

Race Matters: Cosmopolitanism, Afropolitanism, and Pan-Africanism via Edward Wilmot Blyden

by

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Abstract

This paper interrogates the Kwame Anthony Appiah's concept of cosmopolitanism and the new paradigm of Afropolitanism in relation to Pan-Africanism. It argues that cosmopolitanism develops out of racialist discourse of 18th century Enlightenment thinkers, who created codes still operational in the stereotypes attached to blackness today. It challenges the ideas of a post-racial society, by positioning in the violence enacted on black bodies today. It further interrogates Edward Wilmot Blyden's Pan-Africanist concepts to re-situate the trajectory of the Pan-African movement in its beginnings as a global, Afro-humanist tradition.

“...the time of slavery negates the common-sense intuition of time as continuity or progression, then and now coexist; we are coeval with the dead” (Hartman, “Time of Slavery” 759)

Blakk wi blak, we nay tun back/
Blakk wi blak, we under attack
(Mutabaruka, *Blakk wi blak..k..k*)

We are at the point in which the concept of “race” has undergone radical rethinking. Resulting from scientific breakthroughs in recent scholarship, race-based theorizing, as well as race identification, is seen as outdated thinking that limits the advancement to a post-ethnic, deracinated future – a cosmopolitan ideal. Yet, “Black Lives Matter” has become the slogan for the recent sets of rallies against police brutality. So it seems that racial identities are still very much *de rigueur* in the real world, and academicians, once again, present a position that totally contradicts actuality. Public empathy against this post-millennium violence on Black bodies visibly shifted in the wake of Trayvon Martin’s death, but it took the concentrated deaths of 11 people in 2014 alone,¹ the most well-known being Eric Garner (age 46), Michael Brown (age 18), Akai Gurley (age 28), and Tamir Rice (age 12), for the acknowledgment of the sustainability of what DuBois termed the color line. Successive movements from abolitionism, anti-lynching campaigns, civil rights and its local anti-segregationist missions, to what many lauded as its teleological end, the election of the first Black president, all gave hope for this deracinated future. Race is not real, we have been told, and our most renowned cultural and philosophical critics like Paul Gilroy, in *Against Race: Imagining Political Culture Beyond the Color Line* (2000), and Kwame Anthony Appiah in *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers* (2006), have opined on how continued racialism, perverts humanistic values. The two together share the quest to denaturalize race as a signifier of human difference and its attendant forms of racialism and racism. In previous works, I specifically rebutted Gilroy’s *against race* positionality (Sterling 2012; Sterling 2007). The ubiquity of violence on Black peoples now impels my interrogation of Appiah’s concept of cosmopolitanism, as such work is used in academe as a key articulation of an idealized post-race trajectory. Like Gilroy, Appiah’s critique of racialized discourses, which admittedly came well before the events outlined here, is not against the sets of historically charged values that continue to condition and define Blacks as perverted and grotesque, that limit social, cultural, economic and transnational access, and make violence against them perfectly natural, but against the use of race as a paradigm in modern day constructs.

With the first election of Barack Obama in 2007, and the celebratory narrative proclaiming the end of racism, we were officially in a post-racial era, activated by coalitions of likeminded peoples, who simultaneously identify within and beyond race, but who collectively sought for the perfectibility of the human experience. Ironically, however, as I made my way to a friend’s apartment in Brooklyn to watch the inauguration, a young, tall, good looking Black man, asked me for a swipe on my metrocard, because he could not afford to pay the \$2.00 to take the train and dared not risk jumping the turnstile, as he knew that he could end up, if lucky, just face down on the concrete - arrested, and if not so lucky, simply dead. Yet, too, just a month previously in October 2007, right before this first “post-race” election, our leading DNA expert, James D. Watson, stated that Blacks are less intelligent than whites.

While the knowledge gained from mapping the human genome tells us that there is little to no differences between human beings, Watson claimed that testing has shown and the advanced level of testing that would develop in the next 10 years would show that Blacks did not have equal capacity to reason as whites (Milmo). Dr. Watson has apologized for his claims and negated them, but does that signify a real change in his perception or the perception of others influenced enough to see his judgments as true and valid? This begs the question that if a Nobel prize winning scientist continues to recount, affirm, and prolong the racist perceptions undergirding this society, are the inchoate blunderings of a Donald Sterling, the directed vigilantism of a George Zimmerman, or the racist emails of police officers in Ferguson² really such aberrant behaviors?

Yes!, race is a social concept and not a biological one, but does this fact eradicate racism or the history of racialism that undergirds it? The sustained violence on Black bodies and the continued modes of economic and social exclusion, tell another story and make issues of race, racialism, and racism, in the past and present, even more valuable to excavate, enumerate, and adumbrate. In the first epigram, Saadiya Hartman states that we are “coeval with the dead,” that ancestral time and the now, are one in the articulation of the myriad sustained struggles that began with the transatlantic slave trade. So, it seems, we still have to tell the world and local policing agents that Black lives matter. This article is meant to be an inquiry into the inherent tension in our globalized world, which has and continues to become much more, interactive, integrated, and demographically intertwined, yet persists with the continued sublation of the Black subject. It interrogates Kwame Appiah’s concept of cosmopolitanism in relation to Pan-Africanist thought. It analyzes cosmopolitanism’s foundational premise as the concept for this new globalized age, and as a continuity of the humanist tradition, in relation to the beginnings of Pan-Africanism and the principles set out by Edward Wilmot Blyden, who even Appiah aptly names as the “father of Pan-Africanism” (*Father’s House* 21).³

Hence, my inquiry, by necessity, goes back to 18th and 19th century discourses on/about and from the Black subject. It seems that we are living with the baggage inherited from (post) Enlightenment discourse, its stereotypes of peoples of the world, postures of domination and subordination, ideals of rationality and humanism, that having become codified in whiteness, manifests in what bell hooks terms a “terrorizing imposition” on the Black subject (341). The actuality of terror, especially since it is now conflated with radical Islamists, is never applied to the modalities of Black lives. However, Western man defined himself through a litany of terrible, terroristic, and genocidal acts that were reinforced by his definition of humanism. That Euro-humanism equals terror to the majority of non-white peoples around the world is not explored in the cosmopolitan paradigm.

