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| The Construction of Meta-Narratives: Perspectives on Pan-Africanism and Nationalism in Ghana, 1957-1966 |
| A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy |
|  |
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|  |
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# **Abstract**

This thesis explores the development and deployment of two political meta-narratives, Pan-Africanism and nationalism, in both the Gold Coast/Ghana, and amongst diaspora intellectuals and activists. Through a close examination of the published and personal writings of those who engaged with these meta-narratives – African American intellectuals, West Indian activists, and the first post-colonial African Prime Minster of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah – the extent to which context impacts upon the development of these ideas will be demonstrated. Considering the interaction between the construction of meta-narratives and socio-political change, this thesis will argue that broader historical changes fundamentally shaped how these sets of ideas were interpreted, and in turn, Pan-Africanism and nationalism provided a framework for how those historical changes were understood. The resulting interaction between ideas and practices led to a wide variation in meanings attributed to the meta-narratives, and it was from these variations that Nkrumah began to articulate his own understandings of Pan-Africanism and nationalism in the mid-twentieth century. This is demonstrated through the placing of Nkrumah’s worldview within a longer history of Pan-Africanism. In situating his work this way, both the flexibility and potency of meaning that both meta-narratives provided becomes apparent. It is here argued that Nkrumah responded to a range of domestic, continental, and international influences, and his responses demonstrate both his understanding of the meta-narratives, and how this understanding changed over a relatively short period of time. As a result, Nkrumah’s development of and alterations to Pan-Africanism and nationalism were consistent with their historical utilisation, and not a reflection of his personal search for power. In analysing the interaction between thought and action on both sides of the Atlantic, the thesis also considers the experiences of African American émigrés to Ghana, and how their personal experiences in the USA, and subsequently in Ghana, altered and informed their understanding of Pan-Africanism. ‘Africa’ had played a powerful role in the African American imagination for decades, but it had been an imagined version of the continent, one which was intended to reinforce and direct self-perception among the diaspora. In choosing to emigrate to Ghana, a small group were brought into direct contact, mostly for the first time, with a very different reality. Through extended periods of interaction with Africa, diaspora assumptions about the continent were challenged, and those present were forced to reconsider the relationship between nationalism and Pan-Africanism in new ways.

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**Abbreviations**

**In the Text:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| AAPC | All-African Peoples’ Conference |
| AAPSO | Afro-Asian Peoples’ Solidarity Organisation |
| ARPS | Aborigines’ Rights Protection Society |
| BAA | Bureau of African Affairs |
| CIAS | Conference of Independent African States |
| CPP | Convention Peoples’ Party |
| CPUSA | Communist Party of the USA |
| CRM | Civil Rights Movement (1955-1965) |
| HBC | Historically Black College |
| IASB | International African Service Bureau |
| NAM | Non-Alignment Movement |
| NLM | National Liberation Movement |
| OAU | Organisation of African Unity |
| SCLC | Southern Christian Leadership Conference |
| SNCC | Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee |
| UAMC | United American Management Corporation |
| UAS | Union of African States |
| UGCC | United Gold Coast Convention |
| UP | United Party |
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**In Source References:**

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| GPRL | George Padmore Research Library (Accra, Ghana) |
| NARA | National Archives and Records Administration (USA) |
| PRAAD | Public Records and Archive Department (Ghana) |
| TNA | National Archives (UK) |

# **Introduction**

*Africa is one continent, one people, and one nation.*

*The notion that in order to have a nation it is necessary for there to be a common language, a common territory and common culture has failed to stand the test of time…*

* Kwame Nkrumah, *Class Struggle in Africa* (1970)

This thesis is, at its heart, a study of the creation and function of two political meta-narratives and their deployment, specifically nationalism and Pan-Africanism. These two meta-narratives had, in the post-1945 world of decolonising empires and international Cold War politics, a profound effect on the emergent independent states of Africa. In Ghana, they found a symbolic figurehead in Kwame Nkrumah, the first elected leader of post-colonial Sub-Saharan Africa. He was viewed by his contemporaries in Africa and his sympathisers and supporters around the world as the *‘paterfamilias’* of African nationalism, and is, to this day, considered to be the godfather of African Pan-Africanism. Yet he was not the first Pan-Africanist, and for more than half a century before him Pan-Africanism had been debated and developed within the diaspora. This thesis will therefore consider a longer history of Pan-Africanism, incorporating the contributions of diaspora thinkers (African American and Caribbean), and Nkrumah’s subsequent changes to these meta-narratives; how he adopted, adapted, and reconfigured them in a period that saw major changes in Ghana, Africa, and the wider world. To fully understand the impact of these changes in Ghana, this thesis will return to African Americans, those living in Ghana, and examine their relationships with Pan-Africanism and the Ghana state.

It is first necessary to consider the particular utility of ‘meta-narrative’ as a key term in this thesis. Framing these ideas as meta-narratives encourages a view that is not restricted to the political sphere that ‘political thought’ or ideology might imply. Michael H. Hunt defines ideology as ‘an interrelated set of convictions or assumptions that reduces the complexities of a *particular slice* of reality to easily comprehensible terms and suggests appropriate ways of dealing with that reality.’[[1]](#footnote-1) Ideology, working under the auspices of this definition, serves as a paradigm through which a particular part of reality can be perceived, translated into a recognisable language, and better understood. This limits ideology to a primarily functional role. Similarly, terms such as ‘concept’ are too narrow in scope to incorporate the vast array of variables, and indeed layers of meaning, that ‘meta-narrative’ contains. A concept is, at its most basic level, a foundation for the understanding of an abstract idea. Whilst its usage accepts variations in meaning, a concept typically has a much smaller frame of reference. Whereas a single ideology can cover a range of ideas and beliefs, the language of a concept is more often deployed in relation to one. As such, a meta-narrative can incorporate a number of concepts, deploying them in various combinations to assert different values. It does so by incorporating both the abstract concept and the localised (or contextualised) narratives that JDY Peel has accurately demonstrated constituted a core feature of meta-narratives and their mass appeal.[[2]](#footnote-2)

The narratives that Peel identifies are in themselves a point worthy of further consideration, as these go some way to demonstrating the means by which meta-narratives are constructed and ‘put together’ by individuals and organisations engaged in their deployment. This construction, and the layering of single narratives and stories, highlights the importance of the interaction between past, present, and future in the discourse. Jean Allman’s work on Hannah Kudjoe, a widely forgotten Ghanaian nationalist CPP activist, further highlights how meta-narratives are constructed through the construction and ordering of memory, and destruction or forgetting of others. Those who challenged the dominant concepts within the meta-narrative were ‘forgotten’ by those attempting to guide its construction and deployment. In the case of Kudjoe, Allman argues that her presence in Ghanaian history threatened the masculinity of leadership associated with the nationalist meta-narrative, and she was therefore subject to the process of ‘agnatology,’ written out of narratives, and forgotten.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Adding to the argument that meta-narrative is the most fitting characterisation for both Pan-Africanism and nationalism, Allman and Peel both demonstrate the multifaceted nature of their construction, and the extent to which individuals and groups could influence their conceptual content. The notion of ‘meta-narrative’ is utilised here because it provides a broader range of functions beyond interpreting present realities and offering future solutions. It is, as the word itself suggests, an abstraction from the present situation, an incorporation of past, present, and future into a single, universally applicable narrative. The use of meta-narratives in explaining social and political change has received a great deal of criticism from postmodernists, who argue that meta-narratives have been deployed with little consideration of alternatives or aberrations, thus reducing the complexities of past, present and future into a single narrative.[[4]](#footnote-4) This thesis does not however seek to develop a single meta-narrative of nationalism *and* Pan-Africanism. Rather, it will examine these two *as* meta-narratives, in keeping with the ways in which they were used by their advocates. Viewing them as anything other than meta-narratives devalues the crucial interaction of past and future, and the fact that they came to form the paradigms through which *every* aspect of reality was interpreted by Nkrumah as he combined the two in different ways in specific periods.

To further contextualise Nkrumah’s contributions to Pan-Africanism and nationalism, this thesis incorporates a longer and wider historical view. This takes into account the development of two parallel discourses, one of which was based in the African diaspora, around ideas of Pan-Africanism and the unity of the African peoples of the world. In contrast, the early forms of nationalism initially emerged in the Gold Coast amongst a small educated elite, who were concerned with the best methods of representation to the colonial authorities. Whilst not directly concerned with the position of the diaspora, this group sought to demonstrate the autonomy and unity of the peoples of the Gold Coast to the colonial government. These two developments were however concerned to some extent with the same issue: the political and social rights of Black peoples in the face of white oppression. They however developed in very different contexts. The interests and perhaps even the motivations of the earliest participants in these political movements may have been the same, but the importance of local experience, and indeed lived experience, was crucial to their perceptions and their arguments. As a result, their development must be understood as two separate processes and should be examined independently of one another.

Nkrumah’s unique position as the first leader of a post-colonial African state has led to his isolation from the historiography of Pan-Africanism as it existed within the diaspora. Bringing Nkrumah and the diaspora Pan-Africanists together in this study demonstrates the degree of continuity and break between Nkrumah and his intellectual antecedents. Whilst one may think that diaspora Pan-Africanists were interested solely in Pan-Africanism, they were also engaged in discourses on African nationalism. Anti-colonialism as a specific facet of African nationalism was a subject of great interest within the diaspora, and the methods for anti-colonial agitation were likewise an issue which diaspora Pan-Africanist thinkers frequently discussed.

This thesis therefore examines the development of diaspora thought on Africa with specific reference to Pan-Africanism and African nationalism. Such an investigation necessarily incorporates both the individual contributions of specific thinkers and activists, as well as an analysis of the construction of ‘Africa’ within the African American press. This press emerged as a powerful political and social tool (for the dissemination of information and the construction of a common identity/cause) in the African American community around 1910-1920, and continued to grow in circulation and influence over the following decades. Understanding how Africa was constructed and presented (in a press which was, at the very least, sympathetic to the cause of African independence) can highlight the underlying importance of a positive image of the continent. ‘Africa’ formed, in the mid-twentieth century African American imagination, a space in which the community could engage both aspects of the ‘dual personality’, the African and the American, to the benefit of African peoples around the world.[[5]](#footnote-5) Simultaneously, the anti-colonial movements that swept across the continent in the 1950s provided inspiration for an increasingly self-aware and agitating African American elite. Africa thus became a model for change, and a source of encouragement.

As a result, awareness of African political change was not limited to an intellectual elite, the ‘talented tenth’ that Du Bois identified as leaders of the African American community. Analysis of both the media and the attitudes of individuals demonstrates the much broader appeal that Africa held within the diaspora, beyond those who identified themselves as Pan-Africanists. This interaction, between Pan-African ideas and an overwhelmingly positive view of Africa, reinforced the desirable image of Africa as a potential destination for those who could not feel at home in America, and the belief among a minority that Pan-Africanism was the most suitable meta-narrative to guide the liberation of all the African peoples of the world.

The impact of Pan-Africanism however went beyond perceptions of Africa informing two key aspects of the nationally-defined Civil Rights Movement (CRM) after 1945, namely the emphasis on cultural heritage and race pride. As one of the first discursive tools for debating African American rights, early Pan-Africanism (1890s-1920s) informed the development of later discourses on civil rights. The emphasis that Pan-Africanism placed on shared history and cultural heritage influenced the articulation of race pride within the CRM, as activists sought to replace what they understood (drawing on psychological insights) as an inherent shame amongst African Americans about their appearance with a sense of pride. There was a strong degree of continuity and shared ideas in the development of later civil rights discourses, which borrowed arguments and ideas formulated by Pan-Africanists. However, the other consequence of Pan-Africanism was that it came to form a minority view to the mainstream multi-racial CRM of the 1950s and 1960s, marginalised because of its perceived ‘radical’ race-related demands and associations with left-wing organisations. African American Pan-Africanism thus shaped the development of, and simultaneously set the boundaries of, the CRM.

Parallel debates and discourses surrounding African self-governance and representation in the Gold Coast emerged, as they did in the United States, in the last years of the nineteenth century. The Gold Coast had, in comparison with some other British African colonies, a well-established intellectual class, which attempted to define a form in which all Africans in the Gold Coast could be represented to the authorities. In doing so, these intellectuals asserted a form of proto-nationalism, albeit a limited one, and in doing so asserted themselves as a (if not the) political class.[[6]](#footnote-6) The ways in which the rights of Africans were constructed, their content and presentation, reflected an ongoing debate not only with the colonial power, but amongst African intellectuals themselves. The role of leadership, the desirability and form of mass participation, even the legitimacy of traditional chiefs, were all issues raised in a debate regarding self-governance and indigenous representation.[[7]](#footnote-7) These debates formed the foundations upon which Nkrumah later developed his own unique interpretations of the meta-narratives.

This thesis then examines these two strands as precursors and contributors to Nkrumah’s changing definitions of nationalism and Pan-Africanism. Nkrumah’s contribution to the two meta-narratives should be understood as part of a much longer, and continual, process of redevelopment and reconstruction. Rather than isolating Nkrumah in a geographically defined sphere of political thought, as much early writing on Ghanaian political history did, this thesis reconnects his actions with a history that spans continents and many decades of debate and political activism.

