rid of the rotten foundation which many of the missionaries created when they came. To this date black people find no message for them in the bible simply because our ministries are still too busy with moral trivialities. They blow these up as the most important thing Jesus had to say to people. They constantly

urge people to find fault in themselves. . . Deprived of spiritual content, the black people read the bible with a gullibility that is shocking (Biko 2004: 33-34).

The Christianity of Blyden and Crummell was content with finding faults in the morality and culture of the African people, preaching how irrelevant and inadequate African cultures are, rather than sending a positive message of hope. Biko reckons the best way forward is “to redefine the message in the bible and make it relevant to the struggling masses. The bible must not be seen to preach that all authority is divinely instituted. It must rather preach that it is a sin to allow oneself to be oppressed” (Biko 2004: 34). This is where Black theology comes in:

Black theology seeks to do away with spiritual poverty of the black people. It seeks to demonstrate the absurdity of the assumption by whites that ‘ancestor worship’ was necessarily a superstition and that Christianity is a scientific religion. While basing itself on the Christian message, black theology seeks to show that Christianity is an adaptable religion that fits in with the cultural situation of the people whom it is imparted (ibid).

Black theology for Biko is not aimed at eradicating Christianity, but simply reforming it to be more accommodating instead of judgemental, to preach positively about the cultures and lifestyle choices of others. Because of its introduction as the cleansing project, Christianity created divisions between the “converted... and the pagan. The difference in clothing between these two groups made what otherwise would have been merely a religious difference actually become at times internecine warfare. Stripped of the core of their being and estranged from each other because of their differences the African people became a playground for the colonialists” (Biko 2004: 60). The way Christianity was introduced in Africa was not as civilized as it was noted to be and it certainly contradicted itself. Whilst preaching love and tolerance, Christianity created rifts amongst people, and labelling what was different as ‘pagan’ and ‘savage’. This attitude resonated within the colonialists and New World Negro nationalists alike.

Black theology aims to restore an image of God and Christianity where they are seen as a tool for the people, but as the situation stood, God was only seen through colonial eyes, and as Biko puts it, “if our faith in our God is spoilt by our having to see him through the eyes of the same people we are fighting against then there obviously begins to be something wrong in that relationship” (Biko 2004: 64). Christianity’s concern with cleansing of pagan cultures and tongues and colonising barbarians misses the biggest issues concerning humanity, and Black theology’s endeavour is to rectify this. Black theology aims “to shift the emphasis from petty sins to major sins in a society, thereby ceasing

to teach people to 'suffer peacefully'. These are the topics that black ministers of religion must begin to talk about seriously if they are to save Christianity from falling foul with black people" (ibid).

Christianity in Africa did not come with a choice, it did not come with compromise or without bloodshed, the way in which Christianity, education and certain colonial languages came to Africa were by use of force, and the means through which they were introduced worked by undermining the indigenous religion and languages of Africa. This made it difficult for the African to view Western imports evenly. They either viewed them with resentment or a queer acceptance that was underlined with inferiority.

For African intellectualism to begin to grow, the intellectuals themselves need to recognize the forces they are fighting. In this chapter, I have used the work of Steve Biko to show that the mental attitudes of white domination and black inferiority are distortions that need to be dealt with from the root. The role of religion, which is commonly overlooked in African intellectualism as something separate, is pivotal lest we forget that Western forms of education were introduced through missionaries. In the next chapter I will continue with a form of Black Consciousness, I will be looking at the work of Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and the role that language and literature has played in African intellectualism.

4. On Nativism

The night of the sword and the bullet was followed by the morning of the chalk and the blackboard. The physical violence of the battlefield was followed by the psychological violence of the classroom.

- **Ngugi Wa Thiong'o**

In this chapter I use the work of Ngugi Wa Thiong'o to show important correlation between African intellectuals, language and nationality. I will use Ngugi's work in contrast (and sometimes in agreement) with Appiah to show that Appiah's argument against nativism is one that had already been anticipated and countered by Ngugi. Ngugi is a well-known advocate for the use of African (or marginalized) languages in African literature and undertook a personal quest of writing in his mother tongue to ensure the preservation and relevance of marginalized languages. I will also be examining the opinions of other African writers and their stance on literature in the African continent and a way forward.

4.1 Sprachgeist

Nativism, according to Appiah is "the claim that true African independence requires a literature of one's own" (Appiah 1992: 56), the nativist perception as captured by Appiah is best described as follows:

The decolonized subject people write themselves, now, as a subject of a literature of their own. The simple gesture of writing for and about oneself ... has profound political significance. Writing for and about oneself, then, helps constitute the modern community of the nation, but we do it largely in languages imposed by "the might of the legions"... European languages and European disciplines have "turned" like double agents, from the projects of the metropole to the intellectual work of post colonial cultural life. But though officially in the service of new masters, these tools remain, like all double agents, perpetually under suspicion [by nativists]" (Appiah 1992: 56)

Nativism is not an entirely new concept in itself, it is a familiar trend in the West and Appiah makes a note of this. Appiah traces back the links between race, nationality and literature in Western cultures and eventually ties the similarities of these initial stages to the development of African

literature and more specifically, nativism. Language in literature and the pride of a nation tie specific nation building blocks together. Appiah uses the example of the creation of the United States of America and how one of its founding fathers, Thomas Jefferson, revered Anglo Saxon literature despite political tensions between America and Europe:

Anglo-Saxonism spread easily to a United States whose dominant culture imagined itself – even after the revolution – as British. (Appiah 1992: 49)

Jefferson went as far as incorporating Anglo-Saxon literature into the English curriculum of the University of Virginia so that “students would imbibe with the language of their free principles of government” (ibid). Anglo-Saxon law, language and literature represented, to the American, a free state:

Anglo-Saxon institutions were seen both to account for the English-mans “natural love for freedom” and to underlie the “immemorial rights” of free men against the crown” (Appiah 1992: 48)

This urge to break away from the crown was one that created a lot of angst and national pride for the American ‘republic’. It was as if the colony was using a piece of its mother-body, or colonizer to create a nationalistic feeling in the newly created colony of the America’s. Anglo-Saxons were, according to Jefferson ‘superior to blacks “in both endowments both of body and mind”’ (Appiah 1992 49). Here we begin to see the use of race as a binding (binding the American with their Anglo-Saxon counterparts) and dividing (racial divisions) factor. This obviously rings very close to home when we examine the trajectory of African literature, and how it has stuck very close to utilizing certain pieces of its mother-body to create a nationalistic disposition. Again, Appiah draws a correlation on how African intellectuals tend to not stray very far from their Western colonizers. Literature has been used in African intellectualism, to create oneness that is defined and characterized by ‘African-ness’ and race, where we see, with the work of Senghor, that literature (and many other factors of being) becomes a racial endowment.

Another important character Appiah makes a note of in the discussion of nation and literature is Johann Gottfried Herder’s notion of a national sprachgeist. Herder, being a nationalist philosopher, claimed that “whoever writes about the literature of a country . . . must not forget its language” (Appiah 1992: 50), Sprachgeist, therefore, is “the spirit of language” (ibid). This, according to Herder, is how to build a nation, not a state, where “the nation [is] a natural entity [whereas] the state is a product of culture, a human artifice” (ibid). This is important in examining how the sprachgeist is utilized in African literature and how nationalism in Africa is focussed more on the human creation

of a state rather than the formation of nations as a natural entity. The creation of states, as they are in Africa, is a man-made creation, they are the product of colonialism, and nativists seem to undermine this correlation.