Appiah's cosmopolitanism, grounded in the collective discourse of humanism and, most particularly, influenced by Kantian strains of thought, must be placed in dialogue with responses by the Black intelligentsia, and Blyden becomes the obvious choice, as his work opens the discourse from the other side of humanist thought, by accessing the strategies of those constructed and oppressed by premises of the transcendence of (white) man and his rational capacity. Through his ideations, Pan-Africanism's globality developed and flourished even despite the suppressed mobility of Black peoples in local and transnational networks, and within a system of averred global insignificance to disrupt and reshape Euro-domination.

When scrutiny is placed on Euro-humanism limitations, in its creation of man in its own image and the specific response of Black peoples to their collective systematic objectification, it opens a field of inquiry in understanding how to conceptualize the present with its reverberations of the past? How does our understanding of both past and present then transform? How does this interplay slip from moments of dialectic tension, to palimpsestic overlaps, to free floating signifiers? And what shifts in our understandings, codifications, taxonomies, stereotypes, meanings and intentions are available in the oeuvre of this time/space, i.e. past/present,now continuum? Too often are we caught in a *deus ex machina* complex that sees racism as outside of individuals. The institutionalization complexes pioneered by Saussure, Marx, Freud, Nietzsche, and Foucault show the existence of systems of knowledge, perception, and being that transcend individuality and singularly, actional behaviors. The choice for individuals was never whether to work within their flows of conditioning, but how to work in these systems for their own betterment or not. With this logic, if a police officer even as a Derridean supplement of a larger social order, is pre-conditioned to conflate blackness and criminality, until s/he understands from where that conditioning derives, how such conditioning is imbedded in our visual and discursive fields, how much of this conditioning affects his/her individual sense perception and leads to faulty logic as truth, and that human difference does not have to be apprehended as deviant, then race continues to matter.

Cosmopolitan vs. Pan-Africanism

In the 18th century bleeding into the 19th, the term cosmopolitan was coterminous with world citizenship as it conferred the title of being a citizen of the cosmos. It signified a moral code and an ideal of being, marked by open-mindedness, impartiality, use of reason and rationality to determine place and positionality in the world. It signified a sense of freedom from religious credo, political authority and dogma; the cosmopolite was unbiased, open to all, devoid of local loyalties, and free from cultural prejudices.

The term was also used to describe a sophisticate, an urbane, learned individual with a love of the arts, of literature, who traveled and enjoyed traveling, who cherished and held a network of social contacts across an international scope, and, by extension, was comfortable everywhere and with anyone. Cosmopolitanism, in these definitional modes, was a mythic construct and rather delineated the ultimate expression of individualism and the individuated nature.

Many philosophers such as Montesquieu, Voltaire, Diderot, Hume, Kant, and on the U.S. side Jefferson, identified themselves as such and even developed theoretical posturings prompted by this larger consciousness. Appiah defines his notion of cosmopolitanism as “the idea that we have obligations to others, obligations that stretch beyond those to whom we are neither related by ties of kith or kind, or even the more formal ties of a shared citizenship” and “that we take seriously the value not just of human life but of particular human lives” (xv). Being “a citizen of the world” is his ideal, and it signifies both “universal concern and respect for legitimate difference” (Appiah xv). Cosmopolitanism thus is a transnational identity that liberates one from particular, local forms of belonging, but such a cursory definition can apply to anyone who travels and is interested in different cultures. Much in line with Trouillot’s (1995) reasoning about the silences in historical narratives, Appiah only elucidates the cosmopolitan ideals of Enlightenment thinkers. Suppressed is the affective range of their myopia, their distillation of reason, and their complicity in the exploitation of darker peoples. It is as if because they dared to question the nature of the world, during a time when the world was metamorphosizing, it was/is enough to confer on them placement as *the* rational, arbiters of truth, without any exposition as to whose truth and to what purpose did these truths serve? Intellectuals pose questions and offer summary judgments about the nature of the universe and their place in it all the time, but do their opinings (like a James Watson), belie or elide their intrinsic belief systems, their own self-consciousness, self-reflexivity, or self-revolving worlds? Why should we continue to suggest that the logic of thinkers from a time so different to our own, is the epitome of intellectual inquiry, especially since these thinkers never really traveled anywhere, spoke to any of the peoples they objectified, or had much concourse with anyone who did not look like themselves? For instance, how does one reconcile the racism of a champion of liberty like Thomas Jefferson, who infamously wrote: “I advance it, therefore, as a suspicion only, that the blacks, whether originally a distinct race, or made distinct by time and circumstances, are inferior to the whites in the endowments both of body and mind” (139). How did Jefferson psychologically justify his sense of superiority with his desire for the Black female body? When he had sexual relations with Sally Hemmings, did he really think he was having relations with someone who was not quite the same human as himself? This type of schizophrenic delusion allowed racism to become rationalized, but was it rational? Trouillot points out that these enlightened thinkers could not have thought any other way, since they were men of their times.

Yet, I cannot accept this, since the nature of their inquiries were in such realms as the qualification and quantification of ontology, the quest for the perfect state, the moral good, and the warrant of aesthetic reflection; their quest for beauty and perfection entwined with their justifications of superiority, their acceptance or minimal contravention of slavery; and their ubiquitous support of colonization. Even if we are only to speak of individual thinkers, like Jefferson, as a man of his times, his belief in individual freedom and rights, and his “co-eval” support of slavery, suggests a psychological and cognitive disjunction that may well be reflective of dominant social norms at the time, but does it excuse the tacit and tangible supportive positioning of Euro-domination on the rest of the world? Since supposedly in our modernity or post, we are different in our understanding, then why do we not relegate these voices to the past, treat their works as speculative fictions, as part of an aberrant, myopic period that we must move beyond. Why are their discourses considered universal, when their rationale was so particular, limited, and contra-humanity? When the foundational structures of Western discourse, nation building, social and economic progress are derived from false constructions of who is human and their potentiality of affect in the world, we have to understand that all these beliefs, canonical postures, namings of wrongdoers in the world that we inherit must be questioned in relation to set discourses that only valued one type of people.