Of course, it is then necessary to consider Nkrumah’s particular articulation and augmentation of the linked meta-narratives of nationalism and Pan-Africanism. Whilst he certainly began this process prior to the independence of Ghana, it was during his time as a national leader, from 1957 to 1966, that these changes became most apparent. This thesis re-evaluates Nkrumah’s time in power as a period of active intellectual construction, in which Nkrumah was both adapting his own views of the world and reacting to changes and challenges as they emerged around him. In examining three distinct phases of such change, in which Nkrumah responded to the political, social, and economic issues that he faced, this thesis seeks to provide a more nuanced account of Nkrumah as a political figure. A serious analysis of his beliefs moves away from the perception of Nkrumah as a Machiavellian actor, pursuing power and engaging with ideology only as a linguistic tool to legitimise his undertakings. Rather than casting the changes Nkrumah implemented under the banner of Pan-Africanism and nationalism as the actions of a ‘Leninist Czar,’ here they are conceived of as ideological adjustments based on Nkrumah’s perception of a changing reality.[[8]](#footnote-8) Instead, such an analysis points to Nkrumah as a more complex character, whose changing world view underpinned his political activities and informed the form and direction of his governance.

Just as Nkrumah was influenced by the earlier discourses of the African American diaspora, so was the diaspora subsequently influenced by Nkrumah. For a small group of African Americans, supporting African advancement from a distance was not sufficient. They believed that direct participation in Ghanaian post-colonial state-building and wider political development would allow them to participate directly in what they believed was a new type of Black activism. In response to the appeal of Nkrumah’s politics, the opportunities that Ghana appeared to hold, and to the increasing marginalisation they experienced in African American politics, a small community of African Americans settled and were active in Ghana, some participating directly in the implementation of Nkrumah’s Pan-Africanism and nationalism.

However, as a result of the changes Nkrumah had made in relation to both the meta-narratives and government policy, the expectations that this African American émigré community had prior to leaving the USA were challenged as they experienced the realities of life in Ghana and were increasingly forced to confront the differences between this reality and their perceptions of ‘Africa’. This confrontation partly stemmed from the disconnection between their support for Nkrumah as a symbol of Pan-Africanism and their personal experience of life in Ghana under his government.

As noted above, Nkrumah had, with the attainment of Ghanaian independence, become the unofficial champion of African independence. Drawing on their own experiences of American life, this group of émigrés to Ghana had come to see Nkrumah as their leader. Confronted as they were with Nkrumah’s narrowing interpretation of Pan-Africanism, and an increasingly authoritarian nationalism, members of this diaspora group were forced to develop new explanations for the position in which they found themselves. In doing so, they drew on the twin meta-narratives of nationalism and Pan-Africanism in new ways. Through the alienating dislocation of experience and belief, some of these émigrés engaged in a revision of ideas and concepts surrounding race, attempting to incorporate their experiences of both Africa and the USA into a new single narrative. The explanations that they developed became easily identifiable in the main trends of African-American political thinking in the 1970s, in a context shaped by post-colonial disillusionment and dissatisfaction with the limited achievements of the CRM.

### The History of Ideas in Colonial and Post-Colonial Africa: Nationalism and Pan-Africanism

In developing an understanding of Kwame Nkrumah’s contributions to nationalism and Pan-Africanism, it is important to begin with a clarification. Nationalism is analysed in this section as a form of political thought. It will be separately addressed in relation to its role in the socio-political movements that emerged after 1945 in the context of decolonisation. As a form of political thought, nationalism can be usefully considered alongside scholarship on Pan-Africanism, as both contain a notion of identity as timeless and ‘natural.’ Scholars of both nationalism and Pan-Africanism have successfully demonstrated the constructed, historically contingent nature of both racial and national identities.

The study of African nationalism developed from European-dominated studies of nationalism and as such has been hampered by its continued reliance on a normative western European model, with only limited relevance to Africa’s historical experiences.[[9]](#footnote-9) With the rise of African nationalist movements, greater attention was paid in the 1950s and 1960s to the specific nature of the nationalism in former colonies. The ahistorical nature of nationalism was thrust into the limelight as the unnatural or inorganic territorial boundaries of the colonial state were wedded uneasily with claims of organic national identities. Richard Rotberg summarised this conundrum in 1966:

In common usage, African nationalism is descriptive shorthand for an assembly of separate and distinct phenomena, some of which have already taken on the protective colouring of popular understanding. For many … students of recent African events, its manifestations are obvious, although the quality of its spirit, like most spirits, capable only of inexact description. It is, in essence, pretty much what it is.[[10]](#footnote-10)

Despite Rotberg’s rhetorical inability to capture the inherently contradictory nature of African nationalism, he asserted the idea that it was there, an entity that could and should be deconstructed and understood. Much of the literature which has engaged in the deconstruction of African nationalism has built on the work of Benedict Anderson, whose demonstration of the highly curated and constructed nature of the nation remains among the most influential works on the subject.[[11]](#footnote-11) Anderson’s work, whilst providing a functional model of nationalism which may be usefully applied to the historical phenomenon, remains squarely rooted in the European experience of nationalism. In relying upon highly Eurocentric indicators for the emergence of nationalism, Anderson’s model is somewhat limited in its application to the African experience. Hobsbawm and Ranger’s discussion of the ‘invention’ of the nation provides a paradigm that moves away from Anderson’s European indicators of national self-consciousness.[[12]](#footnote-12) Hobsbawm explains that ‘“Invented tradition” is …a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past.’[[13]](#footnote-13) Ranger further suggests that, as a result of European respect for and fascination with tradition, certain aspects of pre-colonial African societies (such as the ‘proud warrior’ and his reincarnation in the British African forces) became institutionalised.[[14]](#footnote-14) Through repetition and deployment in colonial society, these tropes and invented traditions came to underpin a vision of the past that connected African experiences under colonialism with a proud and distinguished heritage that was not created or maintained by colonialism, but rather interrupted by it.[[15]](#footnote-15)

Kenneth Harrow has, however, challenged the belief that African nationalism was inspired by the imposition of colonialism, instead drawing attention to the existence of ‘national’ identity in pre-colonial African states. The focus on ahistorical nationalism has resulted in a dislocation of post-1945 mass nationalism from the pre-colonial state, thus leading to the conclusion that ‘the idea of the nation-state in Africa is often, mistakenly, regarded as a maladroit consequence of colonialism, better discarded than reformed.’[[16]](#footnote-16) Literature on pre-colonial African states has added to debates on nationalism by challenging the singular reliance on European models of statehood which are ill-suited to this specific African context. Engaging with an alternative set of criteria, which will be discussed below, historians such as Ivor Wilks have attempted to link the existence of pre-colonial states with a latent nationalism that would be incorporated into the territorial nationalisms of the 1950s. When taken in a broader sense, to incorporate a wider range of power structures and relations, the idea of the African pre-colonial state becomes far more applicable, in turn allowing for its incorporation into understandings of twentieth century African nationalisms.[[17]](#footnote-17) By taking such a step, it becomes apparent that the idea of African nationalism is not wholly foreign, relying instead on certain understandings of statehood and nationhood more applicable to the African context.

Wilks, among others, has attempted to demonstrate this, drawing attention to the existence of certain elements and characteristics recorded in Asante that all lend credence to the argument that it was a state and within it elements of nationhood.[[18]](#footnote-18) Though it lacked clearly defined borders, or a highly stratified central bureaucracy visible throughout the territory, pre-colonial Asante certainly resembled a state, and by extension, it incorporated elements of nationhood. Wilks conceptualises the Asante state as having existed as a network of communities owing allegiance in various forms to a central figure (or institution) and connected by a similar network of roads. This network of ‘great roads’ and paths, Wilks argues, is the clearest physical demonstration of Asante statehood, connecting the central hub, Kumasi, with regional trade centres, villages, and outlying districts.[[19]](#footnote-19) He notes that these physical networks went beyond a functional purpose in support of trade. These ‘network[s] of communications’ provided the rulers of Asante with a means to conduct trade with neighbouring states and communities and the means to control the political environment of those linked by the road networks.[[20]](#footnote-20)

To this Wilks adds the expansions southward of the Asante territory in the eighteenth century. He argues that the power of the *Asantehene* (King) to launch military excursions and the capacity of military leaders to negotiate peace settlements indicates the existence of a highly organised military order capable of invading and dominating new territories.[[21]](#footnote-21) Tom McCaskie adds to this, noting that the ‘Asantehene-in-council functioned in a local as well as a national capacity,’ creating and implementing customary law.[[22]](#footnote-22) Only the deportation of King Otumfuo Nana Prempeh I by the British colonial authorities in 1900 removed the capacity of the political elite in Kumasi to enact and enforce customary laws in Kumasi and beyond.[[23]](#footnote-23) Colin Newbury suggests that the result of this was the end of Asante as a patrimonial state, and in its reconstruction after the reinstatement of Prempeh I as *Kumasehene* it became a ‘client nation’ of the British colonial state.[[24]](#footnote-24)

McCaskie further demonstrates the links between this pre-colonial state and the development of both Asante nationalism in the colonial period, and the absorption of this into Gold Coast nationalism.[[25]](#footnote-25) The incorporation of aspects of the state into the colonial order, intended to ensure the smooth running of the territory, allowed for the continuation, at a basic level, of Asante culture and practices for the vast majority of people in the region.[[26]](#footnote-26) Despite the changes that the British had attempted to implement, ‘only the core had gone, leaving behind it an inevitable sediment of cultural norms.’[[27]](#footnote-27) The core political structure was removed, but the colonial authorities permitted the continuation of certain chiefly practices and customs.[[28]](#footnote-28) These ‘cultural norms’ remained after the state as indicators of Asante unity, embodied in the Golden Stool and the system of chiefs who, though considerably weakened, were a potent remnant of pre-colonial Asante. Symbols of the social order and history of the *Asantehene,* resurrected by the British to instil unity within the colony, coalesced into an awareness of the past tied to pride, loyalty, and continued (low-level) opposition to the British.[[29]](#footnote-29) This could arguably be perceived of as a basis from which later nationalisms may have developed, or indeed as a form of ‘proto-nationalism’, though it lacked any territorial dimension by the 1920s. But the symbolism of Asante could also be co-opted into the nationalist accounts of the major political parties, the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC), the Convention Peoples Party (CPP), and the National Liberation Movement (NLM). The founding members of the UGCC sought to gain the vocal support of the *Asantehene* and chiefs across Ghana, whom they believed could provide legitimacy and vindication for the party’s claims to nationhood and leadership. NLM leaders drew on regal lineages to demonstrate their connection to a pre-colonial past, and at Independence, Nkrumah wore kente cloth, traditionally reserved for Asante royalty, though it is worth noting here that Nkrumah clashed with the Asante chiefs throughout his years in power.[[30]](#footnote-30) These tropes all invoked the idea that the Gold Coast and pre-colonial Asante had a shared history, though they did so in different and potentially incompatible ways. As the colonial system came under increasing criticism, Asante history was drawn upon as evidence of the capacity of Africans for self-rule, and Gold Coast statehood.

It is therefore clear that Asante and post-1945 Gold Coast and Ghanaian nationalism were inextricably linked, though the literature which has highlighted these links is weakened by the failure to consider the political utility of nationalism. Nationalism has functioned, in every region, as a tool by which a central or centralising power can unite disparate communities under a single, simultaneously ahistorical and locally contextual, concept. [[31]](#footnote-31) The fact that African nationalism was constructed on an ostensibly unifying anti-colonial basis was crucial in bridging the intellectual gap between the nation and the state, and between the elite nationalist leaders and the African masses. However, at the attainment of independence, anti-colonialism ceased to provide a unifying basis for African leaders, as the apparent enemy was, in theory at least, no longer present. The deployment of ‘neo-colonialism’ in this period can be seen therefore as the unifying tool for leaders in the absence of a defined ‘enemy’. The centrality of anti-colonialism, and subsequently neo-colonialism, as the basis for an African form of nationalism has been discussed extensively: this distinctive feature of African nationalism must be taken into account if we are to understand its specific nature, and its relative success notwithstanding the artificial basis of the nation-states over which its leaders claimed sovereignty.[[32]](#footnote-32)

The increasingly nuanced approach to the study of nationalism has allowed for the development of an understanding of African nationalism that is neither ahistorical nor simply a problematic reproduction of Eurocentric models. These studies have emphasised the importance of context and perception in the emergence and presentation of nationalisms in Africa.[[33]](#footnote-33) However, despite these developments, scholars have tended to accept that, once asserted, a territorially-defined nationalism remains fixed and uncontested. Historians have challenged this assumption by highlighting the presence, in the Gold Coast/Ghana, of alternative nationalisms, or contestations of the dominant form of nationalism. The presence of ethno-social nationalisms, such as that of the Asante, is, according to Jean Allman, a demonstration of the contested nature of nationalism, as the Asante political leadership attempted to assert an alternative vision of the post-colonial nation that was rooted in a distinct and unique history.[[34]](#footnote-34) Similar work has been undertaken by Skinner and Nugent in relation to ethnic groups which attempted to challenge the ‘accepted nationalism’ of Kwame Nkrumah and his CPP in the years leading up to independence.[[35]](#footnote-35)

This thesis seeks to build on this advance, by relocating Kwame Nkrumah’s nationalism away from the traditional view of it as the nationalism of the nation-state leader, constructed in a vacuum and subsequently popularised. Instead it is viewed here as a competitive meta-narrative that was altered and reconstructed by Nkrumah in response to the challenges that alternative nationalisms posed. When taken as a flexible entity, the changing nature of Nkrumah’s nationalism is neither a historical aberration nor simply the result of political manipulation. Rather, such changes were central to the constructed and contested process of defining the nation, and thereby to nationalism itself. Studying the process by which Nkrumah constructed the dominant version of Ghanaian nationalism will demonstrate the changing way in which this was constructed over time. In particular, the thesis highlights the reactive nature of this process of construction and reconstruction. Nkrumah’s nationalism was under a constant process of adjustment and alteration, inspired in part by the changing events and processes that occurred in Gold Coast/Ghana during the period under examination, and partly as a result of his intellectual engagement with those around him.