In the nativist concept, the culture and most importantly the language of the colonizer is under continuous suspicion and accusation of subjugation and continual oppression by the colonizer through intellectual means. Even if, as Appiah highlights, “the colonizer’s language is creolized, even when the imperialist vision is playfully subverted in the lyrics of popular songs, there remains a suspicion that a hostile *Sprachgeist* is at work” (Appiah 1992: 56). The notion of nativism plays around with the concept of some sort of a *sprachgeist*, but nativism, as Appiah emphasizes, at times does not see the human invention of the state for what it is and continues to draw from invented states as though they are natural entities. In the next section I will examine the relation between nativism, nationalism, particulars and universals and also explore the issue of invented states as argued by Appiah and Franz Fanon.

4.2. Particulars and Universals

When examining the concept of nativism, there are two concepts to keep in mind: particularism and universalism. Particularism as is seen by Appiah, is captured in these lines:

“Us on the inside, them on the outside . . . operating with this topology of inside and out – indigene and alien, Western and traditional – the apostles of nativism are able in contemporary Africa to mobilize the undoubted power of a nationalistic rhetoric, one in which the literature of one’s own nation is that of one’s own nation” (Appiah 1992: 56).

With this in mind, it is apparent that nativism and particularism then leads to a nationalistic view, as Andrew Vincent states:

“One of the more pervasive conceptions of group particularity, in the last two decades, has been nationalism. Despite the power of nationalism in practice, political theory – particularly all theory up until comparatively recently – has been deeply troubled by its status. Nationalism has been seen as overly narrow and potentially irrationalist in content. . . Nationalism [is] associated with recidivist tribalism – tribalism here being used in a derogatory manner” (Vincent 2002: 05)

This regress from nationalism down to tribalism is one that is also anticipated by Appiah:

“Nativists may appeal to identities that are both wider and narrower than the nation: to ‘tribes’ and towns, below the nation-state; Africa, above” (Appiah 1992: 56)

Appiah reckons that the best way of avoiding nativism is not to challenge nativism directly, but to challenge its opposition to universalism:

“I believe, we shall have the best chance of redirecting nativism’s power if we challenge not the rhetoric of the tribe, the nation, or the continent but the topology that it presupposes, the opposition it asserts” (ibid).

The opposition that it asserts, is of course, universalism, and is essentially linked to the West. Universalism as defined by the *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*:

“...Is the idea that ethics can be formulated in terms of universal principals, rather than learned as a swirl of potentially conflicting pressures on policy and action. In this sense it is the opposite of particularism” (Oxford University Press 2008)

Appiah’s stance is not one that directly advocates for universalism, rather what Appiah intends to do is to show that what nativists are trying to do is not all that different from universalism, because the nativist himself is a product of Western pedagogy. He makes distinct examples of three intellectuals advocating the use of nativism, Dr. Chinweizu, Dr. Jemie and Dr. Madubuike, all of whom are esteemed educated African intellectuals holding various degree and titles in Ivy league universities in the West, and all of whom are intrepid nativists and against universalism. For them, African literature needs to be criticised and removed from its Universalist route, that is. its Western route and this route is one that they claim “suits the English literary establishment just fine, since they would much prefer it if an African nationalist consciousness, inevitably anti-British, was not promoted or cultivated, through literature, in the young African elite” (Appiah 1992: 57).

Appiah claims that nativism is universal without realizing it, because colonialism brought with it a new dimension to African culture and life that to say “African literature is an autonomous entity separate and apart from all other literature” (Appiah 1992: 56) is a big mistake for the likes of Dr. Jemie et al. Appiah claims that what these fellow nativists are claiming “is the posture that conceals its privileging of one national (or racial) tradition against others in false talk of the Human Condition” (Appiah 1992: 58).

What nativists fail to realize, says Appiah is that African nations in themselves are an invention of the West, and as such, even the conception of nativism (as we saw with the American colony) is a by-product of the ‘mother country’, so to speak. Appiah goes as far as saying that what particularists

are really against is not universalism at all, but "... and who would not? ... – is Eurocentric hegemony posing as universalism" (Appiah 1992: 59). And this is a powerful point to make, that intellectuals continue on a long struggle for African literature, facing the wrong enemy, as Appiah points out, "the actual ideology of universalism is never interrogated" (ibid).

These stringent nativists are against the "positivist conception of European languages" (Appiah 1992: 56). This is where European languages are to be "cleansed of their imperialist – and more specifically, racist modes of thought" (ibid) and used simply as tools of writing. What nativists seem to neglect, however, is what Appiah refers to as the "invention of Africa" (Appiah 1992: 62).

Appiah challenges the Nativist's claim to "ancestral purity" (Appiah 1992: 91) and urges them to examine the way in which some 'traditions' in Africa came to be. Some were taken by colonial officials, 'modernized' labelled as 'customary law' which were later interpreted by intellectuals (and the populace) as ancestral African tradition. As Fanon writes:

The culture in which the intellectual leans toward is often no more than a stock of particularisms. He wishes to attach himself to his people, but instead catches the outer garments. . . [The nativist] cannot go forward resolutely unless he first realizes his estrangement from them (Appiah 1992:61)

The concept of the native, the Negro or African is itself an invention of the West. Fanon notes further that "the Negro is never so much a Negro since he has been dominated by whites" (Appiah 1992: 62). This is a sentiment shared by Appiah as well as Terence Ranger, that "the reality is that the very category of the Negro is at root a European product: for the "whites" invented the Negro to dominate them. Simply put, the course of cultural nationalism in Africa has been to make real the imaginary identities to which Europe has subjected us" (Appiah 1992: 62). Ranger makes a startling point in claiming that

The invented traditions imported from Europe not only provided whites with models of command but also offered many Africans models of "modern" behaviour. The invented tradition of African societies – whether invented by the Europeans or by the Africans in response – distorted the past but became in themselves realities through which a good deal of colonial encounter was expressed (Appiah 1992: 61).

It is these invented traditions that entrench the African intellectual unwittingly into Western hegemony, whilst still thinking they are fighting against it, and it is "those like Ngugi", Ranger continues, "who repudiate bourgeois elite culture [who] face the ironic danger of embracing another set of colonial inventions instead" (Appiah 1992: 61-62).

African culture as we know it is a by-product of European colonialism, and colonialism left its mark in every aspect of African life, more especially, African intellectualism. But this should not take away the relevance within the particularist sphere. In an interesting essay titled *The Universality of Local Knowledge*, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o creates a good argument for the relevance of particularism as a starting point for universalism. Ngugi does not agree with the commonly held "tendency to see the universal and the local as in absolute opposition to each other" (Ngugi 1993: 25). As Appiah had noted "what is Western becomes universal and what is Third World becomes local. Locality becomes measured by the degree of its distance from the metropolis of the Western world" (ibid).

In such circumstances, where the West becomes universality and the rest of the world a particularity, what is needed, according to Ngugi is to "[shift] the focus of particularity to a plurality of centres" (ibid). I think this is a welcome shift, viewing particularism as a hostile reaction to universalism is unnecessary, yet, considering a perspective that moves from the particular to the universal seems to make intuitive sense. To Quote Ngugi further:

The universal is contained in the particular just as the particular is contained in the universal. We are all human beings but the fact of our being human does not manifest itself in its abstraction but in the particularity of real living human beings of different climes and races (Ngugi 1993: 26).

An interesting correlation Ngugi used is showing how language is a universal human trait, yet English is particular to certain regions. As people who live together in a cosmopolitan world, the centres of the world need to shift "towards a pluralism of culture" (Ngugi 1993: 02). The centre needs to move from making the West the centre of universalism and embrace particular centres within a universal scope. In this case we see how Ngugi is in agreement and disagreement with Appiah. As we will see in section 4.4, Ngugi presents a suitable case for moving the centre from within a particularist world to a more universal or (even though the terms are not mutually exclusive) cosmopolitan world that Appiah is working towards:

It is important to see phenomenon in nature, society, even in academia, not in its isolation but in its dynamic connections with other phenomena. It is important to remember that social and intellectual process, even academic disciplines, act and react on each other not against a spatial and temporal ground of stillness but of a constant struggle, of movement and change which brings about more struggle, more movement, and change, even in human thought (Ngugi 1993: 28-29).