Appiah similarly perpetuates a reductive topos of what knowledge is in his text, and never addresses the transnational communion of Blacks like Oludah Equiano, Paul Cuffee, and J. E. Casely-Hayford, who may well have fit under the cosmopolitan paradigm, if it did not conceptually elide their existences. The only explorer/man of letters, whose depth of field Appiah analyzes is Richard Burton, who he calls an “odd blend of cosmopolitan and misanthrope” (7). Burton is a complex and controversial figure and Appiah gestures to these nuances in his characterization of Burton’s ability to buy “slaves without scruple,” but whose work gave unparalleled cultural and religious insight into the Muslim world. Appiah, however, does not question the verities of his intellectual and analytic capacity as seen within the present day reappraisal of Burton, who is now considered a formative ideologue of Orientalism, as well as bizarre, heretical, and perverted. Instead, he seems to celebrate Burton’s transnational capacity as adventurer and intellectual. His waxing on about thinkers like Montesquieu and Hume are similarly reductive because he privileges their cosmopolitan stances that “human beings are different and we can learn from these differences” (5), without addressing that they only recognized as human beings peoples similar to themselves. When he invokes Montesquieu’s, *Spirit of the Laws*, he mentions nothing of how Montesquieu viewed the darker “races,” in his creation of a hierarchal codification of humanity that linked climate and color, and indeed, how he thought that Blacks were fitting for slavery, but contradictorily opposed the system.

Neither does he mention Hume's questioning the intellectual capacity of Black peoples (we will refer to this later), nor Kant's racism. As stated previously, Appiah's concept of cosmopolitanism is based on Kantian constructs, and as Simon Gikandi points out, Immanuel Kant should be considered the "father of raciology" (598).

Kant opined that all rational beings are members in a single moral community. Characteristics they hold in common are the desire for freedom, equality, and independence. Analogous to citizens in a polity (republican sense), they generate laws for themselves. However, these common laws are moral laws grounded in reason. Kant also introduced the ideal of a cosmopolitan law, calling for global citizenship in place of local citizenships in individual nation states. This is the crux of Appiah's argument, an argument for common values or as he states, "a shared horizon of meaning," (81) and the value of "conversations across boundaries of identities," in order to learn to understand each other (84). Kant is also rightfully credited with envisioning the League of Nations, 150 years before its applicability, and on the surface, the quest for these democratizing common values is a quest for the perfectibility of humanism, in the shared recognition of our humanity and understanding of our ways of being, *but only some were human and Black lives didn't matter.*

Why Is Every Shot A Kill Shot?

Kant, like his fellow Enlightenment thinkers, could not see within the Black *other* a humanity similar to himself, but only a condition of debasement, worthy of vilification. It behooves us to examine this lengthy quotation to fully access his thoughts:

The African Negro by nature had no feelings which rise above the trifling..., although many of them have even been set free, still not a single one was ever found who presented anything great in art or science or any other praiseworthy quality, even though some continually rise aloft from the lowest rabble, and through special gifts earn respect in the world. So fundamental is the difference between these two races of man, and it appears to be as great in regard to mental capacities as in color. (Kant 110-11)

Kant builds his premises on David Hume's essay (1748), "Of National Characters," in which Hume categorically rejects any aspect of creativity or agency attributable to Black people by penning that, "There scarcely ever was a civilized nation of that complexion, nor even any individual eminent either in action or speculation. No ingenious manufactures amongst them, no arts, no sciences."

It is doubtful if either Kant or Hume ever met or had a moment of social intercourse with one who was dubbed as “Negro”, yet their magnificent display of hubris, so endemic to the position they believed their humanity and false sense of rationality conferred on them, allowed them to conceive of an entire continent of people only in the most reductive outlines. Even though Kant opposed slavery, he could never have envisioned the Black subject in any terms other than that of servant or child. Blacks could not even be the same type of human, lest a fellow transnational subject. The most pernicious effect of this lack of exposition of these positionalities is their continuity. All poorly constructed foundations must either be restructured at the base or reinforced. Enlightenment discourse is constantly reinforced, at least in the halls of academe, as the focus is on the seemingly objective criteria of these thinkers, in their questioning of the nature of the world and man’s place in it, over their incredible constrictions in their use of what was considered scientific reasoning in their time to define themselves as superior to all. If such racist beginnings are not addressed, how are we to analyze and understand the inheritable programming that derives from the ubiquitous coding of Euro-norms onto all narrative and visual fields, which undergirds present-day racial, social and cultural inequities (see Wynter, “Ceremony” 26).⁴

The humanistic tradition, Sylvia Wynter so ably argues, progresses through struggles in regards to a God-centered ideation of man to a human-centered one, generating a series of rationales, principles, and structures, “a self-evident order of consciousness and a creed specific conception of what it is to be human” (Wynter, “Unsettling” 291). Global expansion from the fifteenth century forward was carried out with such an order of truth. In tracing the transformation in humanistic discourse, Wynter tells of how “Man” was reinvented, no longer was he just the rational embodiment of God’s image, meant to dominate all life on the planet, but a political subject of the state, a bio-centric, economically agitated product of the natural sciences. In Western man’s exploration and cognitive remapping of the world, as evident in the voyages of exploration and the development of the physical sciences, Wynter shows, he defines himself as the other of God, instead of his subordinate as promoted in the Judeo-Christian tradition. Conceptually, with this definition of himself as Man, the earthly avatar of God, and the center of creation and agency, he could not conceive of the peoples “discovered” in these voyages as anything, but *other* to himself. Since Euro-man invents himself as the archetypal standard and model of humanity, these others are not quite human or even the same type of human, and as Wynter further argues, it results in our present struggles with respect to race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, struggles over the environment, and the sharply unequal distribution of the earth’s resources.

Otherness when it became defined as subhuman and enacted on the Black subject led to enslavement, enshrined prejudices, continual domination, brutality and exclusion. Humanism when apprehended in this light implicitly rejects the inculcation of any narrative or action of uplift, transcendence, transformation, freedom, and conceptualizations of humanity that is not within its own definitional ethos. That there has to be a foundational catharsis, a confrontation of the ills of its inception and the evils such discourse perpetuate has to be evident, but it is not. If we simply continue to elide its illogical and contra-human beginnings, then Appiah's call for universal humanism as promoted through the lens of cosmopolitan discourse is to be desired. But just a shard of microscopic clarity, leads to questioning as to whether it is not just another totalizing discourse disguised as a civil mission.

Instead, however, the call for a cosmopolitan identity has been so effective in inculcating a perception that it is *the* prescriptive tenet to normalize difference that Ifeoma Nwankwo, in *Black Cosmopolitanism*, argues that Blacks were denied access to "national subjectivity and human subjectivity" and also "cosmopolitan subjectivity," due to the portentous hand of European imperialism (10). There are those, who specifically grasped onto a Kantian type of cosmopolitanism, and Michael Echeruo tells us of such a group in Lagos, which existed towards the end of the 19th century, who called themselves cosmopolites. They began as a core of mixed-race elites and spread to a small minority Black elite. Categorically, they rejected the discourse of blackness. Considering themselves world citizens, they thought that an identification with race and nationhood as retrogressive and sought to fully adopt the values of European society (Echeruo 676-677).