Pan-Africanism, which did not appear to share the same long or distinctly European history as nationalism, thus making it a far less universally applicable meta-narrative, became the subject of academic attention primarily after Nkrumah’s establishment of independent Ghana as a safe-haven for Pan-Africanist activists from across the continent. In doing this, Nkrumah brought Pan-Africanism into the sphere of political movement (as opposed to political thought), an identity the meta-narrative had lacked previously. This perhaps reflects the failure of Pan-Africanism to take hold in the diaspora in a major way prior to the 1950s, and the general success of the 1955-1965 CRM in achieving its legislative aims (certainly in comparison with the American Pan-Africanist movement).

The study of Pan-Africanism has benefitted from a greater level of contextualisation than the study of nationalism, this being the result of the emergence of Pan-Africanism as a powerful set of ideas in a very specific time and place, African decolonisation and the honeymoon period of independence. [[36]](#footnote-36) This is represented best by Colin Legum’s work on the subject.[[37]](#footnote-37) Much like many early scholars of Pan-Africanism, Legum ties the development and popularity of Pan-Africanism to a distinctly African constituency, and whilst he makes an obligatory nod towards the earlier Pan-Africanist thinkers (e.g. Du Bois, Garvey and Blyden), he neglects the critical contributions that these figures made in establishing the core tenets and basic directions of the ideology.[[38]](#footnote-38) Nkrumah’s adoption of Pan-Africanism as a guiding principle in independent Ghana put Pan-Africanism into a more concrete form that could then be critically assessed. It is perhaps understandable then that Nkrumah’s contribution is often taken, by Africanists at least, as the principal one. This thesis will demonstrate the importance of earlier thinkers and the role that they played in Nkrumah’s formulation of Pan-Africanism. By historicising the meta-narrative, the thesis draws attention to the multifaceted nature of Pan-Africanism, as of meta-narratives more generally.

These early works have since been re-evaluated in the light of the perceived failure of Nkrumah’s grand Pan-Africanist vision, after 1966. More recent researchers have considered the contexts in which Pan-Africanism existed and functioned (such as the Cold War, and the ‘Third World’ or Non-Aligned Movement), and the various forms that Pan-Africanism has taken. Pan-Africanism was construed in such contexts as indicative of an international ‘third way’ vis-a-vis the superpowers, and to guard Africa from the potential to become a theatre for proxy wars.[[39]](#footnote-39) The Non-Aligned Movement preceded Nkrumah’s leadership of Ghana, and Pan-Africanism has been considered as a particular element of such a movement.[[40]](#footnote-40) Despite the changes in the literature discussed above, the treatment of Pan-Africanism remains broadly ahistorical. Studies of the meta-narrative have tended to divorce the ideas from the temporal and geographical contexts in which they were developed. Adam Ewing suggests that the focus on the big names of Pan-African organising have encouraged this form of analysis as those ideas and proponents deemed ‘successful’ receive greater attention, and those considered ‘failures’ are excluded from comparative research and consideration.[[41]](#footnote-41) Understanding Pan-Africanism as both a meta-narrative derived from several strands of thought, and as reliant on historical contextualisation, enables us to move away from popular but historically inaccurate interpretations of Pan-Africanism as a singular, unchanging entity.

In this respect, many analyses of nationalism and Pan-Africanism suffer the same weakness. Removing these meta-narratives from the time and place in which they developed overlooks their inherent dynamism, and dislocates them from the historical contexts in which they emerged.[[42]](#footnote-42) Presenting such ideas as static entities ultimately leads to a misrepresentation of those who engaged with, advocated, and re-interpreted these meta-narratives to better reflect the changing situation they found themselves in, as deviating from the confines of a ‘true’ ideology. This thesis challenges such assumptions by emphasising and demonstrating the importance of context, and presenting meta-narratives as historically contingent rather than timeless and authentic. Doing so highlights the capacity of individuals and movements to influence the components of a meta-narrative and alter its meaning and application.

Partly because of the above tendency to see such ideas as largely fixed, little research has been carried out in regard to Nkrumah’s specific contribution to both Pan-Africanism and nationalism. Instead, studies of Nkrumah have typically fallen into the category of political biography, which is discussed below, and the ideological aspect of his politics has been either overlooked or subsumed within a realism that tends to assess it only in regard to its direct impact on political outcomes. However, Ama Biney’s recent research on Nkrumah’s political and social thought makes a rich and insightful contribution, providing a nuanced analysis of his ideas and politics throughout his life. [[43]](#footnote-43) Firstly, by discussing his ideological beliefs in relation to other Pan-Africanists, Biney positions Nkrumah’s ideas within a larger Pan-Africanist movement.[[44]](#footnote-44) Secondly, her careful attention to periodisation allows for changes during Nkrumah’s period in government, which in turn demonstrates that his ‘political, social, and cultural thought, as contained in his writings and speeches, reflects a coherent thought process.’[[45]](#footnote-45) Moving away from Nkrumah as a purely political actor allows Biney to present Nkrumah as a far more complex individual. However, several issues remain. Despite acknowledging the importance of African unity in Nkrumah’s thought, Biney fails to incorporate a serious analysis of Pan-Africanism into her research. Why she fails to fairly attribute his political and social beliefs to his ideological beliefs remains largely unexplained.

Rahman comes closer to bridging the intellectual gap between Nkrumah’s socio-political beliefs and his commitment to Pan-Africanism. He writes that ‘Nkrumah’s success or failure as a decolonizer hinged on his abilities to supplant Britain’s colonial ideological superstructure… He aimed each of his books, essays, speeches, gestures, and cultural affectations at the goals of anti-colonial, then decolonizing, and later anti-neocolonizing Pan-African unity.’[[46]](#footnote-46) Rahman constructs Nkrumah’s Pan-Africanism as inherently linked to the anti-colonial movement and as a challenge to a colonial assumption of social, political, and intellectual supremacy. Pan-Africanism thus had a dual purpose, as an ideology for future development, and as a Fanonite principle for African ‘rehabilitation.’[[47]](#footnote-47) Franz Fanon’s central proposition was that the preconceptions inherent in colonialism were internalised by colonial subjects, to the effect that colonised peoples came to believe that their situation was irreversible.[[48]](#footnote-48) Nkrumah thus adopted the position of the previous power, subverting the psychological tactics used by the colonial authorities to use them in uniting the peoples of the Gold Coast against the British. Though Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth* did not consider the idea that African leaders would engage the same tactics as the colonial powers, Nkrumah’s actions are explained, at least in Rahman’s argument, as a necessary step in the ‘full’ liberation of African peoples.

Constructing Pan-Africanism in this manner allows Rahman to evaluate Nkrumah’s post-independence politics in a more nuanced context of colonial legacy and continued anti-colonial agitation. This is both helpful and problematic: on the one hand, Rahman slips easily into hagiography, and rather than challenge the negative aspects of Nkrumah’s rule (arrests without trial, deportation, and the undermining of democracy), he interprets them as the inevitable outcome of Nkrumah’s decolonising Pan-Africanism. On the other hand, such a conclusion allows for a reassessment of Nkrumah that moves away from a two-dimensional caricature and incorporates the apparent inconsistencies in Nkrumah’s beliefs and politics into a three-dimensional individual tied to his historical context. This study seeks to consider Nkrumah in precisely this way, whilst not neglecting assessing his more authoritarian actions as either inevitable or arising directly from Pan-Africanism.

### Sub-Saharan African Decolonisation and Nationalism

Although the decolonisation of Europe’s African empires has been studied extensively, and in great detail, there are areas that still require further analysis and illumination to uncover the complexity and nuance of the processes by which these territories gained a form of political independence. Ghana has been the recipient of a great deal of this attention, as it was the first colony to attain independence, and as Cooper notes, ‘there is a particular poignancy to the history of Ghana because it was the pioneer.’[[49]](#footnote-49) Whilst this is certainly true, it is important to consider the broader historiographical trends that have affected the writing of African history, and their implications for Ghanaian history.

The academic interest in decolonisation began with the first stirrings of nationalist sentiment in the colonies. The attention that scholars such as Thomas Hodgkin paid to nationalist movements was overly deterministic, viewing the Second World War as the spark which caused the emergence of nationalism.[[50]](#footnote-50) In response to this, a later generation of writers focused instead on the European or global context of decolonisation, considering the metropoles’ primary role in driving the process.[[51]](#footnote-51) Such a view tended to downplay African agency and the nationalist, anti-colonial sentiment that swept across the continent from the 1930s onwards.[[52]](#footnote-52) This overly Eurocentric view of decolonisation was not without its critics though. In an effort to re-establish the centrality of African participation in the decolonisation process, historians and political commentators turned the focus back to the leaders of nationalist movements and subsequent heads of state.[[53]](#footnote-53) The pivotal role that these men played in the construction of both mass movements and political narratives highlighted the importance of mass participation in African nationalism, thus explaining why earlier political elites had not achieved the success of Nkrumah’s mass-oriented nationalism. Indeed, such mass-oriented leaders were viewed by metropolitan observers and some contemporaries as rabble rousing ‘prison graduates.’[[54]](#footnote-54)

Despite the more Afrocentric study of such nationalist leaders, the predominant focus in the literature has remained on the capture of states as the primary basis on which to assess nationalist movements’ political effectiveness.[[55]](#footnote-55) Analysis has typically focused on government and its various branches and actors. This level of analysis places the central state at the heart of debates about the forces driving decolonisation, with little consideration of the regional and local levels, or groups that functioned within and in relation to the state. This has created a distorted view of the state as all-powerful, the capturing of it as the singular answer to Africa’s problems, and the diverse indigenous population as the homogenous proto-citizenry of a country not yet born. This paradigm was heavily influenced by the post-Second World War international order, where ideas of national self-determination were seen as the basis for solving humanity’s problems. The burden of responsibility for change within the state was placed on the shoulders of leaders with little consideration of the internal social pressures that shaped African debates on leadership and independence. However, it was also influenced by a period of great optimism within African states, based on the belief that independence had brought with it the potential for great change in which states had the capacity to develop and transform societies.

As this optimism regarding the future of Africa began to fade as the result of the military coups, civil wars and economic woes of the 1970s, academic interest moved away from the state, instead highlighting the importance of different social groups in defining the boundaries of political power over decolonisation and independence.[[56]](#footnote-56) This period in writing saw a concerted effort to incorporate social groups, opposition movements and private interests into new understandings of the political landscape. This problematised the image of smooth transition and orderly government that had been assumed by many scholars and indeed was advanced by Nkrumah himself.