What I find most interesting about the argument presented by Ngugi is its acknowledgement of change and flux within social structures. He acknowledges the colonial effects and the entrenchment of the African to that past, yet still works towards a future in which the native intellectual is not further alienated from his own language and traditions. Ngugi works from a particularist and nativist perspective, yet also leaves room for the advancement of cosmopolitanism:

In a situation of flux, the effective use of the delicate skills of navigating our way through may very well depend on whether we are swimming against or with the currents of change or for that matter whether we are clear in what direction we are swimming, towards or away from the sea of our connections with our common humanity. Local knowledge is not an island unto itself; it is a part of the main, part of the sea. Its limit lies in the boundless universality of our creative potentiality as human beings (Ngugi 1993: 29).

In the next section I will be looking at the work of Franz Fanon and his take on the native intellectual's entrenchment in European pedagogy. Franz Fanon shares common features of thought with Appiah in that they both recognize the invention of Africa through colonialism. They both see the major blunders made by African intellectuals who seek a future for Africa in its distorted past. Where they differ though, is that Fanon is for nationalism and national consciousness in much the same sense as Steve Biko. His search for a national consciousness is not through a racialized Negro mentality, but rather as a way for African intellectuals to seek solace in the past bestowed upon them and create an African intellectual sphere that does not mimic European pedagogy.

4.3. The Search for a National Culture

The invention of Africa was not only a geographical invention of African states divided into territories and countries, it was also the invention of the Negro himself. Colonialism created the African intellectual, and the African intellectual transgressed into many sectional titles. Franz Fanon, depicted this transgression into three phases. Phase one, "the intellectual gives proof that he has assimilated the culture of the occupying power" (Fanon 1963: 178). In this phase, the intellectual learns and mimics the writings and thought patterns of those intellectuals of the mother country. In the second phase the intellectual finds himself conflicted between his newly found identity and that of his people, "but since the native is not a part of his people, since he only has exterior relations with his people he is content to recall their life only" (Fanon 1963: 179). The intellectual will try to remember episodes from his former life and try to make simple correlations which are borrowed from days long passed. In the third and final phase, which Fanon calls the fighting and awakening

phase, the intellectual will become a revolutionary, with the aim of awakening his people with prophetic literature, “they feel the need to speak to their nation” (ibid).

There is a sense in which the native intellectual wants to capture some sort of a national culture and regain traces of past lives and somehow reinvigorate them into contemporary life:

But it has been remarked several times that this passionate search for a national culture which existed before the colonial era finds its legitimate reason in the anxiety shared by intellectuals to shrink away from that Western culture in which they all risk being swamped. Because they realize they are in danger of losing their lives and thus becoming lost to their people, these men, hot-headed with anger in their hearts, relentlessly determine to renew contact once more with the oldest and most pre-colonial springs of life of their people (Fanon 1963: 168-169).

An important correlation Fanon makes in which native intellectuals find themselves withering into a racialized nation is through the creation of the African Cultural Society. According to Fanon, the aim of this society was immediately a very racial one.

The members of this society [were] confined to showing Europeans that such a thing as African culture exists, and opposing their ideas to those of ostentatious and narcissistic Europeans. We have shown that such an attitude normal and draws its legitimacy from the lies propagated men of Western culture (Fanon 1963: 173).

This is a point Appiah has already drawn on, and Fanon also anticipates the same ambiguities as Appiah. The formation of this society was for the Negro from the Diaspora as well as for Negroes from the continent to rally together in search of something called an ‘African culture’. This search was fruitless because the Negroes from the Diaspora as well as those from the continent did not share the same struggle:

The American Negroes realized that the objective problems were fundamentally heterogeneous. The test cases of civil liberty whereby both whites and blacks in America try to drive back racial discrimination have very little in common with their principles and objectives with the heroic fight with of the Angolan people against the detestable Portuguese colonialism. Thus, during the second congress of the African Cultural Society the American Negroes decided to create an American society for the people of black culture (Fanon 1963: 174).

As I have discussed in chapter two, the racialized Negro is one riddled with ambiguities, the concept of the Negro was on a continental scale, “for the colonist, the Negro was neither Angolan nor a Nigerian, for he simply spoke of ‘the Negro’... Colonialism’s condemnation [was] continental in its scope” (Fanon 1963: 170). In response (as discussed in chapter 3), the native intellectual minimized the diversity of African life into a single metaphysical conception of the Negro. But, as Appiah also noted, the native intellectual has become estranged to his people, and to reintegrate himself, the native will seek an African culture, and not a national culture, in which the people are conscious of their reality. A nation focussed on realizing the reality of the colonial situation and to face that reality in a way that is productive for the future of African intellectualism.

In the search for national consciousness, what Franz Fanon is looking for is a national culture, not a Negro culture:

To fight for a national culture means in the first place to fight for the liberation of the nation, that material keystone which makes the building of a culture possible (Fanon 1963: 187).

National culture is the fight and realization of the colonized people to fight the colonial structure, and to immerse themselves in current affairs, not to move backwards to try find justification for a Negro culture that once was there prior to the colonial era. As we have seen, colonialism took Africa as a continent and Africans responded as a continent, but as both Appiah and Fanon acknowledge they were simply reacting in the wrong direction. To quote Fanon:

We must not therefore be content with delving into the past of a people in order to find coherent elements which will counteract colonialism’s attempts to falsify and harm. We must work and fight with the same rhythm as the people to construct the future and to prepare the ground where vigorous shoots are already spring up. A national culture is not a folklore, nor an abstract populism that believes it can discover the people’s true nature... A national culture is the whole body of efforts made by a people in the sphere of thought to describe, justify and praise the action through which that people has created itself in existence (Fanon 1963: 188).

In search for a national culture, the native intellectual needs to look at the situation of his people and work from that standpoint. It is no good reverting back to pre-colonial times in search of a culture or some form of validation. This is a point I would agree with vehemently. However, that is not to say that there is nothing from a pre-colonial African past that is worth keeping. I am sure Appiah and Fanon are not implying that we should discard pre-colonial ties, but I do think they do not place much of their focus on preserving or defending those ties.

In the next section, I will examine the sprachgeist of African literature from a nativist perspective and show the importance of focussing on preserving African languages from the impending doom of globalization.

4.4 Decolonizing the Mind

In an article published in *The Economist*, titled, *South African Tongues under Threat*, the issue of indigenous languages facing extinction in South Africa is brought forward due to the threat of English's dominance in South African education. Although English is "the mother tongue of just 8% of the people" (The Economist, 2011), its dominance in South African life is rampant. "Its hegemony may even threaten the long term survival of the country's African languages" (ibid).

This is due to Apartheid in South Africa which made English and Afrikaans the two national languages. Yet "16 years after the advent of black majority rule, English reigns supreme. Not only is it the medium of business, finance, science and the internet, but also of government, education, broadcasting, the press, advertising, street signs, consumer products and the music industry" (ibid). The irony is that most South Africans (almost 80% of the population) do not speak English as a first language, yet most students are taught in English. In an effort "to give non-English speaking children a leg up the government agreed last year that pupils should be taught in their mother tongue for at least the first three years of primary school" (ibid). But this has not been a successful endeavour due to the fact that this is not done outside of rural areas nor is it "financially and logistically feasible" (ibid).