In some ways, the Lagosian cosmopolites presage the Afropolitans of today. Taiye Tuakli-Wosornu (Taiye Selasi), in her article, "*Bye-Bye Babar: or Who is the Afropolitan?*," states that Afropolitans are "not citizens, but Africans of the world." Tuakli-Wosornu speaks of cultural hybridity, an ethnic *mélange* of those who have a vested sense of belonging to Africa, whether it is nationally, as part of an urban-chic environ, or in an "auntie's kitchen." Yet, Afropolitanism is not a discourse of global blackness, in its openness it is also exclusionary, for it is about global Africanness. It is conceived of and for the newest iteration of the African diaspora, the new immigrants and their progeny. In conversation with a group of young African women, who simultaneously live in the US and in Accra, I asked about their status as Afropolitans.⁵ Whether they intended to or not, they reinforced an anti-black rhetoric by asserting that they are not "Black," but African and they participate in the world as transnational subjects, with families of mixed heritage, located all over the world. They confirmed, for me, a sense of elitism of the Afropolitan stance, a need to separate themselves from the Blacks over there, i.e. ghettoized African-Americans, who are conceived of with all the stereotypes attached to blackness, whose nature and culture, they would like to believe, is fundamentally different from theirs.

As the character Odenigbo says in *Half of a Yellow Sun*, “I am Nigerian because a white man created Nigeria and gave me that identity. I am Black because the white man constructed Black to be as different as possible from his white. But I was Igbo before the white man came” (25). Odenigbo re-ethnicizes himself as a point of political resistance. However, Afropolitans are not advocating a root identity or a local form of ethnic belonging. These are not folks who are comfortable in the village, speaking a local language, and can live with “lights off” for any length of time. They are sophisticated urbanites, who can casually wear Gucci, with African print cloth, and who are just as familiar with any metropolis in Europe and the US, as they are with Accra, Lagos, Dakar, Harare and Cape Town. Yet, too they are participating in the simplification of “post-racial” discourse in acting as if opting out of blackness, by simply saying, “I’m not Black,” makes it so. Granted that not all Afropolitans would make such a pronouncement, but they are attempting to create a sense of identity and identification as new transnational elites. Such is the topos of Adiche’s latest novel, *Americanah*, in which the character Ifemelu simultaneously affirms and displaces this Afropolitan ideal.

Americanah’s examination of blackness in America, Britain and Nigeria, reveals the hypocrisies within the “race is not real” discourse, but likewise the dissimilarity of experiences in the new transnational contours of blackness. While little commonality seems to exist between the different African Diasporas, that of 400 years ago and the new immigrant population, Ifemelu’s symbolic return to Lagos, simply because she wants to, is like that of her literary predecessor, Sissie, in *Our Sister Killjoy*, which grounds the story in a narrative of return, a cornerstone of Pan-African ideals (Sterling, “Can You Really See through a Squint?” 146-148). However, as Fanon famously states, “wherever he goes, the Negro remains a Negro” (173) and, at least in the U.S., the police affirm this truism. I cannot help but speculate that if Amadou Diallo when hailed with 41 bullets and Ousmane Zongo in his storage locker, had shouted “I’m not Black,” would it have changed any aspect of their deaths? One can shoot in the air or at many different parts of the body to stop an individual, but when all of the shots directed at the Black body are meant to kill then the naming of the reality of racism and interpretation of racialized subjectivity has to come together, and Pan-Africanist discourse does this.

“Blakk wi blak?”

Binyavanga Wainaina’s response to Afropolitan identification has now become as famous as the coinage of the term, in his proclamation that “I am a Pan-Africanist, not an Afropolitan.”⁶ In these times, when sanctioned discourses seem to have transcended parochialism, where global humanity and humaneness are the issues on the table, the perception of Pan-Africanism as a limited construct that is predicated solely on race, because it ushers in and couples a liberatory ethic for African and African diaspora peoples, has to be rethought.

Pan-African ideations arose from the desires of the enslaved to return to Africa, and it has been envisioned as a social, cultural, philosophical, and psychic call. It is a movement predicated on the construction of blackness and Africanness that presupposes a commonality in suffering faced by all Black peoples due to slavery, racial discrimination, colonial exploitation, and the movements for decolonization, which in turn, allows for a common form of identification that nullifies geographic, ethnic, social, cultural, and class differences (Nyerere 11-14; Esedebe, *Pan-Africanism* 7- 42). It indeed calls for a universality of acceptance, openness, a leave-taking from parochial cultures through a rejection of nationalism, and an understanding of an underlying fundamental dynamic that holds the African world, which includes its multiplicitous diaspora, together. Because its subjects in this definition are obviously “raced,” its brand of global humanism, or what I would rather consider Afro-humanism, becomes the one critiqued as limited and racist.

Yet, Pan-Africanism is also a political movement. It evokes the concept of African unity, which is of course tied to the decolonization of African states, and the creation of the Organization of African Unity, and its present day manifestation in the African Union. Pan-Africanism as a political movement with its aims to create a unitary continental governmental body and a unified economic field is thus considered a failed movement, for it does none of these, but it is a work in progress, as acknowledged by the African Union celebrating its 50th anniversary, with the theme *Pan-Africanism and the African Renaissance*. Seemingly forgotten is that African nations have been collectively free only since 1994, with the first election of the majority government in South Africa and that is a very short time in any historical unfolding. I prefer not to compare Africa’s development to that of Europe, but for many that is the logic they best understand, so if we consider that Europe, since the signing of the Magna Carta in 1215, took a little under 800 years to unify, then Africa needs time to progress beyond its babyhood.

Troubling still is that humanist discourse is reinvented as openness to all humanity, and Pan-Africanism is viewed as an essentialist construct that delineates a narrow outlook of the world and ones place in it. The function of such reductionist logic succeeds as even Africanist scholars (like the Appiah’s) consider its ideations entrapment in a counter-discourse; rather than seeing such critiques for what they are, in that, Euro-hegemony entwined with Euro-humanism, cannot conceive that other forms of unification, envisioned by other peoples for themselves as participatory members of the global world are just as valid as any other evocation. Frankly, any theory that speaks about a collectivity of over a billion people, which Pan-Africanism does, would never be viewed as essentialist, but because of its link to race and blackness it becomes symbolic of a reductionist discourse.