Whilst a great deal of this literature on Ghana evaluated the role of politically active groups such as labour groups, trade unions, and students, scholars did not generally challenge the supremacy of the state, and in extension Nkrumah and the CPP, as the sole arbiters of both domestic and foreign policy.[[57]](#footnote-57) Rather, these groups were conceived of as self-interest groups, engaging the state for the benefit of their members, instead of challenging the prevalent political atmosphere or source of power.[[58]](#footnote-58) For example, David J. Finlay, in considering the relationship between students at the University of Ghana and political life, argues that students’ direct engagement in national politics came about only after the academic independence of the University was threatened by Nkrumah’s government. Their resultant impact in politics, namely their support for the coup, was thus the outcome of parochial self-interest rather than a wider political motivation, assumed to be national in scale.[[59]](#footnote-59) It is perhaps labour history that brought the most significant changes to understanding the function, and more importantly the limitations, of the state, highlighting the powerful yet previously neglected position of trade unions in Ghanaian politics, as the vanguard of CPP activism.[[60]](#footnote-60) After independence, the political power that the unions had previously demonstrated became a significant problem to the state, though the impact of strikes and labour opposition on government policy has still received limited scholarly attention.[[61]](#footnote-61)

These historiographical developments, whilst shedding greater light on the complex role played by various elements of Ghanaian society, have created a separation between the state and the masses, rooted in the liberal ‘state-and-civil-society’ paradigm, a distance and separation that did not in reality exist.[[62]](#footnote-62) This paradigm creates an almost unbridgeable divide between the State and citizenry, with interactions only occurring through social movements: only through entrance into these organisations and mobilisation of these groups could the state be negotiated with. Similarly, work on parliamentary opposition has suffered as a result of the populist/elitist paradigm that Nkrumah himself employed to delegitimise and dismiss opponents of his regime.[[63]](#footnote-63) The relative paucity of work on this specific area, even to this day, is remarkable. One may wonder why the group that came closest to posing a serious threat to Nkrumah’s grasp on power has received only cursory attention. The image of the outdated, conservative parliamentarian in opposition to a young, energetic, modernist like Nkrumah was passively accepted by academics who sought to explain the failure of the opposition to organise successfully against Nkrumah.[[64]](#footnote-64) Thomas Hodgkin, an early exemplar of this view, states that ‘Kwame Nkrumah in the Gold Coast, Nnamdi Azikiwe and Obafemi Awolowo in southern Nigeria… are new men, dealers in a new kind of power. They differ profoundly both from the traditional chiefly leadership and from the past generation of lawyer-politicians.’[[65]](#footnote-65) Hodgkin and Basil Davidson both claim that this new generation benefitted from the traits of chiefly authority combined with knowledge of European political life. However, this is again cast in a somewhat negative light, as Hodgkin argued that the traditional chiefs inhabit the world of ‘the ancestors, dance and the market,’ as opposed to the high politics of the parliament or senate. [[66]](#footnote-66)

Whilst this thesis does not deal directly with this paradigm, it challenges it indirectly by presenting the government of Kwame Nkrumah not as a monolithic state actor but rather as one which reacted to the challenges it faced, with recourse to ideas, not simply to force. Its ability to respond in a number of ways to domestic challenges to the authority of the state demonstrates a form of state-society interaction that went beyond institutions and figured into the process of decision making and policy formation to an extent that has not been acknowledged by historians to this point.

In the past two decades, the focus of historiography on Ghana has again shifted, away from the visible institutions of power and opposition, instead examining the interactions between the state and alternative power bases, particularly ethnically-based opposition. This work has sought to shed greater light on the complex composition of Ghanaian society and political life in the late colonial and independence periods, thus usefully problematising the strict delineations between ‘State’ and ‘civil society’. Jean Allman’s work remains the seminal example, in her study of the rivalries between traditional chiefly authority and the secular, self-styled modernism of the CPP, which was a constant source of contention throughout Nkrumah’s time in power.[[67]](#footnote-67) This form of challenge to Nkrumah was particularly pronounced in Ashanti and the Volta region, among the Asante and Ewe peoples respectively. Allman and Kate Skinner have both demonstrated that, rather than posing a direct challenge to Nkrumah and the CPP, political activists claiming to represent these two groups attempted to establish alternative nationalisms.[[68]](#footnote-68) In the case of the Ewe people, and the Togoland Congress, this nationalism was framed around a desire to separate the territory from Ghana and join with Togo.[[69]](#footnote-69) For the Asante, nationalism was constructed around notions of a historical past, a distinct social hierarchy, trade, art and culture, which could form the basis of an alternative for of Ghanaian identity. Independence from Nkrumah’s Ghana was not the principal motivation for Asante nationalism. Instead, it provided an alternative rallying point and was aimed at forcing recognition by the central government of the power and legitimacy of the Asante people.[[70]](#footnote-70)

In discussing ethno-regional opposition to Nkrumah’s rule, both Allman and Skinner emphasise the notion of a highly orchestrated, constructed nationalism. They demonstrate the idea of alternate nationalisms as a form of political mobilisation and action. Such an idea has typically been applied to disenfranchised or opposition groups, yet it has not been considered in relation to the nationalism that Nkrumah himself employed. As has been mentioned above, when employed at the State level, the promulgation of nationalism is adopted in a paradigm reflecting the notion of nationalism constructed on the basis of European nation-statehood – the nation fits the boundaries of the territory, and therefore the nationalism of the state reflects this. However, this thesis makes it clear that Nkrumah’s conceptualisation of Ghanaian nationalism was itself actually more akin to that which Skinner describes, and which Carola Lentz also demonstrates in the case of the Dagara of North-Western Ghana, a construction.[[71]](#footnote-71) Viewing the nationalism promulgated by the state in such a light allows for greater contextualisation of the events surrounding its reconstruction.

### Kwame Nkrumah and Political Biography

In an attempt to understand the process of decolonisation from what may be considered a more Afrocentric perspective, some historians have turned to the method of biography to explore the personalities who led the first generation of independent African states.[[72]](#footnote-72) This is certainly true of Kwame Nkrumah, whose period in office has been the subject of academic and popular attention. This particular type of study became increasingly popular in the late 1960s, as a wave of military coups and civil wars swept across the continent.

As a result, the first ‘generation’ of political biographies reflected a relatively negative view of Nkrumah. These were an attempt to understand why the once-popular Nkrumah had fallen from both power and grace, ousted by a military coup with apparent widespread support. In attempting to understand why this had happened, scholars generally adopted a *realpolitik* approach, portraying Nkrumah as a Machiavellian figure, ruthlessly searching for and maintaining power by any means. Henry L. Bretton, writing in 1967, wrote of the ‘political machine,’ the state and semi-state apparatus by which Nkrumah gained and maintained power over Ghanaian political life.[[73]](#footnote-73) Nkrumah was, in this characterisation, at the head of an overbearing and ultimately over-reaching political mechanism, characterised as something of a puppet-master. Bretton thus argued for an understanding of Nkrumah as an egocentric leader, and presupposes the February 1966 coup as inevitable in the light of Nkrumah’s growing personal control.

In response to this, a number of Nkrumah’s supporters and admirers borrowed the model of political biography in an attempt to demonstrate the limited power that Nkrumah had over external affairs. Most famously, Basil Davidson, who characterised Nkrumah as a political hero, argued that Nkrumah was forced into a corner by external actors opposed to Ghanaian independence.[[74]](#footnote-74) In *Black Star*, published the year after Nkrumah’s death in 1972, Davidson wrote apologetically about the turbulent final years of Nkrumah’s rule in the mid-1960s, justifying the more dictatorial aspects of his leadership as either misrepresented by an intolerant press or necessary in the light of the international political opposition he faced.

Davidson’s work can be understood as a response to the increasingly critical views of Nkrumah after his removal from power in 1966, an attempt to understand why Nkrumah had fallen from both power and grace. However, Davidson did not break away from the model of Nkrumah in isolation from broader changes and phenomena that occurred around him. Characterising Nkrumah in such a manner has brought certain aspects of his rule to the fore. The importance of individual personality and charisma has been widely discussed, for both negative and positive reasons.[[75]](#footnote-75) Omari, writing in the 1990s, has argued that Nkrumah’s charismatic method of leadership masked a manipulative character.[[76]](#footnote-76) Both his and Bretton’s earlier work ultimately draw the same conclusions – that Nkrumah was an egocentric leader, whose principle aim was absolute power. Whether taken at an academic level as Bretton, or on a personal level as Omari, both writers have examined Nkrumah in relative isolation, hoping to better understand the man as a political actor yet removing him from the socio-political context in which he developed.

The cult of personality that developed around Nkrumah ensured that what was presented to the world was a highly orchestrated image. In addition to this, Nkrumah’s personality ensured him both ardent fans and critics, even enemies.[[77]](#footnote-77) Both Nkrumah’s supporters and detractors have focused on the man as a political actor, his personality and abilities to the extent that the wider context in which he functioned has been neglected. Allman has highlighted the issues surrounding the possibility of reconstructing Nkrumah in a historical context, identifying the constructed nature of his public image, and perhaps most importantly for historians, the curated nature of his memory.[[78]](#footnote-78) Nkrumah maintained strict control over all aspects of his public image – images, speeches, interviews, even personal letters, were all moderated to fit with the constructed image of Nkrumah as an passionate, unflappable leader. Those closest to him, Allman notes, participated in the curating and archiving of this specific image by making public only that material which contributed to the approved image of the leader, thus reinforcing the cult of personality that had developed around him even after he was removed from power.[[79]](#footnote-79) Allman has successfully problematised the overly simplistic historical construction of Nkrumah’s memory, and has argued for caution when attempting to reconstruct any aspect of his historical legacy. Whilst she has laid clear some of the more problematic aspects of historical inquiry, this is not an insurmountable problem.

More recent scholarship has sought to problematise the popular image of Nkrumah and address some of the problems that Allman has raised. Marika Sherwood has demonstrated the necessity of looking beyond Nkrumah’s years in power to understand the man in terms of both political activities and ideology. [[80]](#footnote-80) By examining his life during the twelve years he spent overseas, Sherwood places Nkrumah within a broader context of global social and political change, linking his Pan-Africanism to his exposure to the politics of men like W.E.B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey and George Padmore during his years in the USA and UK. Closer analysis of this time period is still required for a fuller understanding of the development of Nkrumah’s ideological positions, but Sherwood makes a major contribution in bridging the divide between Nkrumah as a political leader and the development of his political thought.

This thesis seeks to build on these biographical approaches to Nkrumah, whilst moving away from both positive and negative political, *realpolitik,* analyses. Moving away from the two-dimensional view of Nkrumah will demonstrate that he was a powerful but not omnipotent actor, thus reasserting the role of intellectual thought in Nkrumah’s politics. The failure in each case to incorporate his ideological beliefs into studies of his leadership has resulted in the treatment of Pan-Africanism as little more than a political tool, used to legitimise Nkrumah’s authority. By placing his construction of Pan-Africanism and nationalism at the heart of his decision-making process and considering his ideological development, this study seeks to challenge the misconception of Kwame Nkrumah as an African Machiavelli. Instead, this thesis will demonstrate, through an analysis of his formulation of Pan-Africanism and nationalism, that Nkrumah’s method of leadership changed during his time in power. Rather than a singular construct, he, like the meta-narratives he employed, changed in response to external events. Indeed, these changes need to be understood in relation to his developing ideas and ideologies for a fully contextualised view of the man to be realised.

### Rethinking the Civil Rights Movement

Our understanding of the US Civil Rights Movement has, in the past two decades, undergone several major developments which have broadened the scope of potential inquiry and deepened our understanding of its complex social, cultural, and political history - or, more accurately, histories.[[81]](#footnote-81) The focus has moved – in ways that parallel recent developments in the study of African nationalism - from a grand narrative of liberal political campaigning and successful reform during the decade from 1955-1965, to an emphasis on the diversity of African American political expression and a more critical analysis of the movement’s achievements. This has extended both the depth and the temporal scope of analysis, which has now moved beyond the 1955-1965 period.

For example, scholars have attempted to reintegrate this ‘high civil rights era’ into a longer history of African American political and social activism. The established understanding of the Civil Rights Movement has focused on the period from the Montgomery Bus Boycott (beginning in December 1955) to the passing of the Civil Rights Act in 1965 (hereafter this phase is referred to as CRM).[[82]](#footnote-82) This has dislocated this period from earlier African American discourses and activities focused on equality and liberation, and likewise tends to disassociate it from the subsequent emergence of the Black Power Movement. This reflected and reinforced a popular perception of both the pre- and post-CRM periods as marked by failure, relative to the undoubted impact and achievements of the core CRM period. For example, Peniel E. Joseph noted in 2009 that it was until recently ‘accepted as wisdom… that black power undermined struggles for racial justice… The embrace, at times, of violent rhetoric, misogyny, and bravado by black power advocates have made them and their struggles easy targets for demonization and dismissal.’[[83]](#footnote-83)

This narrow approach has in recent years faced not only criticism but revision. Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, among others, has argued for a broader temporal scope, identifying a ‘civil rights era’ which encompasses African American political activities from 1865 to 1978.[[84]](#footnote-84) Aldon Morris has similarly argued for greater acknowledgement of the social, cultural and intellectual origins of the civil rights movement in American history.[[85]](#footnote-85) Such approaches allow for a more holistic understanding of the origins of the ‘high era of civil rights’ and highlight both the continuities and discontinuities between the CRM and the Black Power Movement.[[86]](#footnote-86) For this thesis, such an approach enables an understanding of the vital contributions of early diaspora Pan-Africanist thinkers, not only to the subsequent development of the liberal integrationist CRM, but also the prior importance of Pan-Africanist thinking for generations of African American thinkers and activists. Most significantly, such an approach enables the reincorporation of those who were alienated from the CRM by its non-racial, integrationist approach and who found a home, physically and intellectually, in both Africa and in Africanist notions of political liberation.