In the education system, most students prefer to learn in English or Afrikaans, and "[a]t universities African-language departments are closing" (ibid). The black elite prefer to send their children to English speaking schools because English is viewed as a better future prospect and it is generally "regarded as a sign of modernity, sophistication and power" (ibid). It is true that English has become a global language, and proficiency in English makes communication with the majority of the world (and the African continent) much easier. However this should not be at the cost of other marginalized languages.

In his book, *Decolonising the Mind*, Ngugi works through some important factors relating to African languages, colonisation and a suitable way forward for African (or marginalized) languages in all aspects of intellectual life. He identifies what he coins 'the fatalistic logic' in African literature, which is prevalent in Appiah's work. The fatalistic logic is the commonly held notion that African literature should be written in (better developed) European languages, whilst still "[carrying] the weight of our

African experience by, for instance, making them 'prey' on African proverbs and other particularities of African speech and folklore" (Ngugi 1986: 07). This is similar to the positivistic logic of European languages I had already mentioned above.

In *Decolonising the Mind*, Ngugi criticises Afro-European (African writers using European languages in literature) writers for their negligence of African languages and their failure thereof to develop them. His intention is not to advocate for eradication of their work but rather to open up space for a different vantage point:

If in these essays I criticise the Afro-Europeans (or Euro-African) choice of our linguistic praxis, it is not to take away from the talent and the genius of those who have written in English, French or Portuguese. On the contrary I am lamenting a neo-colonial situation which has meant the European bourgeoisie once again stealing our talents and geniuses as they have stolen our economies... Europe is stealing the treasures of the mind to enrich their languages and cultures. Africa needs back its economy, its politics, its culture, its language and all its patriotic writers (Ngugi 1986: xii).

This means that even though Ngugi may be a nativist and a nationalist for African literature, he does not mean to take away from the established status quo within the literary sphere, but to bring in a different dimension to it. The most suitable starting point in examining Ngugi is to examine the reasons behind his perceived need to move away from what he calls the 'imperialist tradition' into a more recognizable, and admired African intellectual class.

As we saw with Fanon (and Steve Biko), "colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures and destroys it" (Fanon 1963: 169). Although Fanon was in search of a national consciousness, he shares much the same sentiments as Ngugi when it comes to imperialism:

[T]he biggest weapon wielded and actually daily unleashed by imperialism against [the] collective defiance is the cultural bomb. The effects of a cultural bomb is to annihilate a peoples belief in their names, in their languages, in their environment, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities and ultimately in themselves. It makes them see their past as one wasteland of non-achievement and it makes them want to distance themselves from that wasteland (Ngugi 1986: 03).

It is through this mind-set that inferiority complexes are created and maintained. The native language is replaced by the colonial tongue and the latter is given greater value and prestige. Ngugi

aims to rectify some of these misconceptions by giving marginalized languages the value and authenticity they deserve. This is not an act of reversing back to past traditions as we saw with Fanon's third phase intellectual, it is an act of finding a way to move forward, whilst not neglecting to rectify past misconceptions. This, I think, is the way forward for African intellectualism.

Through their entrenchment in Western pedagogy, the native intellectual has neglected and marginalized their vernacular tongue, in search of a universality that is thought to bring greater significance to African education. In the first chapter of his book, Ngugi tells us about a conference he attended at Makerere University in 1962, where African writers met to discuss the future of African literature in the continent and what was to be the content of African literature:

The debate which followed was animated: Was it literature about Africa or about the African experience? Was it literature written by Africans? What about a non-African who wrote about Africa: Did his work qualify as African literature? Or were African languages the criteria? OK: what about Arabic, was it not foreign to Africa? What about French and English, which had become African languages? What if an European wrote about Europe in an African language? (Ngugi 1986: 06).

Ironically, the conference completely excluded writers who wrote in African languages. Most participants in the conference, including Chinua Achebe, Gabriel Okara and Amos Tutuola, to name a few, were of the opinion that European languages could be used "to carry the weight of [their] African experience by, for instance, making them 'prey' on African proverbs and other particularities of African speech and folklore" (Ngugi 1986: 07).

The likes of Achebe and Okara advocated for the fatalistic logic, claiming that English, French and Portuguese can carry the experience of the African people adequately. To directly quote Okara's stance in the matter:

Some may regard this way of writing English as a descriptive of the language. This is of course not true. Living languages grow like living things, and English is far from a dead language. There are American, West Indian, Australian, Canadian and New Zealand versions of English. All of them add life and vigour to the language while reflecting their own perspective cultures. Why shouldn't there be a Nigerian or West African English which we can use to express our own ideas, thinking and philosophy in our own way? (Ngugi 1986: 09).

Chinua Achebe also presents an argument for this kind of fatalistic logic, in a journal article entitled *English and the African Writer*, Achebe deals with the question of African literature and also makes reference to the conference held in 1962 at Makerere University. Achebe stands juxtaposed to

Ngugi. Achebe sees English as a unifying factor for Africa, whilst Ngugi, who is not against the use of English in African literature, contrasts Achebe in that he does not place as much value to English as Achebe.

Achebe's stance is clean and precise, and I think it represents the opinion of many African writers and intellectuals. Africa, as we have seen, is a colonial invention, Achebe shares the same sentiment, "these nations were created in the first place by the intervention of the British which (I hasten to add), is not saying that the peoples comprising these nations were invented by the British" (Achebe 1997: 344). With this in mind, Achebe claims that colonialism's invention of Africa brought with it good and bad repercussions, but the good should not be over shadowed by the bad. What colonialism did, according to Achebe, is bring Africa together, it created "big political units where there were small, scattered ones before" (ibid). By doing this, colonialism brought Africans together, but above and beyond that, colonialism gave Africans languages which made communication between Africans on the continent much easier. "The only reason why we can even talk about African unity is that when we get together we have a manageable number of languages with which to communicate" (Achebe 1997: 344-45). With the invention of Africa comes the invention of the intellectual:

Those African writers who have chosen to write in English are not unpatriotic smart alecs, with an eye on the main chance outside their countries. They are by-products of the same process that made the new nation-states of Africa (Achebe 1997: 344).

It is easier, according to Achebe, to communicate between intellectuals and writers who share a common language throughout a broader spectrum of people across the world. Achebe makes the example of his first physical encounter with Joseph Kariuki, a Kenyan English writer. They had only met through their work, and upon meeting for the first time, Achebe seemed to click with Kariuki in a much deeper way than he did when he met Shabaan Robert. Robert is also a writer, but not an English writer, he is a Swahili poet. Achebe chronicles their meeting as follows:

We spent some time talking about writing, but there was no real contact. I knew from all that I was talking to an important writer, but just how important I had no idea. He gave me two books of his poems which I treasure but cannot read – until I have learned Swahili (Achebe 1997: 345).

This problem, according to Achebe, is not only one shared in Africa and the Diaspora, it is a global phenomenon. During a trip Achebe took to Brazil, he realized the dilemma faced by Brazilian writers who write predominantly in Portuguese, although they gave their fellow Brazilians a great

understanding of their literature, they were restricted to Brazil and few Portuguese speaking countries. One of the poets he encountered even went as far as saying “she had given serious thought to writing in French!” (Achebe 1997: 346). This is why Achebe feels the need to write in a world language, a language which is understood and shared throughout the world, and colonialism, despite its negative mishaps, made this possible.