Conveniently elided are fundamental contradictions that shatter this imposed limitation on the ideology and the movement because Africa is not all or only comprised of Black peoples, and in its unification, it may well be the first combination of nation-states, since Alexander conquered the known world, to have such a diversity of ethnicities, cultures, belief systems, and languages under one charge.

From “Race Man” to Pan-Africanist

Within the confines of 18th and 19th century treatment of Black peoples, ideologues such as Blyden generated some of the most daring responses to their objectification, in assuming a humanity, shared cultural values, laws, ethics, modes of behavior and thought that linked all African peoples, in effect seeding the beginnings of Pan-African thought. When denied the basic recognition of humanity, which is the intrinsic necessity to participate in any discourse of humanism, what is the oppressed to do? What choices did the oppressed have to construct strategic engagement with the casual, everydayness of the brutality under which they suffered? My argument is predicated on Blyden’s interventionist discourses in his direct engagement with Western beliefs about Africa and African descended peoples. Blyden’s ideations overwrite Euro-humanism’s limits in articulating and suggesting to Black peoples alternate modes for self-identification, self-definition, and agency to combat their objectification and attendant nullification of subjectivity. His prescripts for liberation, unity, and revaluation of African cultural dynamics become the basis for Pan-African discourse.

There is not much in terms of book-length scholarship on Blyden. Edith Holden’s, *Blyden of Liberia* (1967), Hollis R. Lynch’s seminal work, *Edward Wilmot Blyden, Pan-Negro Patriot, 1832-1912* (1967), and the most recent work by Teshale Tibebu, *Edward Wilmot Blyden and the Racial Nationalism Imagination* (2012) are the volumes that stand out. In Lynch’s work, he lauds Blyden as “the greatest Negro champion of his race in the nineteenth century” (3). Yet, Teshale Tibebu characterizes Blyden as “a brilliant intellectual of incurable contradictions” (37). In notable articles like those of V.Y. Mudimbe, he also points out Blyden’s “unbelievable inconsistencies” (115), but in this work, I am also responding to Appiah, who while naming Blyden, the father of Pan-Africanism, also excoriates him as a “racist,” in the line of thinkers like Alexander Crummell, because of his articulations of race as a unifying construct (*Father’s House* 17). I question Appiah’s imbrication of Pan-Africanism and racism in relation to Blyden’s thought, for in his time were the humanist, cosmopolitan thinkers Appiah champions receptive to the full potential of what Africa and African-descended peoples could be? I am not purporting to do a full excavation of Blyden’s work in this article, as I am most interested the aspects of his thought that become the proto-narratives of Pan-Africanism.

If he was indeed a racist because he accepted the confines of racial identification to which he was subjected, my queries must extend to the following: When one is a Black slave, or living in a world demarcated by enslaving Black peoples, then how does one construct a mode of identification with a white underclass, who may face similar levels of oppression, but believe they are better than you? Is it possible to link politically in a sustained struggle with white bourgeois or upper class, without a paternalistic determinism about who you are? Can one construct a form of belonging across the lines of gender, when white women also use your body to secure their economic futures and your will to project their political goals?⁷ Can one successfully construct a universal humanist identification when many still believe that you are just chattel? If these elemental unifications become impossible, then how is the Black subject supposed to participate in global humanity and its discourses? Always silenced and oppressed?

If we palimpsestically code Blyden as a man of his times, in facing these questions, he ubiquitously answered emigration was the solution, but that was the beginnings of his ideations. Blyden may have been contradictory in his writings, but he never waived in his belief in seeing the West as a space of limit and dehumanization of Black peoples. Such emigration, he envisioned, would produce a reintegration of Blacks from the West and those on the continent, which was vital for their collective development as a people, the development of Africa, and the sharing of their humanistic contributions to the world. In his over fifty years of intellectual output, his ideations followed an evolutionary trajectory, and as his knowledge grew of African cultures and social dynamic, his views transformed tremendously in terms of the role of Christianity in Africa, his understanding of African cultures and their contributions, how Islam functioned, and the composition of the “Negro” republic he sought.

As a transnational product, Blyden was born in 1832 in St. Thomas, the Danish West Indies; his family was of Igbo origins and he later immigrated to Liberia in 1851 (Lynch, *Pioneer* 373). He briefly sojourned in the United States, in hopes of beginning his training as a reverend minister, but in 1850 because of the racism of the society, Blyden lost admission to three different theological colleges (Henriksen 280). Prompted by the advice of John Knox, the white American clergyman who mentored him, he did a quick exodus from the U.S. and launched a lifelong engagement with Africa. Emigration proved to be the best personal solution for Blyden, for he quickly became the epitome of the successful Black man that he championed. His achievements were staggering; he became a minister by the age of twenty-six. He served as editor for the newspaper, *Liberia Herald* (1855-1856); founder and editor of *The Negro* (1872-1873); and *The African World* (1912) in Sierra Leone. He held a professorial position at Liberia College (1862-1871) and was appointed its President (1880-1884).

He served one term as Secretary of State of Liberia (1864-1866) and two terms as Ambassador to the Court of St. James (1877-1878 and 1892). He became a sought after celebrity throughout English-speaking West Africa and because of his scholarship and writings, he was in equal demand in intellectual circles in Lagos and the court of St. James.

He traveled to the Caribbean and several times to the United States, touring extensively to disseminate his work and to push for emigration. Blyden was an autodidact and taught himself to speak many languages. He learned Hebrew and traveled to Syria to learn Arabic, sojourned in North Africa and visited Egypt. He used these languages to study original religious texts, to confront and refute the origins of European racism, and to also study North African, and Islamic-based cultures in West Africa (Henriksen 281; Lynch, "Pan-Negro Patriot" 13-14). In his time, Blyden produced an unparalleled intellectual discourse about Africa. His seminal text, lauded by critics then and now, *Christianity, Islam, and the Negro Race* (1887), was the first detailed study of African modalities of life. In fact, given the reception to this work and his beginning the critical historical survey of African cultures,⁸ *it bewilders me as to why Blyden is not considered the father of African history.*