The research undertaken builds on the ‘long civil rights movement’ approach by examining the process by which Pan-Africanists, previously the most vocal champions of African American rights, became a marginalised group in the politics of ‘African America.’[[87]](#footnote-87) Removing the negative association surrounding the Black Power Movement has allowed scholars to provide a more nuanced account of the relationship between the different elements of the US black political movement.[[88]](#footnote-88) A closer analysis of the positions adopted by American ‘Black Nationalism’ highlights a continuous strand of cultural assertion that had been present throughout the longer period of the civil rights era. Most clearly represented in the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s, this strand of belief asserted that African American culture was equal to that of white society, and was something in which African Americans should take pride.[[89]](#footnote-89) This perspective of the civil rights movement has often been downplayed as a result of the legislative focus of the CRM, though in recent years there has been an increased interest in the cultural history of African American civil rights.[[90]](#footnote-90)

One such aspect has been the production of racial identity and the construction of race and ethnic identity within the African American imagination. Research in this area has considered the relationship between a historical growth in civil rights awareness and the formulation of racial identities in the USA. Such studies have grown out of interest in groups such as Marcus Garvey’s Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), which placed race at the core of its ideological structure. Tony Martin highlights the central role that notions of race played in the creation and appeal of this early mass civil rights movement in the USA.[[91]](#footnote-91) More recent research has problematised the nature of race and race identification; for example, Omi and Winant rightly argue that race formation is a ‘sociohistorical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed and destroyed.’[[92]](#footnote-92)

The study of race formation has also demonstrated the importance of ‘Africa’ in African American constructions of race identification.[[93]](#footnote-93) For example, Lemelle and Kelley have demonstrated the important connection that emerged between Africans of the continent and the diaspora as a result of Pan-Africanist constructions of race.[[94]](#footnote-94) Joy L. Abell and Glenn Jordan have both demonstrated the importance of ‘Africa’ as an imagined construct and an artefact of cultural memory in understanding the contemporary position of African Americans.[[95]](#footnote-95) This thesis develops on the constructed nature of ‘Africa’ as a basis for understanding the broad interest in Africa. This constructed nature is also crucial in understanding the responses of the small minority of African Americans who experienced Africa directly. This area of research – the relationship between African Americans and Africa during the Civil Rights era – is a relatively new development in the literature. It has allowed scholars to move away from a strictly national focus and ground the civil rights movement in a global context, examining how international events and processes came to have an impact on the development and direction of the CRM. Scholars in this field have focused primarily on South Africa and the common ground identified between participants in the Black Power Movement and the anti-Apartheid campaign.[[96]](#footnote-96) This research has highlighted areas of commonality and transnational relationships, but its focus on Apartheid South Africa has resulted in a neglect of the wider changes that were taking place across sub Saharan Africa in the 1950s and 1960s.

Kevin Gaines has made a particularly important contribution to studies of the diaspora in Africa beyond South Africa. His work on African American émigrés in Ghana makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of the lived experience of African Americans in a context of Pan-African politics and African liberation.[[97]](#footnote-97) Whilst Gaines has certainly laid bare the process by which this small group came to identify with Nkrumah’s politics, and the importance of African liberation in the changing perceptions of African American liberation, his work fails to address the African perspective in these relations. As a result, the importance placed on Ghana in these studies fails to establish the country or its politics as anything more than a backdrop to African American affairs. This thesis seeks to develop on Gaines’ work by incorporating an analysis of Ghanaian politics into the experience of African American émigrés and providing a counterbalance to his research by presenting the Ghanaian perspective. An understanding of the changes to Pan-Africanism and nationalism that occurred within Ghanaian politics in the post-independence period provides a richer context, vital for understanding the émigrés’ changing relationship to Pan-Africanism and to Ghana, if not Africa. This, as a result, highlights the importance of constructed ‘Africa’ as an influencing factor in their world view, and the sharp divide between this and the reality of life in Africa.

### Sources

In a thesis of this scale, which incorporates a number of fields of study and scales of approach, reliance on a single source base would be inappropriate. Rather, the thesis attempts to bring together disparate areas of analysis, and therefore requires a broader methodological approach, utilising a wider range of sources, both in terms of content and in location. The thesis therefore incorporates sources of both a public and private nature, which cover both the public image and the personal experience of Pan-Africanism. In addition to this, the sources used here are indicative of the global scale of the topic. Collections and archives in the United States provide the principal sources for the African American component of the thesis. Personal collections held in the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York, and the Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library (MARBL) at Emory University, Atlanta, have provided a wealth of material for the arguments presented here. The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) at College Park, Maryland, provide context and further supplementary information. The George Padmore Library in Accra, along with the Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD), Accra, and the W.E.B. Du Bois Library, also located in Accra, provided the substantial majority of material on the Ghanaian angle of this research. Supplementary material includes digitised newspaper collections.

In attempting to understand the historical development of Pan-Africanism and Nkrumah’s personal changes to the meta-narrative, a close examination of public speeches and official documents is particularly helpful. Speeches, official statements, editorials, and similar productions, all highlight the official position of the author at the time they were written, but when taken together, they are used here to demonstrate the changing positioning and meaning of Pan-Africanism over a longer period of time. From Blyden’s published books to Nkrumah’s radio addresses, these sources all provide insight into both what the individual believed but also how they wished Pan-Africanism to be perceived. The edited and produced nature of these sources means that it should not be claimed that they are a direct reflection of the beliefs of intellectuals. Nevertheless, , it is possible, as this thesis will demonstrate, to understand how intellectuals’ ideas and beliefs changed over time in response to external events, and how they constructed their arguments publicly to seek to influence others.

Newspapers and magazines are perhaps the best means by which to understand the interaction between the masses, intellectuals, and political ideologies. The printed press acted as an interlocutor of sorts, a bridge between very disparate communities, both intellectual and non-intellectual, even geographically distant groups as well. The role that newspapers played in promoting anti-colonialism has been well established elsewhere, yet the role that they played in promoting certain imaginings of the world and of key issues has been overlooked, especially in relation to Pan-Africanism.[[98]](#footnote-98) Intellectuals and political or community leaders used newspapers to advance their ideas and beliefs (as discussed above), and simultaneously to discuss important stories, presenting them in such a way as to make them both understandable and relevant to readers. It would be easy to overstate the impact of newspapers, to suggest that their ability to influence readers can be demonstrated through their coverage of particular topics and issues. Whilst letters from readers may highlight certain instances of influence, it is in truth almost impossible to accurately gauge the level of influence of specific newspapers and journalists. Rather, newspapers attempted to reflect popular attitudes, hoping to please or appease their readership. Thus newspapers play a key role in helping academics understand popular opinion. Both African American and Ghanaian newspapers are significant in this regard, and a close study of a small number of publications will be used to examine mass attitudes.

Finally, personal papers, for example letters, diaries, memoirs and autobiographies, can provide insight into the personal development of some of the individuals under study here. Though ultimately personal collections and letters suffer the same weaknesses and strengths as official and published materials (though in this case the level of editing that has occurred is in fact unknown), these private documents provide a great degree of insight into the thought processes, the personal journeys and indeed the highly complex personal struggles that individual observers of Pan-Africanism went through and documented. Rather than trying to present a holistic and smooth experience or narrative, the personal papers presented here embody the contradictions, uncertainties and the complexities of the lived experience of the meta-narratives under analysis.

### Structure of the thesis

In order to address the questions raised in this research, this thesis has been divided into the following chapters. The first chapter examines the historical origins of Pan-Africanism. As discussed above, Pan-Africanism was initially the intellectual construct of diaspora thinkers and activists in the United States and the Caribbean, such as Edward Blyden, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Marcus Garvey. A close analysis of the key actors in Pan-Africanist movements and debates highlights their unique personal contributions and simultaneously examines the level of continuity between them, questioning the extent to which this can be understood as a single movement. In doing so, this chapter will situate Nkrumah’s initial adoption of Pan-Africanist ideas and approaches within this longer history of Pan-African debate, rather than as a departure from them. A serious reconsideration of the development of intellectual thought regarding the relationship between Africans of the diaspora and the (colonised) African continent provides the basis for the argument that Nkrumah’s later (re-)conceptualisation of Pan-Africanism was not an aberration from its historical practice. Rather, Nkrumah was participating in a continuous process of contextualisation and reconceptualisation that was central to these early diaspora thinkers and has arguably been central to the long history of Pan-Africanist thought and practice. Highlighting the particular roles of W.E.B. Du Bois and Marcus Garvey, the chapter examines the role of Pan-African organisations in the United States, and the short-lived popularity of Pan-Africanism in the 1910s and 1920s. This chapter will also examine the reasons for its declining popularity, particularly during the early Cold War and the heights of McCarthyite red-baiting, following which the liberal CRM emerged as the dominant voice of black political activism in the US.

Notwithstanding this decline of Pan-African organisations and support for Pan-Africanism, Chapter 2 examines the continuing popularity of ideas and discourses surrounding Africa among African Americans. In contexts such as the Harlem Renaissance, notions and debates about the relevance of ‘Africa’ occurred within broader discourses on African American life, culture and heritage. Reports highlighted and consistently restated the origins of ‘civilisation’ among the Nubian peoples of Egypt and Sudan. This provided for some African Americans a ‘usable history’ that went beyond the violence and barbarity of slavery and segregation to a proud and prosperous past.[[99]](#footnote-99) This chapter examines how the image of Africa was developed through African American media: reports of African affairs and history ensured that ‘Africa,’ a carefully constructed, broadly positive imagining of a continent, created by African Americans and not Africans themselves, became a symbol of the potential of African Americans to determine their own futures. In the 1940s and 1950s, this cultural and historical vision was strengthened by the inspiration provided by nationalist movements in colonial Africa. Despite the decline of the organised Pan-African movement, the constant presence of Africa in the popular African-American imagination provided an alternative image of pride and action, involving the overthrow or end of white rule. This was, in comparison with the more moderate integrationist, legislative, ambitions of the mainstream CRM, a plausible if not popular alternative.

This chapter then examines the role that such notions of Africa played in influencing and defining the attitudes of a small number of African Americans who would later move to Ghana after 1957. The individuals studied are: W.E.B. Du Bois, St Clair Drake, Horace Mann Bond, Maya Angelou and Julian Mayfield. Though not African American, George Padmore, a Trinidadian, is also examined here because of his useful contributions to Pan-Africanist organising. They have been selected to represent particular strands of African American activists who engaged with African history, cultures and political developments during this period. The aim is to bring to light their perceptions of Africa and how these shaped their experiences of the emergent Civil Rights Movement.

Having outlined the experience of Pan-Africanist thought and activity amongst African Americans, it is then necessary to consider the role that the central meta-narratives of ‘Pan-Africanism’ and ‘nationalism’ played in Gold Coast politics during the same period, from the turn of the twentieth century to Independence in 1957. Chapter 3 will therefore outline the intellectual and political developments that occurred in the Gold Coast, adopting a long-term perspective on the changing nature of political thought in the colony. This chapter will highlight the relationship between changing conceptualisations of political culture (participation, authority, legitimacy) and the course of political change in the run up to Independence. This will incorporate Nkrumah into the longer history of political discourses in the Gold Coast, demonstrating his contribution in terms of both adopting existing ideas, and altering them in a period of changing political issues and arguments.

In contrast, Chapter 4 considers the events that shaped the development of nationalist and Pan-Africanist thought and policy in independent Ghana until the 1966 coup. The chapter focuses on a series of important events, and the key policy changes that Nkrumah, underpinned by his changing interpretations of nationalism and Pan-Africanism, made in response to these events. The focus on key events demonstrates that these changes were not simply pragmatic responses to a changing political environment. Rather, it is argued that these changes were a part of a flexible and reactive approach to ideological implementation. The chapter identifies three phases in Nkrumah’s conceptualisation of Pan-Africanism and nationalism during the First Republic. During the first such stage (1957-1960), Pan-African discourse was noteworthy by its absence, as it saw the articulation of nationalist discourses on political and economic development in the post-colonial state. These discourses were most clearly identified through government policy changes and Nkrumah’s personal relations and public statements in international affairs. The second stage (1960-1964) saw Nkrumah’s deployment of Pan-Africanism as the primary basis of state policy. During this period, Nkrumah’s declarations on Pan-Africanism became increasingly clearly defined. This period was marked by the declining role of nationalism in discourses on economic and political development, as Nkrumah became increasingly pro-active in and preoccupied with continental affairs. The last of these three phases (1964 to the coup in February 1966) was distinguished by a complex hybrid of nationalism and Pan-Africanism. Though Nkrumah did not combine the two meta-narratives into a single discourse, he asserted the reliance of one upon the other. In relation to this, there was the Ghanaian economy was under growing strain during this period; this was Nkrumah’s critics argued, the result of his focus on continental projects, as well as the deployment of Pan-African identity as a source of legitimisation for Nkrumah’s government and the converse delegitimisation of his national critics.