Achebe presents a valid argument, and it is true that Euro-African writers have produced profound and prolific literature which has enhanced African intellectualism drastically. And although he does advocate for a world language to create literature, he still doesn’t take away from those who choose to write in vernacular, but for him English is his strongest platform. However, I do think Achebe sidesteps the important issues involved in the debate of African literature and vernacular tongue. Achebe claims that:

The real question is not whether Africans could write in English, but whether they ought to. Is it right that a man should abandon his mother tongue for someone else’s? It looks like a dreadful betrayal, and produces a guilty feeling. But for me there is no other choice. I have been given this language and I intend to use it. I hope though that there will always be men, like the late Chief Fagunwa, who will choose to write in their native tongue and ensure that our ethnic literatures will flourish side by side with the national ones. For those of us who opt for English, there is much work ahead and much excitement. (Achebe 1997: 348)

This is a resonating statement, however, it sounds more like a submission to English than a critical discourse. Achebe and Appiah both seem to sidestep the relevant issues in Africa, and restrict African intellectualism to a world language rather than trying to bring African intellectualism closer to the people who need and appreciate it more. The average African speaks vernacular and is not fluent in English and French, therefore, the literature produced by African intellectuals is not for the African people, it is for the world. Achebe quotes Obi Wali as saying “Until these writers [Euro-African writers] and their Western midwives accept the fact that any true African literature must be written in African languages, they are merely pursuing a dead end, which can only lead to sterility, uncreativity, and frustration” (Achebe 1997: 347). There will be those like Wali, who will strive to keep African intellectualism and literature close to the African people and there will be those like Ngugi, who will support Wali, yet also not ostracise people like Achebe and Appiah as Wali has harshly done.

There are very creative and critical discourses happening in African intellectualism. The fact that they are written in a colonial tongue does not make them ‘sterile’ nor ‘uncreative’. The work

produced by Achebe et al is work that is important to African literature, and even though it is in English, Achebe does “feel that the English language will be able to carry the weight of [his] African experience. But it will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home, but altered to suit its new African surroundings” (Achebe 1997: 349). This, I think, should not be at the expense of annihilating other marginalized languages and leaving the important critical questions unchecked. Africa inherited these outside languages through a brutal encounter with the West, before these languages can be used, they need to be cleansed of their brutality. It is not enough to say, this language was thrust upon you, and as such you intend to use it. Critical questions have to be asked, psychological effects have to be checked. Although Achebe and Appiah seem very content to accept this fatalistic logic, Ngugi delves deeper into the issue at hand. Ngugi appreciates the fact that these languages are here, they have produced some of his, and other African writers most inspiring and enriching works, but the trails of the past have to be retraced, and rectified, so the future is not as distorted as the past.

As I have shown in chapter two, the introduction of English, intellectualism and Pan-Africanism in Africa was not based on a mutual respect between the West and Africa. The introduction of colonial education was based on the goal of cleansing the savagery of African life, and replacing it with more ‘sophisticated’ and more ‘advanced’ methods of the West. In colonial schools, Western languages were the languages of power and prestige, Ngugi recalls his early education experience:

English became the language of my formal education. In Kenya, English became more than a language: it was the language, and all others had to bow before it in deference. Thus one of the most humiliating experiences was to be caught speaking Gikuyu in the vicinity of the school. The culprit was given corporal punishment – three to five strokes of the cane on bare buttocks – or was made to carry a metal plate around the neck with inscriptions such as I AM STUPID or I AM A DONKEY. Sometimes the culprits were fined money they could hardly afford. And how did the teachers catch the culprits? A button was initially given to one pupil who was supposed to hand it out over to whoever was caught speaking his mother tongue. Whoever had the button at the end of the day would sing who had given it to him and the ensuing process would bring out all the culprits of the day. Thus children were turned into witch hunters and in the process were being taught the lucrative value of being a traitor to one’s immediate community (Ngugi 1986: 11).

These thought processes that are developed at an early age are the past distortions that need to be addressed. The relationship that is mentally embedded with an individual between English and their mother tongue is not a healthy exchange of culture and intellect. What English means for the African

is not the same as what it would mean for the Danish for example. "Language, any language has a dual character: it is both a means of communication and a carrier of a culture" (Ngugi 1986: 13). Ngugi makes the comparison between the British, Swedish and Danish interpretation of English in comparison to the people of East and West Africa:

For Swedish and Danish people English is only a means of communication with non-Scandinavians. It is not a carrier of their culture. For the British, and particularly the English, it is additionally, and inseparably from its use as a tool of communication, a carrier of their national culture and history (Ngugi 1986: 13).

The circumstances are different in Africa:

Take Swahili in East and Central Africa. It is widely used as a means of communication across many nationalities. But it is not the carrier of a culture and history in many of those nationalities (ibid).

African culture and history is tainted and entrenched in Western history and culture and as such, attitudes towards Western languages are viewed differently in Africa than in other parts of the world where English (or other European languages) were introduced differently. English in the colonial school is seen as an intellectual marvel, Gikuyu was seen as demeaning in colonial schools where English was revered:

The attitude to English was the exact opposite: any achievement in spoken or written English was highly rewarded; prizes, prestige, applause; the ticket to higher realms. English became the measure of intelligence and ability in the arts, the sciences, and all the other branches of learning. English became the main determinant of a child's progress up the ladder of formal education (Ngugi 1986: 12).

In colonial education, it did not matter whether one excelled in science or Nature study, if a person failed English and only English they had failed the year. This was the attitude in the colonial schooling system and it remained the attitude of my educational system, years beyond colonialism and Apartheid. This attitude goes beyond language, it goes deeper, it penetrates the lives and mindsets of intellectuals, individuals, and more especially, those in the process of creating a critical discourse for Africa. I do not think Africans need to reject colonial tongues, but there are some aspects that need to be challenged, especially those pertaining to inferiority complexes.

Appiah does try to address the issue of inferiority complexes in African students. In order to deal with these complexes, Appiah claims that three things need to be done:

First, identify accurately the situation of the modern African text as a product of the colonial encounter (an neither as the simple continuation of an indigenous tradition nor as a mere intrusion from the metropole). Second, stress that the continuities between pre-colonial forms of culture and contemporary ones are nevertheless genuine (and thus provide a modality through which students can value and incorporate the African past); and third, challenge directly the assumption of the cultural superiority of the West, both by undermining the aestheticized conceptions of literary value that it presupposes (Appiah 1992:70).

This proposition is fair enough, and I think Appiah and Ngugi would agree on this point. However, I think Ngugi went further than identifying what needs to be done and actually provided a way in which these problems can be solved. Furthermore, he has given an accurate depiction of the ills that plague the African novel, the African student and the African educational system. Ngugi promotes African nativism while still keeping an eye out for the integration of African intellectualism into the global sphere without the evils of colonialism lingering on.

I think it is not enough to simply embrace Africa's entrenchment in Western pedagogy, certain misconceptions must be addressed before this is done. There are people like Appiah who think that creating an educational system out of African languages is a complex and unnecessary endeavour. Why bother when we have inherited more well developed European languages that will accurately express our 'African-ness'? I think Ngugi's response to this is adequate and simple:

We as African writers have always complained about the neo-colonial economic and political relationship to Euro-America. Right. But our continuing to write in foreign languages, paying homage to them, we are not on the cultural level continuing that neo-colonial slavish and cringing spirit? What is the difference between a politician who says Africa cannot do without imperialism and the writer who says Africa cannot do without European languages? While we are busy haranguing the ruling circles in a language which automatically excluded the participation of the peasantry and the working class in the debate, imperialist culture and African reactionary forces had a field day (Ngugi 1986: 26).