After twenty years in Liberia, he relocated to Sierra Leone and traveled extensively into the interior regions all over West Africa. His relocation, however, was prompted by a personal controversy with the then President, Edward James Roye and the mulatto population in the country (Lynch, *EWB* 51-52). Blyden's views on mulattos is point of extreme controversy, where we can concede a modern day evaluation of him as racist. Like the racist in his day, he saw mixed-race people as a distinct group, but also critiqued their separatism as a complex against their blackness. Ironically today, bi-racial/multiracial discourse is predicated on the premise of difference, but privileges it as a source of collective identification, instead of viewing it as aberrant like in Blyden's time.⁹ Blyden ostensibly railed about the imposition of a color and class hierarchy inherited from slavery that came with the implantation of mixed-race peoples in Liberia. He even wrote to William Coppinger, Secretary of the American Colonization Society to ask them to send only pure Negroes. He critiqued the mixed race population as a source of all the disunity in the society and tells in a letter on October 18, 1874 that they "never get into thorough sympathy with the work here....They have never thoroughly acclimated. They drag out their feeble existence making slaves, as far as they can, of the natives and ignorant Americans" (Lynch, *Letters* 174). He condemned the mixed race population for being more European in nature, restless and dissatisfied, and unable to unify with Negroes (Ibid 176). His trenchant critiques led to his being dragged on streets of Liberia and nearly hanged by what he refers to as a "'mulatto-incited' mob," precipitating his departure to Sierra Leone (Lynch, *EWB* 53).

Not to defend Blyden, but these issues of color and class very much defined (post) slave societies and created conflicts over issues of governance, education, rights, and access. Haiti's revolution had been seriously compromised by such conflicts and around the Caribbean and Latin world, color divisions prevented unifying strategies against white hierarchies,¹⁰ and Blyden was determined to prevent such destabilization of Liberia.

However, in his early sojourn in the country, Blyden shared with his fellow emigrants a sense of superiority to Africans and commitment to development on the lines of Westernization. The conundrum within this phase of racial identity politics was that many of the Black emigrants from the West treated Africans abominably and sought to divorce themselves from the 'natives' in course of habit, dress, language, and lifestyle. They brought with them Euro-modeled sensibilities and ideals and, as a result, of their own internalized racism, could not see within African traditional constructs anything of value. The most pernicious effect, however, is seen in how the colonial rhetoric and sense of superiority of Americo-Liberians resulted in the class, color, and ethnic divisions fulminating in the Liberian civil war over 100 years later.¹¹ Even though the beginnings of Blyden's figuration of the Liberian nation reads suspiciously like Rudyard Kipling's infamous call in the poem, *The White Man's Burden*, his advocating of colonization and emigration was inextricably fused with the possibility of progress for Black peoples:

It is theirs to betake themselves to injured Africa, and bless those outraged shores, and quiet those distracted families with the blessings of Christianity and civilization. It is theirs to bear with them to that land the arts of industry and peace, and counteract the influence of those horrid abominations which an inhuman avarice has introduced—to roll back the appalling cloud of ignorance and superstition which overspreads the land, and to rear on those shores an asylum of liberty for the downtrodden sons of Africa wherever found. This is the work to which Providence is obviously calling the black men of this country ("The Call" 112).

This excerpt is from one of his most famous speeches, "*The Call of Providence to the Descendants of Africa in America*," published in *Liberia's Offering* in 1862. Yet, Blyden's potentiality for transformation was already apparent in this speech and he was the first to address the divisions among Black peoples because of their internal racialized psychology. When Blyden invokes the prescriptive agenda of Euro-norms in pointing out the irrevocable damage on the Black psyche, in "[h]aving been told from infancy that his race is naturally inferior to that of the whites, he assents to this proposition, and is ashamed of his own nature. In each of his features he discovers a trace of slavery, and, if it were in his power, he would willingly rid himself of everything that makes him what he is," he presages Fanon's critique of internalized racism and its functional coding on the corporeality of the Black being ("The Call" 113).

The language of abolitionism by necessity focused on the degradation that Blacks faced, but what I consider Blyden's *rhetoric of conversion* was meant to stir a transformative consciousness to propel the spirit of repatriation by enumerating how that degradation affects the ways in which Blacks perceive themselves and, in turn, act in the world. This speech was delivered in one of Blyden's extensive tours in the U.S. to recruit émigrés for Liberia. He was uncompromising in his belief that Black peoples could only realize their full humanity in Africa, and the speech sharply critiqued how they suffered under American racism and discrimination, "We have been dragged to the depths of degradation. We have been taught a cringing servility. We have been drilled into contentment with the most undignified circumstances" ("The Call" 112). Despairing that his dream for mass emigration would never materialize, he similarly wrote in a letter to the *Liberian Herald*:

I thought how sad it was that so many colored people seem disposed to cling to this land—fearing to go to Liberia lest they die of every insult and contumely! Everybody and everything is preferred to them. Afraid of dying! Would it not be much better for the whole five million of them to leave this country,... than to remain in servitude at the base of society? A whole race in degradation! The idea is horrible. (Lynch, *Pan-Negro* 29)

The perspicacity of Blyden's rhetoric was not just in its critique of racism, but in its contouring and refiguration of Black psychopathology through an agentive act like emigration. He performed a psychosocial restructuring by speaking of their elevation, the need for their talents and skills, and the uniqueness of their contributions to the building of the nation of Liberia. He tailored the message to have the vastest appeal, with returning and living in Africa as the ultimate reward, wherein the Black man could realize his idyllic self. The vision he presented of Liberia and emigration was his own idealized concept, but what Blyden hoped was that through such self-reflexivity and self-evaluation, combined with the actional process of leaving the site of denigration, Blacks would see themselves as human beings belonging to one family. In the same speech, he laid out a foundational construct in Pan-African discourse by stating that "[w]e are all descendants of Africa,...In Liberia, there may be found persons of almost every tribe in West Africa, from Senegal to Congo. And not only do we and the natives belong to the same race, but we are also of the same family" ("The Call" 125). In effect, he generates the beginnings of the Pan-African concepts of unity between Africans across the continent and those in the diaspora and the forging of a common destiny of Black peoples.¹²

Blyden's continued to champion colonization and maintained that European countries were working to make Africa more progressive. Yet, what Europe brought to Africa would ultimately be beneficial to Africans, for he believed that their incursion would only last for a time, since they would never stay (Lynch, *Pan-Negro* 209; Blyden, "African Problem" 134). Europeans, like Black returnees, were catalyst to override "African conservatism and stagnation" (Blyden, *CINR* 300). While European enterprise would be used for Africa's development, "[t]he opening up of Africa is to be the work of Africans" (*CINR* 127). "[T]he explorers," Blyden stated, "have discovered that Africa possesses the very highest capacity for the production, as raw material, of the various articles demanded by civilized countries. English and French, and Germans, are now in the struggles of an intense competition for the hidden treasures of that continent" (Blyden, *CINR* 120). Focusing his critique on Europe's economic agenda in how it "still thinks that she can take and utilize Africa for her own purposes," he presaged Marcus Garvey's call of "African for Africans," when he pointed out that "[s]he does not yet understand that Africa is to be for the African or for nobody" ("African Problem" 134, Frenkel 277). Blyden's call for African autonomy augured the meter of the Pan-African movement, to end colonialism and neo-colonialism and to unify the continent politically and economically.