The final chapter examines the experiences of African American émigrés in Accra during Nkrumah’s time in power. A close examination of the personal experiences of those émigrés first examined in Chapter 3 reveals the vulnerable space this ‘returned diaspora’ inhabited on the margins of Ghanaian society. Although they were willing participants in what they perceived as a global Pan-African project, Nkrumah’s domestication of Pan-Africanism resulted in their increased marginalisation from Ghanaian politics and the politics of liberation. This chapter will seek to demonstrate the impact of Nkrumah’s changes to Pan-Africanist discourse on this community in Ghana, and the legacy of these changes in the intellectual development of the émigré community. Some members of this group formed a key link between the diaspora Pan-African movement, the CRM and the nascent Black Power Movement, which played such an important role in the post-CRM period of African-American politics in the late 1960s and early 1970s. This examination highlights the importance of lived experience in the formulation of meta-narratives. As some of these members of the émigré community lived through the process of marginalisation from Ghanaian political decision-making, they engaged with Pan-Africanism and the Civil Rights Movement in new and creative ways. In response to Nkrumah’s ‘nationalisation’ of Pan-Africanism, they reconceived the positive aspects of Pan-Africanism and sought to frame it in a national, American-based, paradigm. The emphasis on cultural pride and self-sufficiency that was so indicative of the later Black Power Movement drew heavily on Pan-Africanism as it developed during this period. It would be reductionist to suggest that it was only through the lived experiences of a small group of African American émigrés to Ghana that Black Nationalism was developed. However, this chapter will demonstrate the important role that experiences of Pan-Africanism during the period of African independence played in informing a new direction in African American politics.

# **Chapter 1. Pan-Africanism in the Diaspora, 1850s-1950s**

*The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line; the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea.*

* W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903)

Pan-Africanism, as an expression of racial unity, is often inaccurately portrayed by scholars as a concrete ideology, with a central canon, core tenets, or a defined scope. A cursory glance at Pan-Africanist literature makes it clear, however, that in reality, it is an amalgamation of a series of strands and individual ideas that have, over time, coalesced into a broad characterisation of the relationship between the African diaspora and Africans of the continent. As with all meta-narratives, however, the flexibility and adaptability inherent in Pan-Africanism has also been a strength, allowing its continued ‘relevance’ in changing contexts. To understand how and why a distinctly Ghanaian imagining of Pan-Africanism developed in the period after 1957, one must first look to the movement’s earliest thinkers, and examine the development of a series of ‘strands’ that emerged in the period from the 1880s through to the 1950s, specifically in the West Indies and, most significantly, the United States of America.

The principal aim of this chapter is to highlight the major developments in pre-1950s Pan-Africanist thought. Because the first Pan-Africanists were from the diaspora, this chapter focuses on the development of Pan-Africanism outside of Africa, where the earliest negotiations over meaning and content occurred among African Americans and West Indians. By examining the development of these ideas, the chapter will examine how they came to form a nexus of ideas under the umbrella of Pan-Africanism. However, to study Pan-Africanism in isolation from the broader social and political changes that occurred in the same period would misrepresent the development of the paradigm. As shall be demonstrated, events such as the Harlem Renaissance, the New Deal, and the emergence of liberal, non-revolutionary, political options under the banner of the CRM all impacted upon the direction that Pan-Africanism took. The chapter is presented in three chronological sections: from Pan-Africanism’s origins in the Reconstruction Era to 1919; from 1919 to the end of the Second World War; and finally from 1945 to the mid-1950s. Each phase saw significant alterations to the Pan-Africanist paradigm, indicative of broader socio-economic and political changes. The chapter will examine the relationship between the diaspora and the continent, how it was conceived of by Pan-Africanists, and the implications of this perceived relationship as Pan-Africanism declined in popularity after the 1920s.

## Paternalistic Pan-Africanism? Early Twentieth Century Developments in Pan-Africanist Thought, to 1918

Despite the ‘African' element in Pan-Africanism, the meta-narrative initially emerged among the descendants of slaves in the diaspora. It was here that the first proponents of an idea of global African unity, generated through shared race, culture and history, were found.[[100]](#footnote-100) The earliest identifiable Pan-Africanist thinkers did not necessarily identify themselves as such. Rather, they attempted to develop both a conceptual understanding of the situation they faced, and a proposed ‘plan of action’ to improve the living standards of African Americans and the diaspora more generally. They sought to demonstrate how the everyday instances of racism and segregation, emblematic of life in the ‘West,’ were linked to a series of discourses concerning the state of Africa and the diaspora. This, in turn, framed and shaped conceptions of Africa and subsequently Pan-Africanism. Arising from the memory of Africa among those taken by the slave trade, a nostalgia for a remembered but idealised ‘Africa’ emerged among their descendants, generating a sense of undeclared unity amongst diaspora communities.[[101]](#footnote-101) As Chrisman has stated, ‘It was precisely the capture and uprooting of millions of Africans and the conditions of slavery which laid the foundations for Pan Africanism…’[[102]](#footnote-102)

Nevertheless, it was not until the mid to late-nineteenth century that something approximating the meta-narrative emerged, in the tumultuous decades following the abolition of slavery in both the British Empire and the USA. Though the British slave trade was outlawed by an Act of Parliament in 1807, the practice of owning slaves was not banned until 1833.[[103]](#footnote-103) In the British West Indies, these changes had a profound effect on the social composition of the colonies. Despite efforts to delay emancipation of plantation workers through the introduction of ‘apprenticeships,’ some slave communities, notably those in Jamaica, successfully demanded their immediate freedom. In the decades after 1833, the transition to wage labour presented a major social upheaval, and abolitionist campaigners increasingly turned to missionary societies as a means to improve and ‘civilise’ the former slaves, through religion and education.[[104]](#footnote-104) The increase in missionary schooling, and acceptance of former slaves into seminary colleges, led to the (albeit limited) expansion of a literate, politically engaged class. Through greater access to education, and in addition to an existing population of Creole freemen predating abolition, a proto-middle class developed, concerned, as Kevin Smith suggests, with the social, political and economic future of the British Caribbean.[[105]](#footnote-105)

Within the United States, the emergence of Pan-Africanist ideas began in earnest slightly later, during the Reconstruction Era from 1863 to 1877. The end of the Civil War (which was of course partly fought over slavery) led to a period of political innovation as the previously Confederate states negotiated their reintegration into the Union. During this time African Americans enjoyed significant improvements in social and civil liberties.[[106]](#footnote-106) These included the extension of the franchise, access to political office, and the opening up of higher education for a few. Johnetta Cross Brazzell has highlighted the Reconstruction Era as critical to the development of an African American intellectual class and the resultant expression of black political thought, principally because of the establishment of what are now known as historically black colleges (HBCs).[[107]](#footnote-107) These colleges, such as Lincoln University (founded in 1866) and Tuskegee Normal School for Colored Teachers (founded in 1881) provided a fertile yet secure environment for debates over race, identity, the African American situation, and potential political activism. As the political backlash against Reconstruction and emancipation grew in the late nineteenth century, the freedoms enjoyed in this short period were steadily eroded. The network of black colleges remained however, becoming one of the very few forums in which African Americans were publicly represented. From this network there grew a small cadre of African American intellectuals who would lead campaigns for socio-political equality in a society which seemed increasingly intolerant to such an idea.

As mentioned above, the changes in the British West Indies allowed for the earliest identifiable Pan-Africanist activity and thinking to emerge there. Edward Wilmot Blyden, born in the West Indies in 1832 to free Nigerian parents, was among the first to articulate aspects of Pan-African thought or theory. From a young age, he developed a keen interest in the situation faced by the African and the black slave. Benefitting from missionary education and encouraged by his family and teachers, he sought seminary training in Europe and the United States. However, Blyden was soon to discover that slavery had in the USA been replaced by segregationist racism, and he was rejected from universities there.

After failing to gain access to seminaries as a direct consequence of his race, he was encouraged to look toward Africa. The West African state of Liberia, colonised by the American Colonization Society in the 1820s and intended as a home for freed slaves, had declared itself independent in 1847, and Blyden offered his services there.[[108]](#footnote-108) Although ostensibly working for the Christian missionaries, Blyden studied the indigenous peoples he encountered in Liberia and Sierra Leone, and concluded that Western notions of religion and politics were not suitable for the African continent. He argued that Christianity was a destructive force that simply encouraged a different sort of slavery, rather than ‘liberating’ the African from his ‘backward’ situation. [[109]](#footnote-109) This sentiment represents a crucial duality that existed within early formulations of Pan-Africanism, including both an Afrocentric perspective and a Western (colonialist) perspective. The latter was embodied in the paternalistic belief that the diaspora, as a result of its superior education and the direct experience of both slavery and freedom, was better placed to lead Africans to independence than either white people or Africans themselves. Simultaneously, however, it challenged orthodox beliefs about Africa and African inferiority by promoting a positive image of the African experience. This positive view grew out of abolitionist literature on African American slavery, which argued that the diaspora was capable of living freely within the US as productive members of society.[[110]](#footnote-110) Blyden, by offering an African perspective that challenged what were then considered universal notions (religion and civilisation) and scientific absolutes (embodied in racial hierarchies), laid the foundations for what would become Pan-Africanism in the early twentieth century.[[111]](#footnote-111)

The growth in popularity of Blyden’s ideas resulted in a larger audience and a self-conscious identification with Pan-Africanism. The first thinker to call himself a Pan-Africanist was Henry Sylvester-Williams, a Trinidadian lawyer active from the 1880s to the 1900s.[[112]](#footnote-112) Sylvester-Williams brought to a new audience a Pan-Africanism that was, like Blyden’s ideas, indicative of his temporal and geographical location. He suggested that the diaspora should play a leading role in the development and eventual self-governance of African colonies. This position certainly echoed the imperial perspective, reflecting the ‘civilising mission’ doctrine that influenced colonial thinking.[[113]](#footnote-113) Africans were viewed by diaspora intellectuals as ‘unready’ for self-government because they lacked the education and experience that was considered necessary for independence. Intellectuals like Blyden and Sylvester Williams appointed themselves (in place of the colonial authorities) as the legitimate authority to guide them towards self-rule. This belief determined the outcome of the First Pan-African Conference, held in 1900 in London.[[114]](#footnote-114) This was arguably Sylvester-Williams’ greatest achievement, as he succeeded in turning the nascent paradigm into a political movement through his role in organising the Conference.[[115]](#footnote-115) This was the first opportunity for Pan-Africanist thinkers, almost entirely from the diaspora, to come together, discuss the meaning(s) of Pan-Africanism, and attempt to establish a single organisation with a clear set of ideas and arguments. As a result of his leading role in organising the event, and management of the invitation of delegates, Sylvester-Williams was also highly influential in the direction that Pan-Africanism would take in future decades. He directed the earliest framing of Pan-Africanist thought, and he inadvertently highlighted one of its key weaknesses, that of a neglect of geographical context, a common problem in movements based on such broad meta-narratives. By attempting to bring together physically disparate groups under a single banner, Sylvester-Williams necessarily overlooked or downplayed the existence of differences rooted in regional and national experience – a source of tension which is of great relevance to this study. It was precisely these differences that characterised the early disagreements among Pan-Africanist thinkers. Mboukou finds that during this phase of Pan-African development (1900 to approximately 1945) there were strong divisions between the West Indian and African American delegates to the Conference; West Indian members, including Sylvester-Williams, saw themselves as better placed to help the ‘African’, due to their experience of colonialism and plantation work.[[116]](#footnote-116) African American participants, including W.E.B. Du Bois (who will be discussed in more detail below), argued that their immediate experience of white supremacy, and better access to education, put them in a stronger position to lead Africans. The resultant internal divisions within the Pan-African Conference ultimately weakened attempts to present a united Pan-African front, and led to Sylvester-Williams’ declining influence by the mid-1920s.

The next significant strand of Pan-Africanism developed outside the framework of the Pan-African Conferences. At the turn of the century, Jamaican-born Marcus Garvey had begun to develop a very different understanding of Pan-Africanism. Unlike participants in the Pan-African Congress, Garvey was not a member of the ‘talented tenth;’ he did not move in intellectual circles, and this perceived inadequacy is reflected in the particular strand of Pan-Africanism that he developed.[[117]](#footnote-117) From an early age, Garvey exhibited a keen interest in the treatment of the diaspora. Inspired by the African American Booker T. Washington’s ideas of a separate Black state, Garvey sought to promote a wholly positive imagining of the Black experience. This was distinct from those of previous Pan-Africanists as it did not rely on the implicit support or approval of white society, or gauge success in terms of western norms of progress and development. Garvey focused on the recapturing of ‘race pride’ which he argued had been stripped from the African by slavery and colonisation. In order to promote his vision of black unity, Garvey founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), in 1914.[[118]](#footnote-118) The UNIA embodied Garvey’s understanding of Pan-Africanism, which differed remarkably from Sylvester-Williams’ paternalistic notions.[[119]](#footnote-119) Though entirely supportive of a separate space for the diaspora, Garvey disagreed with Washington’s rationalisation for it. Garvey disapproved of Washington’s characterisation of the diaspora as inferior to white society and the UNIA presented the diaspora experience positively. Garvey encouraged members to be proud of their race, their culture and their African heritage, stating: ‘The world ought to know that it could not keep 400,000,000 Negroes down forever. We have come now to the turning point of the Negro where we have changed from the old cringing weakling, and transformed into full-grown men, demanding our portion as MEN.’[[120]](#footnote-120) As the UNIA manifesto stated, the organisation aimed ‘[t]o establish a Universal Confraternity among the race; to promote the spirit of race pride and love; to reclaim the fallen of the race …’[[121]](#footnote-121) This provided Africans of the diaspora with an organisation which recognised their history and difference not as the problem, but a part of the solution, thus giving people a sense of both pride and belonging.[[122]](#footnote-122)

In contrast to Sylvester-Williams, who posited the diaspora as the guide and senior partner in a global Pan-Africanism, Garvey argued that African Americans should also be a part of ‘Africa' and help in the struggle for its independence. The diaspora may have been more educated or ‘civilised,’ but in the struggle for liberation, they were the same as Africans of the continent.[[123]](#footnote-123) Bringing the two groups together, and constructing a form of Pan-Africanism in which the same struggle was being fought by all groups, meant that members of each group could be beneficial to other ‘Africans’, liberating them from a despondent sense of isolation (though it should be noted here that there was still a degree of paternalism in his work, which will be discussed in more detail below).