There is something distinctly wrong with letting African languages diminish simply because we (Africans) have been given 'tools' and 'we intend to use them'. It is not fair to accept our entrenchment simply because it is easier to do so rather than developing African indigenous languages. Afrikaans is the youngest language in the world, yet it is the carrier of a culture and nation, and it is used widely in Southern Africa to educate at primary schools, high schools and

universities. I see no reason why African languages cannot evolve as Afrikaans has done. “The Christian bible is available in unlimited quantities in even the tiniest African language” (ibid), yet doubts about the relevance and possibility of producing novels, text books, and academic literature in African languages. This does not take away anything from writers who have produced African literature, Ngugi calls them Afro-European writers, or “literature written by Africans in European languages. It has produced many writers and works of genuine talent: Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Ayi Kwei Armah, Sembene Ousmane, Agostino Neto, Sedar Senghor and many others. Who can deny their talent?” (Ngugi 1986: 27). These are great writers, but, according to Ngugi, they are Afro-European writers and their work will always be constricted to the “era of imperialism” (ibid). African literature, according to Ngugi, will only begin to appear when Africans begin to write in African languages. African writers need to do “what Spencer, Milton, and Shakespeare did for English; What Pushkin and Tolstoy did for Russian” (Ngugi 1986: 29). As Ngugi wa Thiong’o has done for Gikuyu, we need to create an African literature that preserves a legacy for generations to follow, those that follow must not still be stuck in the same imperialist rut, a sense of self needs to be solidified in current and future African intellectuals.

There is another generation of African intellectuals that are to follow, and I think there needs to be a clear distinction between African literature and Afro-European literature. This does not take anything away from any of the two genres, they are both relevant and important but the distinction must be made in order to create, promote and sustain the relevance of African languages and their importance in African intellectualism. This is the attitude that should radiate in African intellectualism now and in the years to follow, as Ngugi said:

I do not want to see Kenyan children growing up in that imperialist imposed tradition of contempt for the tools of communication developed by their communities and their history. I want them to transcend colonial alienation. Colonial alienation takes two interlinked forms: an active (or passive) distancing of oneself from the reality around; and an active (or passive) identification with that which is most external to one’s environment. It starts with a deliberate disassociation of the language of conceptualisation, of thinking, of formal education, of mental development, from the language of daily interaction in the home and the community. It’s like separating the mind from the body so that they are occupying two unrelated linguistic spheres in the same person. (Ngugi 1986: 28)

There is, what Ngugi calls, ‘a harmony’ which needs to be created for the African scholar, “with that harmony between himself, his language and his environment as his starting point, he can learn other languages and even enjoy the positive humanistic, democratic and revolutionary elements in other

people's literatures and without any complexes about his own language, his own self, his environment" (Ngugi 1986: 28-29). It is only after this harmony has been established that the African scholar can expand into the literature and languages of others, it takes a mental rebooting on the part of the scholar and of society to accomplish this, not merely challenging the superiority of the West, but also placing emphasis and value in African literature. The African scholar must acknowledge their encounter with colonialism, but also challenge the rhetoric of the colonial experience on a larger scale. They should not merely accept this encounter lying down, and they should remove and acknowledge its drawbacks.

Appiah's three steps are merely a starting point. Ngugi, a nativist, offers a productive way forward, a way which develops the African language in order to form or write a novel. This is not to say that he did not encounter problems along the way, Ngugi describes his detention in prison cell 16 after his arrest by the Kenyan government which eventually led to his exile. In prison he was not allowed a pen and paper for that was the most dangerous weapon he could yield, and so he made do with course toilet paper and a pen, "toilet paper at Kamiti was meant to punish prisoners" Ngugi remembers, "But what was bad for the body was good for the pen" (Ngugi 1986: 74). It was in prison that Ngugi made his first attempt at writing a novel (only using toilet paper), in Gikuyu. Needless to say, it was a daunting task:

I would write a paragraph in the evening sure of how it read, only later to find it could be read in a different way which completely altered the meaning. I could only solve the problem by severely controlling the context of words in a sentence, and that of sentences in a paragraph, and that of the paragraph within the entire situation of the occurrence of the action in time and space. Yes, words did slip and slide under my own eyes. They would not stay in place. They would not stay still. And this was often a matter of great frustration (Ngugi 1986: 75).

Finding the right way to develop Gikuyu was a challenge for Ngugi, developing the right syntax where he could find or use the correct 'fiction language':

The biggest problem then, and what I think still is the biggest problem facing growth and development of the African novel, is finding the appropriate 'fiction language'. That is with fiction itself taken as a form of language, with which to effectively communicate with ones targeted audience: that is, in my case, the people I left behind (ibid).

The audience Ngugi left behind is the peasant majority that he was writing about but could not connect with because of linguistic constraints. Those that did write in Gikuyu, such as Gakaara wa

Wanjau, were detained and their books banned, as such, writing in the Gikuyu language did not develop. Others who wrote in Gikuyu were missionaries and their sole purpose for learning Gikuyu was to communicate their own agendas and had no intention of developing the language for any other purpose. Ngugi's attempt to write in Gikuyu required him to develop a syntax, he was faced "with basic questions of tense, even those of changing visual impression of words on paper. Words and tenses were even more slippery because of the unsatisfactory Gikuyu orthography. Gikuyu language had been reduced to writing by non-native speakers such as European missionaries and they could not always identify the various lengths of vowels. The distinction between short and long vowels is very important in Gikuyu prose and poetry" (Ngugi 1986: 74).

Aside from these problems, Ngugi was also faced with the problem of content, "content with which the people could identify or which would force them to take sides is necessary. Content is ultimately the arbiter of form" (Ngugi 1986: 78). He aimed for a subject matter which would resonate with the everyday struggle of the reader. He had to delve into the "reality of the neo-colony" (ibid), his historical situation had to reflect "what is universal – that is, applicable to the widest possible scale in time and space – in its minutest particularity as a felt experience" (ibid). With all these factors in mind, the African writer and intellectual can then begin to write a novel in vernacular and develop the novel in a way that is particular and universal.

The next problem is, of course, hooking your reader to your reality, as Ngugi expresses it, "How does a writer, a novelist, shock his reader when they themselves, the neo-slaves, are openly announcing the fact on the rooftops?" (Ngugi 1986: 80). How does a writer present to his reader the reality of their situation when the reader is in the midst of it? For Ngugi, satire is the best way. In his novel *Wizard of the Crow*, Ngugi writes a tantalizing portrayal of the neo-colonial situation of Africa in satire. Not only does it suck you in with its satire, humour and imagination, it opens up your mind to the reality of the African neo-colonial situation in a way that connects with the reader, whether it is a reader from Europe or a peasant from Africa. Because *Wizard of the Crow* was first written in Gikuyu and later translated to English, it reached a wider audience. Ngugi incorporated elements from African orality, writing in a way that made the story easy to read for an English reader whilst still making it flexible enough to be told in an oral fashion.

The next and final problem is getting the book out to the masses. Publishing houses are very reluctant to sell books written in vernacular because they fear it will not sell. This is a valid fear based on the notion that the people the book is written for, do not buy books:

The distribution of the novel [is] a challenge to the publishers... the structure of bookshops, libraries and other information centres was geared to serve the urban English-educated sectors. The urban poor and rural areas had really no access to luxuries in between hard covers. They are presumed to be illiterate –which they are – and poor – which they mostly are (Ngugi 1986: 83).

This turns out to be a self-fulfilling prophecy, they are poor and illiterate, therefore they cannot buy books, and therefore, there is no need for bookshops and libraries in rural areas. This means that the culture of borrowing and reading books in rural areas is underdeveloped. But this mentality was challenged when Ngugi was publishing and distributing *Caitani Mutharabaini*, or his famous novel, *Devil on the cross*, which was published and written in Gikuyu:

The publishers often used their vans or mobile bookshop. They experimented in various ways: like leaving several copies at some shops or stalls on a sale or return basis. But some enthusiastic readers would buy the books from the publisher in bulks of five, ten or twenty and on their own initiative would take the copies to rural areas and plantations (Ngugi 1986: 84).