Christianity also became a point of major critique as his thought evolved away from Ethiopianist rhetoric, which equated Black enslavement with Jewish enslavement, and Africa, as the figurative Zion and the redemptive space for a fallen people. By the time he wrote, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, he was quite scathing as to the impact of Christianity on Africa, and saw within Muslim religiosity a spiritual and moral propensity more suited to the dimension of the Black republic he envisioned. In a visit to the King of Boporo, 75 miles from the coast, he encountered a major center of Muslim learning, with a long standing literary tradition, extensive libraries, and highly learned intellectuals and teachers (*ulamas*). Yet, too, his evaluation of his travels into the interior had a decidedly economic component, detailing the capacity for trade with various Muslim controlled areas, as seen in a letter to J. Pope Hennesy, the Governor of Sierra Leone (Lynch, *Letters* 101-09). Because he spoke Arabic, Blyden became the commissioned emissary to the Muslim kingdoms and with his growing knowledge of the region admired their industry and their political and economic reach. He saw Islam as a unifying force and a way to remove what he considered the retrogressive customs of Africans, without destroying the fabric of their societies. Such unification, along with the religious fraternity, egalitarianism, and erudite, scholarly tradition it fostered, Blyden believed, further gave credence to Islam's beneficial effects in West Africa (Lynch, "Pioneer" 380).

His over 50 years of interrogation and writing about African cultures and peoples makes evident Blyden's capacity for transformation. His scholarship and ideas were so well circulated that they sparked nationalist fervor and cultural revivalism across West Africa.¹³ One of the most profound impacts he made on Pan-African discourse is in his concept of the African personality. Blyden here embraced the premise of racial distinctiveness, but inverted racist sentiments, with a categorical refusal to accept any conditions of Black inferiority. Believing that each group of people had a contribution to make to humankind, he wrote that "Africans are not Europeans in waiting..." further adding that "[i]t is a question of difference of endowment and difference of destiny... They are distinct but equal" (*Christianity* 277). In some ways, he presages the preamble to the Hague Convention in 1958 that states "...each people makes its contribution to the culture of the world," a sentiment which Appiah commends (*Cosmopolitanism* 126). Yet it also immediately brings to mind Senghorian *négritude* and Kwame Nkrumah's articulation of the creative, cultural font for the African Personality that he postulated. Historical conditions, Blyden argued, contributed to the lack of progress in African societies, and, if left alone, Africans would add their distinctiveness to the world. The unique Afro-humanistic contribution to the world was found in the spiritual dimension of African life, in the transformative dynamic of African culture, its cooperative socialism based on family solidarity, communal stewardship of land and resources, and organically democratic governmental institutions (July 78-9; Henriksen 283; Frenkel 281-2).

It is in *African Life and Customs*, written in 1907 that Blyden generates the meticulous exposition of African indigenous cultural practices and places them in a socio-historical context. This was a time when anthropology was in its earliest stages and sociological and political thought was still dominated by evolutionary theory. The Afro-humanism he avowed in the text celebrates socialism and communalism. Blyden articulated the ways in which family was the central unit for the well-being of everyone in African societies. In giving an exposition of the socio-economic dimension of family life, he details its salutary components in its ethic of communal work and care, its stewardship of its weakest members and the elderly, as well as its prevention of poverty in a society. He addressed structures of governance, leadership and adjudication in how elders or local rulers judge all infractions, countermanding the need for institutions of punishment. He wrote about the value placed on land, the tenets of communal ownership and equitable distribution for everyone to have a share. He also spoke about social constructs like marriage, addressing issues like polygyny, which he pointed out was determined by women. Interestingly, African feminist today, advocate for polygyny using the same justifications as Blyden, in that, it was an empowering system for women, allowing for shared resources, childcare responsibilities, household and other work duties.¹⁴ What Blyden created in this work was the first exposition of how African societies functioned without the judgmental lens of Euro-normativity, in effect giving voice to how African peoples conceived of themselves.

While Blyden romanticized the societies in not depicting any of the contraventions, he created a template of constructs from which Pan-African thinkers like Kwame Nkrumah and Julius Nyerere generated the concepts of an African socialism on a national and continental scale, as an alternate political and economic model to Western style democracy and capitalism (Blyden, *ALAC* 11-41).

Blyden's influence crosses time and space and impacted all the future generations of Pan-African thinkers. He asked a profound question, still relevant today: "What could a few years of internal tranquility and order do for Africa?" (*CINR* 282) And, while Blyden never articulated the fulsome vision of political and economic unification we have come to associate with Pan-Africanism, for he fought for a West African Federation, and for a time promoted its fulfillment under the umbrella of British rule, in believing that the British would never stay in Africa. However, he consistently referred to the country of Africa because he saw the continent's wholeness, rather than its polarities. Blyden's legacy, other than his profound scholarship, was that he left in place the modalities for the inheritors of these discourses to envision that unified Africa, with the recognition of the humanity of all and the attendant rights to live freely without the spectra of domination and persistent violence. In Blyden's time, race was everything and he predicated what we now consider Pan-Africanism on such unity of subjectivity. The value he gave to African societies was never to claim superiority, but relativity in the world. Blyden demand was to have a rightful place for African cultures and African-descended peoples as an integral part of humanity and as equal contributors to human culture and development, in so, as Teshale Tibebu states, "he was an advocate of polycentric, multiracial, multicultural cosmopolitanism" (48).

Endings or Beginnings...