Garvey’s suggestion that Africans of the diaspora should be a part of Africa was not simply theoretical or rhetorical. Developing Washington’s idea of a separate state, Garvey argued that if the black man could not be treated as an equal in the diaspora, he should physically return to Africa and work towards independence and equality there. This argument was implemented in Garvey’s ‘Back to Africa’ campaign of the 1910s and early 1920s.[[124]](#footnote-124) Unlike his contemporaries, Garvey appeared to have a definite plan of liberation, which he was taking steps to achieve.[[125]](#footnote-125) Whilst this made him immensely popular in some circles, for many intellectuals, he was too radical and his initiatives could not guarantee a better life for diaspora Africans.[[126]](#footnote-126) Garvey’s plans may have seemed absurd to some, but in the 1910s, he was a breath of fresh air to many, and he highlighted a potential source of support and inspiration that had been relatively overlooked to the wider African American population, whose concerns were arguably not addressed by the intellectual discourses of those who attended the Pan-African Congresses.[[127]](#footnote-127) Nicholas Patsides has argued that despite the Back to Africa campaign, the popularity of the UNIA, at least in the United States, was based precisely on its lack of a unified set of political goals, which allowed followers to read into the UNIA their particular concerns and hopes.[[128]](#footnote-128) In this, the UNIA shares a striking similarity to the Pan-African Conference and later Congresses, and indeed reflected the inherent fluidity of Pan-Africanism as a meta-narrative. It differed from the Conference, however, in that the UNIA targeted a mass audience for participation in its activities.

After Garvey moved the headquarters of the UNIA to New York in 1916 he came into direct conflict with the then leading African American activist and political thinker. The career and credentials of Dr W.E.B Du Bois were already well-established by this time, but in terms of the development of a distinctive strand of Pan-Africanism, Du Bois represents a complex case, as he was not initially a Pan-Africanist. Born in Massachusetts in 1868 into a free black family, Du Bois grew up relatively protected from the segregation and the institutionalised and socio-cultural racism suffered daily by most black people in the Caribbean and the Southern United States. Despite attending the 1900 Pan-African Conference, Du Bois’ political interests lay primarily in the living conditions of African Americans and resolving racial inequalities in the US. Though he took pride and inspiration from pre-colonial African history, he framed discussions of civil rights in a national context, focusing on integration.[[129]](#footnote-129) He and Garvey clashed regularly and publicly over this issue, just as Du Bois had clashed with Washington before the latter’s death in 1915. Du Bois maintained that race pride should be advocated in relation to a racially integrated USA, rather than by a separation of the races.[[130]](#footnote-130) The disagreement between Du Bois and Garvey was viciously expressed, with *The Crisis* newsletter, of which Du Bois was editor, accusing Garvey of a duplicitous policy regarding black and white communities in the USA:

… Garvey did everything that was humanly possible and left no boots unlicked in the effort to make himself a “white man’s nigger” in the eyes of the white ruling class, and at the same time, a “Negro Moses” in the eyes of the suffering black masses. And so Garvey’s shield reads on one side: “Deport the damned niggers to Africa,” and on the other side: “Let us go to our glorious Homeland in Africa!”[[131]](#footnote-131)

Garvey and other UNIA leaders were no less vitriolic in their attacks on Du Bois, whom they argued was ‘a kind of imitator of that white culture that he seems to like so much… just a vain opportunist...’[[132]](#footnote-132) Garvey argued that Du Bois’ snobbery ensured that ‘while the idol of the drawing room aristocrats, [he] could not … become the popular leader of the masses of his own race.’[[133]](#footnote-133) Garvey’s accusation that Du Bois was an elitist was based on the latter’s often-repeated argument that the ‘talented tenth’ of the African American population would be the leaders in the fight for racial equality, that the educated were fundamental to the future of the African American community.[[134]](#footnote-134) He wrote that ‘the Talented Tenth of the Negro race must be made leaders of thought and missionaries of culture among their people.’[[135]](#footnote-135)

The chasm separating the views of Garvey and Du Bois in the early twentieth century was perhaps best demonstrated by their opinions of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). Du Bois, who believed that recognition of racial equality in law and society would bring the greatest improvement in African American living standards, was appalled by the KKK’s violent racism, and saw all such organisations as the biggest obstacle to civil and political rights. In stark contrast, Garvey argued that the KKK was simply stating what all white people believed.[[136]](#footnote-136) Seeking to return all African Americans to Africa, Garvey did not see any contradiction between his beliefs and the extremist desire for a ‘racially pure’ white USA.

Though Du Bois’ seminal work, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903)*,* primarily focused on the history and contemporary condition of African Americans, he drew a number of parallels between the colonisation of African peoples and the situation faced by African Americans.[[137]](#footnote-137) For example, Du Bois argued that the distinctive forms of African American music ‘... sprung from the African forests, where its counterpart can still be heard, it was adapted, changed, and intensified by the tragic soul-life of the slave, until, under the stress of law and whip, it became the one true expression of a people’s sorrow, despair, and hope.’[[138]](#footnote-138) Rather than construing the potential relationship between the two groups as based solely on negative experiences, Du Bois asserted their cultural similarities in an admittedly unquestioning, praising, fashion, thus drawing the two groups into a single, potentially positive, narrative. Despite the many differences between Du Bois and Garvey, they did share a belief in the cultural proximity of Africans in the diaspora and the continent. The importance they both placed on a shared history indicates the appeal of such notions amongst a significant part of African American society at the time.

Du Bois’ apparent lack of conviction in established notions of Pan-Africanism in the first decades of the Twentieth Century can be demonstrated by the role he played in establishing the short-lived anti-segregationist Niagara Movement in 1905, and the subsequent National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples (NAACP), in 1909.[[139]](#footnote-139) He was a visible presence within the NAACP as editor of *The Crisis,* the organisation’s official magazine, from 1910. Despite his personal interest in African affairs and Pan-Africanism, the NAACP stated that its aim was racial integration and social equality within the United States, supporting gradual legislative changes to be achieved through non-violent methods including ‘the encouragement of education and efforts for social uplift; the dissemination of literature; the holding of mass meetings; [and]… the investigation of complaints.’[[140]](#footnote-140) To the ire of many Pan-Africanists, especially Garvey and his followers, the NAACP was also interracial, and relied to a large extent on support from white liberals.[[141]](#footnote-141) Despite its claim to represent African Americans, Du Bois was in fact the only one on the NAACP’s first Board of Directors. Du Bois’ participation in and support for the NAACP was another source of contention between Garvey and Du Bois after the latter’s arrival in the USA, causing friction between the two men well into the inter-war period.

By the outbreak of the First World War, Pan-Africanism was establishing a significant presence in African American circles. What had initially been developed in the West Indies in response to colonialism *and* slavery had found support amongst post-abolition African American intellectual circles, which saw it as a means to explain and understand the impact and legacy of slavery among the diaspora. What had initially been a marginalised ideal had gained ground after the death of Booker T. Washington, as Du Bois and Garvey stepped forward to fill the vacuum in African American representation. Both purported to represent African American society, yet presented very different ideas of what should be done to enable its progress. Their understandings of Africa, as either a home or as an ally, differed greatly, yet both presented a vision of improvement and progress which incorporated aspects of Pan-Africanism and increased popular support for Pan-African ideas. Steps had been taken to institutionalise these differing thoughts on the role of Africa, most effectively through the UNIA, but also through the Pan-African Conference.

Despite the differences in the interpretations of Pan-Africanism of the various thinkers discussed above, they all shared to some extent an element of paternalism, reflecting their position in the diaspora. Du Bois for example defined his notion of ‘double consciousness’ as living with a Negro consciousness, yet also with an American (for which read ‘white’) consciousness, thus internalising the criticisms of White America.[[142]](#footnote-142) He wrote that the western world ‘yields [the African American] no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world… [the] sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity.’[[143]](#footnote-143) Although Du Bois characterised this ‘double identity’ as a struggle to understand oneself and belonging, it also helps explain the views of early twentieth century Pan-Africanists regarding the relationship between the diaspora and Africans. Du Bois states, in the introduction to *The Souls of Black Folk,* that ‘He [the African American] does not wish to Africanize America, for America has too much to teach the world and Africa.’[[144]](#footnote-144) The intimation here is that the diaspora was part of the ‘civilised’ world, whilst Africa was not. Thus the double consciousness was not an inherently negative attribute since, when applied beyond the borders of the Western world, it provided the diaspora with the tools and education to lead non-Western Africans. During this period Pan-Africanism was then broadly constructed as a diaspora-led project, in which Africa was (at best) a junior partner.

## The Rise and Decline of Pan-Africanism in the United States: The Harlem Renaissance, Communism and Black Pride, 1917-1945

Whilst the earlier period of Pan-Africanist history was marked by the contributions of individuals to an emerging discourse on diaspora life, the inter-war period was defined by organisational efforts to implement Pan-Africanist ideas alongside the growth of alternatives to Pan-Africanism in the USA. These developments were however slowed by the outbreak of war in Europe in 1914. James R. Grossman notes that the First World War temporarily reinstated national patriotic narratives amongst Pan-Africanist organisations in the United States.[[145]](#footnote-145) Du Bois and the NAACP encouraged African Americans to participate in the war effort, to demonstrate loyalty to the country as well as the value of African Americans to the USA.[[146]](#footnote-146) *The Crisis,* in May 1917, proclaimed: ‘The English suffragettes did not hesitate when war came. They were English and although bowed beneath age-long insult and injustice, they fought for England. So will we black men fight against Germany for America. God grant us freedom, too, in the end.’[[147]](#footnote-147) In the following issue, the position was restated following the resolutions of the Washington Conference, a meeting of African American organisations in May 1917:

Despite the unfortunate record of England, of Belgium, and of our own land in dealing with colored peoples, we earnestly believe that the greatest hope for ultimate democracy, with no adventitious barriers of race and color, lies on the side of the allies… We, therefore, earnestly urge our colored citizens to join heartily in this fight for eventual world liberty; we urge them to enlist in the army; to join in the pressing work of providing food supplies; to labor in all ways by hand and thought in increasing the efficiency of our country.[[148]](#footnote-148)

The end of the War in 1918 ushered in a period of optimism about the future of politics and social relations around the world. The spectre of war had been vanquished, and to those who had supported the allied war effort, the right side had won. The October 1917 Revolution in Russia hugely increased the popularity of socialism and communism across the world, and communist parties and movements spread across Europe. The success of alternative models of political, social and economic arrangements raised the prospect for radical change in African American communities. By early 1919, both Garveyite and Sylvester-Williams/Du Boisian elements of the Pan-African movement were quick to relaunch their programmes for action, to varying extents adopting or co-opting this global spirit.

Those associated with the Pan-African Conference (1900), however, demonstrated a more conservative reaction to the post-war world. Rather than engaging with the revolutionary spirit that swept through societies in the aftermath of the war, these organisers instead opted to continue lobbying the authorities for piecemeal reform. This outlook was reflected in Du Bois’ hasty organising of the first international Pan-African Congress, held in Paris in February 1919.[[149]](#footnote-149) Although this ideologically followed on from the Pan-African Conference in 1900, it differed in name and in purpose. It also marked Du Bois’ growing interest in Pan-Africanism as a vehicle for ‘the amelioration of his kin,’ and his take-over of the Pan-African intellectual organisation that Sylvester-Williams had previously led.[[150]](#footnote-150) As Clarence G. Contee has pointed out, why Du Bois chose to organise the Congress at all remains a mystery, given that until that point his interest in Africa had focused on the relationship between colonialism and slavery as an explanatory factor for race relations, rather than as a basis for combined action.[[151]](#footnote-151) It appears that during the war, Du Bois’ interests in Pan-Africanism had shifted, so that he increasingly saw it as a potential tool in the fight for both national and global racial equality. Whilst the Congress sidestepped the revolutionary changes that had taken place since 1917, the Congress attempted to capitalise on the actions and support of Africans and African Americans during the war. Coinciding with the Paris Peace Conference, the 1919 Congress was intended to demonstrate the importance of Africans and the diaspora to the European and American powers, and to pressure the delegates at Versailles to formally recognise their wartime contributions. Though it failed to garner such a response, the Congress was demonstrative of a renewed interest in Pan-Africanism and the growing concerns amongst Africans and the diaspora about their futures.