The reception received was so great in the plantations and rural areas that more had to be sent, and many letters of thanks came pouring in. As a matter of fact the publisher had never sold so many copies. The book went on to sell 150 000 copies and was translated into English, Swedish, Norwegian and German. The ultimate aim is to see the book being translated into IsiZulu and Igbo. Ngugi stresses the need to develop and sustain the art of translation, “which would be studies in schools and colleges... Each thing will be feeding on every other thing, in a dialectical sense, to create a progressive movement in the African novel and literature” (Ngugi 1986: 85).

There is a lot of work required in producing and maintaining African literature in vernacular, but this does not make it impossible. It depends on the willingness of the intellectual “a willing writer... a willing translator... a willing publisher... a progressive state... and a willing readership” (ibid).

In this chapter, I have elaborated on the different ways that certain Pan-Africanist works can create a bridge for African intellectualism so that African intellectualism can incorporate itself into a cosmopolitan world on equal footing. I have shown that contrary to what Appiah has said, nativism can be a constructive way of enriching African intellectualism. I have used the work of Ngugi Wa Thiong’o to show that there is a need for the centre to shift and move away from a single universal centre in the West. The need to develop marginalized languages is a necessity, and although it will be challenging, Ngugi has shown that it is not impossible. In the next chapter I will be looking at how

African intellectualism should start looking from the particular to the cosmopolitan outlook. Using the work of Appiah, I will show how cosmopolitanism could create a space for African intellectualism to grow and diversify into works that represent all aspects of African intellectualism in a way that is fair.

5. Cosmopolitanism

I am human: Nothing human is alien to me
- Publius Terentius Afer

In his book *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*, Appiah uses much of his own experiences and background being born to a English mother and Ghanaian father and later becoming a citizen of the United States of America has made him the ideal global citizen. What Appiah tries to bring across in *Cosmopolitanism* is a balance where global citizens can have a universal outlook without losing local allegiances. Appiah does not take the drastic stance of eliminating nation-states all together, in fact his insistence on having local allegiance is ardent.

Cosmopolitanism “refers to a philosophy that urges us all to be ‘citizens of the world’ creating a worldwide community of humanity committed to common values” (Cohen & Vertovec 2002: 07). This is not a new concept, it dates back to ancient Greece, and it is this concept of global citizenship that I think African intellectualism and Pan-Africanism should be working towards. Cosmopolitanism can be used in a variety of different fields, it can be used in cultural studies, law, philosophy or it can just be a shared attitude, as Appiah noted, “Cosmopolitanism and patriotism, unlike nationalism, are both sentiments more than ideologies” (Appiah 1997: 619). Martha Nussbaum views cosmopolitanism as a form of compassion, stemming from the particular to the global: “compassion is an emotion rooted, probably in our biological heritage . . . we form attachments to the local first, and only learn to have compassion for people who are outside of our own immediate circle. For many Americans, that expansion of moral concern stops at the national boundary” (Nussbaum 2002: xii).

Cosmopolitanism insistence on recognizes the locality of people, it recognizes that in order to accept cosmopolitanism, it is not a requirement to detach yourself from your particular centre. There can be patriotism and diversity within cosmopolitanism. Appiah describes cosmopolitan patriotism as someone who “can entertain the possibility of a world in which *everyone* is a rooted cosmopolitan, attached to a home of one’s own, with its own cultural particularities but taking pleasure from the presence of the other” (Appiah 1997: 618).

Because cosmopolitanism moves from the roots of one’s locality to the global whole, it does not face the same criticism that universalism faces, where universalism is taken as a form of Eurocentricity. Cultural imperialism is what universalism does when it is presented to other cultures, it comes as a better solution to certain cultures, especially in Africa, and imposes itself on people. Appiah says

cultural imperialism in today's globalized world is driven further and faster by media and corporations, which push their own agendas in order to dominate the market. As pervasive as cultural imperialism is, it underestimates the ability of certain localities to resist. Appiah uses the example of an American soap opera "Days of Lives" and how it is watched in South Africa, by township dwellers. As much as they enjoy the drama, there are certain parts of it that they might disagree with, namely the early ages with which women start dating in American dramas compared to South Africa.

In *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers* Appiah draws on a lot of his own experiences, and throughout the book, the reader is taken around the world, as examples of different cultural values and norms are explored. Rather than giving a stringent academic picture of Cosmopolitanism, Appiah has written *Cosmopolitanism* in such a way that shows that the subtle cultural interconnections amongst people go a long way in determining how people from different places interact.

Cosmopolitanism, according to Appiah is more of a conversation amongst people. It creates spaces for people to get to know each other, even though they may not agree. Disagreement, to Appiah is not a sign of failure, rather it is insistence on 'facts' that causes most friction amongst differing people. In his second chapter "Escape from Positivism", Appiah argues that positivism's insistence on empirical facts gets in the way of productive conversation.

Positivism, defined in *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* is "holding that the highest or only form of knowledge is the description of sensory phenomena". For Appiah, facts depend on what one already believes and what ideas one already has:

The positivist seems to be suggesting that if we can't answer the question "where is this fact?" or meet the command "show me the evidence" then there can't be any true beliefs about the subject matter (Appiah 2006: 23)

Positivism is too rigid, how one sees the world will be formed by their surroundings, and if scientific fact is how you choose to see the world, you should not expect your facts to trump someone who chooses to believe in witchcraft for instance. If, according to Appiah, you choose to define unclean water that is making children sick 'contaminated by bacteria' it is no different to someone's understanding of choosing to define the very same water as 'contaminated by evil spirits'. Cosmopolitanism is not about agreeing all the time, it's a willingness to be open to discussion.

If defining things by spirits or witchcraft is how people have formed their beliefs, if that is how their everyday lives have been carrying on, then very seldom will reason be the main catalyst to inspire change. Peoples perspective, says Appiah, is usually changed gradually:

Reasoning – by which I mean the public act of exchanging stated justifications – comes in not when we are going on in the usual way, but when we are thinking about change. And when it comes to change, what moves people is often not an argument from a principle, not a long discussion about values, but just a gradually acquired new way of seeing things” (Appiah 2006: 73)

It is an appreciation for this type of conversation that I think Pan-Africanism can grow, Appiah is using the word ‘conversation’ both literally and metaphorically where there is “engagement with the experience and ideas of others ... conversation does not have to lead to consensus about anything, especially not values, it’s enough that people get used to one another” (Appiah 2006: 85).

It is through conversation that people get to see how alike they are in their diversity. We have, according to Appiah, shared universal *values*, so, even though we may not agree on what *being* polite is, we all have a idea of *politeness*, “cross cultural analysis reveals that there really are some basic mental traits that are universal ... practices like music, poetry dance, marriage, funerals, values resembling courtesy, hospitality, sexual modesty [and] generosity” (Appiah 2006: 96-97). Although I am sceptical here with the use of the term *universal*, having shared values is something the global community can relate too. With the cosmopolitan idea in mind, I think African intellectualism will not only grow richer within its own African diversity, but with different influences that are already in African intellectualism (some, for better or worse from colonialism), African ways of thinking can expand to greater lengths.

If we can look to works from the West with a more sober critical eye and not accept them blindly as Crummel and Blyden had previously done, but with a touch less animosity, we can choose those aspects that can help the African discourse grow. More than that, if we also look at other cultures and other discourses that we had not considered, we could find concepts that will enrich rather than harm our own discourse. As Appiah says “the machinery of the human mind is the same everywhere” (Appiah 2006: 94).