Simon Gikandi suggests that race discourse reflects "the struggle of individuals to express free will within the bounds of historical circumstances and the claims of social institutions" (594). Race discourse also represents the claims by individuals who use, as Fanon suggests, ones epidermalization to determine who one is, and one's limits and capacities.¹⁵ The second epigram to this article quotes the Jamaican dub poet Mutabaruka, who chats "Blakk wi blak...we under attack," in this recognition that the collective terror imposed on those of darker hues may really be the only common form of identification. Racism's premise of exclusiveness, its focus on visible and immutable difference, has left Black s peoples in constant apprehension over their lives. To borrow Theodore Adorno's phraseology, humanism's "clandestine entente" with racism has left a historical catalogue of how whites used terror to dominate Black s from the era of slavery to our current epochal transition.

How in the U.S. in particular, the world of reconstruction was a world of terror, the Great Migration was motivated by terror, during the civil rights era terror was systemized and entrenched in policing strategies, and today, “stop, frisk, shoot, kill” seems to be the new motto of appropriate police behaviors, rather than “protect and serve”; and how terror now has an economic dimension in the first world/third world divide, shatters the tacitly accepted benignant invention of humanism as universalist discourse. Rather than deconstructing the foundational prejudices of Euro-humanism, and their continued effect in global inequalities, discourses like cosmopolitanism and Afropolitanism simplify the affective range of continued prejudice against the Black subject; whereas Pan-Africanism creates a paradigm to compare records of atrocities enacted against and on the Black body, past and present, in the local or global arena, on a stairway in New York or a street in France, in a township in Johannesburg or a town like Ferguson, Missouri.

The aim of intellectuals like Blyden was to write themselves into and re-vision for Black peoples a place in the globalness of the world. Blyden’s call for unity, his linking of Africa and the diaspora, was a necessary step in the movement towards global unification. While Blyden was a race man, who primarily advocated for Black empowerment, his Afro-humanist approach advanced for African-descended peoples a cultural and discursive topos from which they were sourced, to envision their subjectivity and sameness as fellow human subjects. Pan-Africanism in this light is as much about the unity of subjectivity as cosmopolitanism. Its abstract vision is inextricably fused with the materiality of life for Black peoples, for all Africans, and for the African continent. It jettisons the prescriptive agendas of control, silences, and sanctioning of irrationality when enacted on the Black subject, to construct a worldview that is receptive to the full potentiality of all African-descended peoples in their localities and in their globalness, and we must stop pretending that all individuals in the world are really ready for this. However, just as the canvas of history is not blank, the future is also not yet written.

Notes

¹ Other deaths include Jordan Baker (22), Mckenzie Cochran (25), Victor White III (22), Tyree Woodson (38), John Crawford (22), Dante Parker (36), Ezell Ford (25), Kajieme Powell (25), Romain Brisbon (34). Rich Juzwiak and Aleksander Chan. “Unarmed People of Color Killed by the Police 1999-2014.” *Gawker*. 08 Dec. 2014. Web. 28 Dec. 2014. <http://gawker.com/unarmed-people-of-color-killed-by-police-1999-2014-1666672349>.

² Recently released emails from police officers in Ferguson reveal how they characterize Blacks as lazy, compare Barack Obama to a chimpanzee and Michelle Obama as part of a group of “tribal” dancers. See Mark Berman, “The seven racist e-mails the Justice Department highlighted in its report on Ferguson police.” *The Washington Post*. 04 April 2015. Web. 05 April, 2015. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-nation/wp/2015/03/04/the-seven-racist-e-mails-the-justice-department-highlighted-in-its-report-on-ferguson-police>.

³ Appiah (1992) considers Blyden one of four men who could claim that title. The others include Alexander Crummell, Africanus Horton and Martin R. Delaney.

⁴ Wynter (1984) uses the terminology “‘inheritable program’ of stored pre-judgments” to address the coding of knowledge in Christian dominated Middle Ages.

⁵ I will not cite their names, but it was after the opening of the *Chinua Achebe Lecture Series*, sponsored by the Black Studies Program, The City College of New York, CUNY on September 30, 2015.

⁶ Wainana similarly repeated his assertions during his talk at the *Chinua Achebe Legacy Series*, on October 9, 2015, at the City College of New York, CUNY.

⁷ I refer here to the history of exploitation by white women of black women. One of the most obvious examples is the use of Sojourner Truth’s speech, “Arn’t I a Woman,” supposedly delivered at the Woman’s Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio (1851). White female activists at the convention objected to her speaking and, in fact, feared that the association would be perceived as an alliance with “‘abolition and niggers’” (Hine 244). Revisionist historian, Nell Irvin Painter (1997), argues over the authenticity of the speech. She states that Truth did not give it and rather a white female member of the organization wrote it. However, whether that is so or not, the text was circulated with the intent to use a Black woman’s story to openly challenge dominant perceptions of women as the weaker sex.

⁸ Blyden placed a picture of himself in reprintings of the text because whites did not believe that it was written by a Black scholar. To view the photograph, see the archive, “A Virtual Museum of the Life and Work of Edward Wilmot Blyden (1832–1912),” Columbia University. 1995. Web. 23 January 2015.

⁹ See Jones 2011; Brunsma 2005; Ifekwunigwe 2004.

¹⁰ See Candelario 2007; Skidmore 1974; Patterson 1967; James 1938. These authors respectively detail how class and color operate in places like the Dominican Republic, Brazil, Jamaica, and Haiti during its revolution.

¹¹ See Ciment 2013; Gershoni 1997; Akpan 1973, who all argue that Black émigrés in Liberia acted similar to the European colonizers. This, however, is not to suggest that they were the only factors that contributed to the Liberian war because issues of resource distribution, sharing of profits, and uneven development of the nation, and the megalomania of Charles Taylor also factored into the war, but its seeds were planted in the divisions imposed by these new émigrés.

¹² Pan-African concepts are laid out in the works of Esedebe 1982, 1977 and Geiss 1974, enumerated in a series of concepts that unify African descended peoples and culminate with the call for political and economic unification of the continent.

¹³ Blyden was one of the first to write about the role of Africans in human history. He wrote extensively about ancient Egypt and Blacks in the Mediterranean world. He helped forge the concept of racial pride to the extent that he encouraged Africans to re-africanize their names and to follow the norms of traditional African cultures (see Henriksen 1975; Lynch 1967).

¹⁴ Oyewumi 2003; Davis and Graves 1986; Steady 1985.

¹⁵ In the chapter, “The Fact of Blackness,” from *Black Skins, White Mask*, Fanon states that “I am a slave not of an ‘idea’ that others have of me but of my own appearance” (116).

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