There are two criticisms of cosmopolitanism that I find interesting. The first is that cosmopolitanism contaminates cultures, and the second is that cosmopolitanism is only for those who have the luxury of travel and exposure. Cultural contamination does not hold much ground because, as Appiah says, cultural purity is not only difficult to achieve, it is not good for societies. Cultural contamination has

been happening for a long time, according to Appiah, cultures have been contaminated before the advent of globalization. Therefore, it is not a new phenomenon, and it is a phenomenon that should be encouraged:

We do not need, have never needed, settled community, a homogenous system of values, in order to have a home. Cultural purity is an oxymoron. The odds are that, culturally speaking, you already are living in a cosmopolitan life, enriched by literature, art and film that are from many places, and that contain influences from many more (Appiah 2006: 111).

Cosmopolitanism of literature, art and film seems almost inevitable and this is why Appiah had previously said that it was impossible for Africa to escape Europe and all the contamination that followed. Appiah goes as far as saying that the contamination of cultures is also very necessary, it creates diversity which strengthens rather than weakens a culture. Being able to incorporate certain values from other cultures whilst being fully rooted in your own locality is exactly what I think African intellectualism needs.

I think the intellectual re-invigoration of Pan-Africanism can do with some contamination but not at the expense of cultural imperialism. Pan Africanism needs to re-examine its foundations, and the foundation of Pan-Africanism is riddled with cultural imperialism.

Cosmopolitanism almost seems bigger than it is when it is spoken of from a global point of view. It gives the impression that cosmopolitanism is a phenomenon that requires one to be well travelled and well versed in world literature. However, this is not the case. In an Essay titled *Cosmopolitanism from Below: Some Ethical Lessons from the Slums of Mumbai*, Arjun Appadurai gives an account of how cosmopolitanism can happen within a single locality, namely Mumbai. Appadurai shows how, within the city of Mumbai, there are many different cultures, religions and languages and new forms of each still forming. Mumbai is a cosmopolitan city:

Cosmopolitanism in Mumbai is rarely identified with self-cultivation, universalism or with the ideals of globalism with which it is historically linked in the Enlightenment Europe. Rather, it is primarily identified with cultural co-existence, the positive valuation of mixture and intercultural contact, the refusal of monoculturalism as a governing value, and a strong sense of the inherent virtues of rubbing shoulders with those who speak other languages, eat other foods, worship other gods, and wear their clothes differently (Appadurai 2013: 200).

This kind of mixing is happening everywhere in the world, within our own localities we are thrust by recognizing first that Africa is not a homogenous whole, and recognizing the cosmopolitanism within Africa, African intellectualism can move from single localities, to the global whole and enrich

literature, academia, the arts and sciences on a global scale. I hope that my research can lead to such a re-thinking of Pan-Africanism and African intellectualism, so that Pan-Africanism can be revived to accommodate not only knowledge from the past but also the changing trends in academia and research so that African scholarship can be a recognizable and formidable contender on a global scale.

into the other on a daily basis, we are no longer living as homogenous cities. Each day, we encounter the throes of cosmopolitanism and interact with what is different from us, as such, you do not need to be well travelled or well-read to encounter cosmopolitanism. By embracing the diversity within itself and interacting with the global community, I think African intellectualism will become a richer and more diverse discourse, a discourse that can look upon itself critically.

6. Conclusion

The aim of my thesis was to shed light on the trajectory that African intellectualism has taken and the consequences thereof. In the first chapter I used the works of the founding fathers of Pan-Africanism to show that for all the good they tried to achieve, the founding fathers of Pan-Africanism left residues of their own prejudices about Africa in their work, which reverberated throughout the Pan-Africanist movement.

Rev. Alexander Crummell and Wilmot E. Blyden's perception of Africa was tainted by their exposure to Western education and learning. What they knew and understood about Africa was informed by European institutions. Their major blunder was not taking a vested interest in learning about Africa for what it provided. They were misinformed about Africa and this misinformation has been rippling through African intellectualism ever since.

The advent of World War II gave Africans a peek into the European world and how far their own prejudice against each other could go. Thus, the Pan-Africanist movement took a different turn. African intellectuals began to write their own stories and formed a strong sense of racial solidarity. This concept of racial solidarity was forged by the founding fathers of Pan-Africanism, and it may have been necessary then, but it is unfortunate that racial solidarity continued until it reached a point where it became detrimental. Ethnic wars are an example of how racial solidarity can regress from race to tribe. It was colonization that created solidarity amongst Negroes in Africa, when colonization was over, that racial solidarity morphed into ethnic solidarity, the antithesis of white dominance had disappeared and it was replaced with a new antithesis.

Whilst Africa and the Diasporas were facing colonization, slavery and oppression, they were fighting European hegemonic dominance. So, when Europe claimed their Victorian feats were testament to their right to dominate the world, Negroes responded by showing their capabilities. W.E.B Du Bois' insistence on perfecting the Victorian etiquette for the Negro was a reaction to show that the Negro is not as incompetent as claimed by the European.

This tendency to react shows up again, with the slight difference that Post WWII Negroes were no longer competing with Victorian life, they wanted to show the relevance of their own feats in comparison to the Europeans. This is shown in Afrocentric works of Senghor and Asante, they react to European hegemony by showing that the African, who is represented as a singular metaphorical whole, is capable of separate capabilities from the European. They do exactly what the Europeans did, namely, using race to make claims about certain capabilities.

The use of race is not unexpected considering that what was at stake was white domination against Negro subjugation. However, I think that African intellectualism does need to transcend using race, especially when it is as misleading as the Egyptianists claims. When Negroes began writing their own history and stories, they were still done in Western institutions, and this, according to Appiah is a fact we cannot escape. What we as African intellectuals learn is a product of Western academia, even when we are writing for ourselves this is a fact we cannot escape. This is not only a practical point but it is also very crucial, and as we have seen, there are African intellectuals like Achebe and Appiah who have embraced the use of colonial institutions and languages.

There are those, however, who feel that the use of Western institutions need to be more accommodating of indigenous African language and make room for indigenous forms of knowledge. The likes of Ngugi have advocated for such shifts, moving the centre from the European universal to particulars. This shift to particulars needs to happen by conscientizing the negro race, there needs be a process through which the Negro is taught new forms of solidarity, not only solidarity with their racial groups, but with groups whom they share a struggle with. This is where Steve Biko's Black Consciousness comes in, where the people who share a common goal can unite under an ideology that is not only based on race. I think this is important for contemporary African intellectualism because in a world that is globalizing, the 21st century struggle is not entirely European (white) domination, there are issues of gender and class equality which transcend race and as such, the discourses on these issues need to shift accordingly with the times.

The injustices of the past put a strain on African intellectualism and African culture, and such injustices need to be eradicated. This is why I have included the work of Ngugi Wa Thiong'o. I think it is vital that marginalized African languages be given a space within African intellectualism to grow within the discourse. Colonial languages have been put up on a pedestal for far too long, and as has been noted by Achebe, they have provided not only Africa, but the world with a medium of communication that is used by billions of people. However, this convenience should not be at the expense or death of marginalized languages.

The excuses that have been put forward as reasons why certain languages are marginalized are inadequate. This is a point that Ngugi has refuted time and time again, marginalized languages are spoken by millions of people who are not considered to be part of the intellectual community. This exclusion prompts publishers and writers to marginalize those people and their languages. But as Ngugi has shown, this is a self-fulfilling prophecy, given the opportunity, these marginalized languages can reach people and create a space for diversity within intellectualism.

What I have been trying to show with my thesis is that there needs to be a different way of looking at intellectualism and it starts with examining the miniscule traits of Pan-Africanism and dissecting those traits in order to create a discourse of critical and factual African intellectualism. A discourse which needs the people, literature and languages to be able to look at their own works with pride and be able to use Western tools without neglecting their own on account of inferiority.

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