Du Bois sought to base the event and his position within it on Sylvester-Williams’ model from 1900. Whilst the majority of delegates were from the diaspora, there were a number of Africans present, principally from the French colonies. Among these was Blaise Diagne, the Senegalese Deputy to the French parliament. Broadly supportive of the French colonial order, Diagne and other French African delegates supported the gradualist demands of the Congress, advocating increased economic investment in colonies and greater representation for Africans in colonial administrations.[[152]](#footnote-152) As a result, the Congress was emblematic of two processes. On the one hand, the outcome of the Congress represented a continuation of its moderate original model among the intellectual elite, with reform being the preferred path of change. On the other hand, it marked the growing shift towards a larger continental delegation within the movement, in contrast to the previous domination of diaspora experiences. Over the next three decades, this change would continue, being marked most clearly at the 1945 Manchester Congress.

In contrast to the continued moderation of the Congress, Marcus Garvey’s arrival in the USA towards the end of the war and the growth of the UNIA after 1918 represented a revolutionary change in the history of Pan-Africanism in the USA. UNIA membership increased rapidly from this period until the early 1920s; at its height there were divisions and chapters operating in thirty-eight states.[[153]](#footnote-153) Garvey later claimed that, by 1924, the UNIA boasted nearly six million members.[[154]](#footnote-154) Building on the growing sense of frustration amongst African Americans in the post-war period, Garvey relaunched the ‘Back to Africa’ campaign, advancing the idea of self-reliance, economic autonomy, and political independence from white society. In 1923, he wrote that ‘the Universal Negro Improvement Association has been advocating the cause of Africa for the Africans – that is, that the Negro peoples of the world should concentrate upon the object of building up for themselves a great nation in Africa.’[[155]](#footnote-155) Such self-reliance was promoted in the language of social Darwinism, turning discourses of racial hierarchy on their head to assert the equality of races. Garvey told an African American audience in 1921 that ‘that theory [of white superiority] has been exploded in the world war. It was you, the superman, that brought back victory at the Marne.’[[156]](#footnote-156) Theories of white superiority had been challenged by the role that black soldiers and workers had played in the war effort, yet there had been no form of compensation for their effort; many African Americans recognised no changes in social or political relations in the aftermath of the war, and grew increasingly frustrated with the unchanged situation.[[157]](#footnote-157) Garvey’s argument that only total independence would force white societies to acknowledge the importance and equality of Africans around the world gained legitimacy as a result.

The popularity of Garvey’s ideas was enhanced further when, in the summer of 1919, race riots broke out across several US cities. This was the result of a confluence of events and processes, beginning with the mass migration of African American labourers and their families to the north during the war years. Mark Ellis has estimated that between 1910 and 1919, Chicago’s African American population increased from 46,000 to 125,000, though James Grossman suggests that the numbers were somewhat lower, with at most 109,458 African Americans residing in the city.[[158]](#footnote-158) This greatly increased demand for work and a shortage of affordable housing, a factor Grossman highlights in explaining the outbreak of violence.[[159]](#footnote-159) The demobilisation of troops further increased competition for these resources, creating serious tensions between the cities’ existing inhabitants and the new migrant communities. Low level rioting and violence had spread since 1917, both as a result of this migration and as a response to the rise of communism in Eastern Europe. In the summer of 1919, a panic swept through these cities, the result of anti-Bolshevik agitation. Despite a lack of evidence, the idea of a link between new black arrivals and communism sparked violence in cities like Chicago, where veterans and white civilians turned on the African American populations, killing approximately seventy-five, and harming several hundred.[[160]](#footnote-160)

The ‘Red Summer’ of 1919 added credence to Garvey’s argument that race independence was necessary, to protect African Americans from increasing white violence and the inability or unwillingness of the police to act against it.[[161]](#footnote-161) This drew large numbers to the UNIA, and though Garvey’s claim that the organisation boasted nearly six million members is clearly overstated, there is no doubt that the hundreds of branches across the country reached a sizeable section of the ten and a half million African Americans living in the US around 1920.[[162]](#footnote-162) Co-founder of the NAACP, Mary White Ovington, was forced to admit that, although he had arrived with no fanfare, “to hundreds of thousands of his own people he was and still is a magnificent leader, a Washington, a Lincoln, with a glorious program of emancipation.”[[163]](#footnote-163) His speeches empowered listeners to join with the UNIA, to take greater pride in their race, and to take action against racist abuse. He was considered confident, unshakeable in his beliefs and a strong black leader. In 1919, Garvey purchased Liberty Hall in Harlem, New York, which would become the headquarters of the UNIA. From this point, Garvey focused on making the Back to Africa campaign a reality. Organising communal land and villages, farming programmes and artisanal training, the UNIA emphasised Garvey’s belief that economic self-reliance was a precursor to economic improvement for Africans in both the diaspora and the continent.[[164]](#footnote-164) During this period, 1918-1925, Pan-Africanism was arguably at its most popular. Garvey and the UNIA reached millions of African Americans, members or supporters, spreading a message of global black action and race pride. He successfully identified and tapped into popular sentiment amongst African Americans, articulating both their fears and their hopes. His form of Pan-Africanism provided an alternative model for African American and diaspora advancement which, in this period of optimism and opportunity, seemed not only desirable, but achievable.

However, as mentioned above, other movements and processes also began in the inter-war period that would ultimately diminish Pan-Africanism’s popularity. Even as the UNIA was still growing in popularity, another movement was emerging at the heart of the largest African American community in the USA. Based in Harlem, New York, a group of artists, writers and intellectuals began to reconsider and repossess ideas of race and race relations. Approaching the issues facing African Americans from a less overtly political perspective, they began to provide cultural expression of the domestic African American experience. In what became known as the Harlem Renaissance, authors such as Alain Locke and Langston Hughes, and musicians including Duke Ellington, redefined ‘Negro’ art, moving away from classical compositions and techniques and developing new models and methods for black self-expression. Attempting to overcome the divisions that existed between intellectuals and the working class within the African American community, they sought to capture a rapidly changing social situation brought about by increased urbanisation (which is discussed in more detail below) and industrialisation, in the process asserting a new race identity which sought to promote both a realistic and a positive characterisation of ‘African America’.

The location of the UNIA headquarters in the heart of Harlem, next to the largest African American church in the city, undoubtedly aided the promotion of Garvey’s ideas and their application in artistic milieu. As an artistic expression of Garveyite race pride, those involved in this ‘cultural revolution’ were proud of the colour of their skin.[[165]](#footnote-165) Those involved in the Harlem Renaissance encouraged positive perceptions of the African American community.[[166]](#footnote-166) Yet, unlike the Pan-Africanist leaders, the Harlem Renaissance was distinctly national in scope. Its artistic productions used race and culture to define a space for African Americans *within* the United States, as equals with whites. Whilst there was certainly interest in African affairs (many of the intellectuals and academics involved in the Harlem Renaissance moved in the same circles as Pan-Africanists), the focus was on the United States, and, despite adopting a Du Boisian belief in a shared African heritage (revolving around the shared brutality of slavery and colonialism), a distinction remained between the treatment of colonised subjects and that of African Americans, especially in the Southern States. Countee Cullen, a celebrated poet of the movement, highlighted the difficulty in identifying with African struggles. Suggestively titled ‘Heritage,’ the poem considered the divide between African and African American:

*One three centuries removed*

*From the scenes his father loved,*

*Spice grove, cinnamon tree,*

*What is Africa to me?...*

Quaint, outlandish heathen gods

Black men fashion out of rods,

Clay, and brittle bits of stone,

In a likeness like their own,

My conversion came high-priced;

I belong to Jesus Christ,

Preacher of humility;

Heathen gods are naught to me.[[167]](#footnote-167)

Cullen’s honest consideration of the distance he perceived between Africans and African Americans challenged the assumed commonality that Garvey had promoted and Du Bois had encouraged. Yet despite this, the very fact that those involved in the Harlem Renaissance engaged in such debates highlights the importance of the continent in popular discourses on African American rights.

Although it attempted to overcome the internal divisions that existed within the African American community and present a singular imagining of African American life, the influence of the Harlem Renaissance, or ‘New Negro Renaissance’ as it was also called, was restricted by the same elitism as the Pan-African movement. Its artistic and intellectual activities had only a limited impact beyond urban centres and urbane elites, failing to engage in a meaningful way with the mass of African Americans.[[168]](#footnote-168) There was still a divide between the majority of African Americans, who had a basic elementary school education, and the ‘talented tenth,’ which constituted the majority of participants in the movement.[[169]](#footnote-169)

Despite its elitism, the Harlem Renaissance provided an opportunity for race pride, creativity, and unity, all without the exclusivity of organisational boundaries. It also moved discourses on the African American away from political and philosophical debates and towards an area of culture that was more acceptable to more people. Thus one can see the Harlem Renaissance as a cultural movement that inadvertently expanded the numbers of people receptive to radical ideas, and moved the political space away from the traditional talented tenth towards a new, expanded audience.[[170]](#footnote-170) Simultaneously, it reflected a growing political consciousness among African Americans that was not a result of cultural productions, but rather the social and demographic changes caused by northward migration and the urbanisation of African Americans.

This new wave of Black self-expression and self-awareness came at a time when the organisational strength of the UNIA was going into decline. It is almost impossible to tell, without complete records, just how large UNIA membership was at any point in the inter-war period.[[171]](#footnote-171) Cronin suggests that any consideration of membership should involve a combination of the much smaller group of dues-paying members and the larger ‘number of Negroes who identified themselves with the exciting emotional atmosphere of the movement and gave its aims vigorous if informal support.’[[172]](#footnote-172) Such an argument gains credence when one considers the longevity of popular support for Garvey after the decline of the UNIA.

The apparent drop in membership after 1923 was caused by both the internal politics of the UNIA, and external factors, particularly the changing economic circumstances of African Americans. Critics of Garvey blamed him personally for the UNIA’s weaknesses, arguing that his charismatic leadership, vanity and greed undermined both the organisation and his commitment to Pan-Africanism. Garvey certainly maintained a tight control on the organisation, holding it together through his dominant personality and disarming speeches. Having established his Pan-Africanism as a populist idea to be enjoyed by the masses, Garvey personally dictated the actions of the UNIA, the directions it would take. However, his rhetorical skills did not translate into organisational acumen, and the UNIA was ill-managed, and it failed to develop into an organisation sustainable in his absence. The mismanagement of funds landed the organisation in financial difficulty by the early 1920s, and the numerous projects that Garvey had initiated began to crumble around him. The extent to which the wider UNIA leadership was aware of these financial problems is unclear, and Garvey’s allies maintained that stories of crisis within the organisation were fabricated by its enemies.[[173]](#footnote-173) The rapid growth of the organisation had certainly brought a great deal of attention, including from the government, and as the UNIA’s financial ‘irregularities’ became public knowledge, the authorities, who saw him as a deviant radical, closed in.[[174]](#footnote-174) Arrested in 1925 on charges of mail fraud and deported to Jamaica in November 1927, Garvey’s absence irreparably weakened the organisation at a time when membership was already stagnating.[[175]](#footnote-175)

As mentioned above, the socio-political changes that occurred across the United States in the inter-war period also impacted upon the popularity of Pan-Africanism. The First World War had sparked the migration of African American labour to the industrialised North East, as jobs appeared in both munitions factories and amongst vacancies created by the conscription of soldiers.[[176]](#footnote-176) This caused a massive shift in social demographics, which, whilst weakening the African American networks and communities in the South, expanded and strengthened urban African American populations in the North. The continuation of this process in the 1920s created a sizeable African American workforce which was primarily engaged in modern industrial work, in which trade unions were active and a labour-oriented political atmosphere prevailed. Though often badly paid, these new migrants were no longer as isolated or exploited as Southern plantation and farm labourers, and worked alongside white workers, albeit often unequally.[[177]](#footnote-177) As Rick Halpern has noted, trade unions were, in the first decades of the twentieth century, not universally welcoming to African Americans, and indeed many African Americans viewed union activism as ‘toadying up to whites.’[[178]](#footnote-178) Despite this, the spirit of activism and ideas of equality and basic rights nevertheless did find an audience, and the popularity of union organising and activism spread to a much wider audience.[[179]](#footnote-179) African Americans seeking material and civil improvements identified new avenues for agitation and improvement by finding ways to participate in trade union activities.

Against the backdrop of this structural change in US society, international and domestic politics also dramatically evolved. The Russian Revolution of 1917, the establishment of the Soviet Union in 1922, and the implementation there of a communist ideology, provided a positive example of alternative social arrangements that might better suit African Americans than those in place in the United States. Although it never gained the mass popularity it experienced in Europe in the 1920s, the US communist movement was sufficient to support the establishment of a Communist Party (CPUSA) in 1919 and a membership of just over twenty thousand members in its first year.[[180]](#footnote-180) The CPUSA presented itself as the champion of workers’ rights, promoting absolute equality for every citizen. This was understandably popular among the masses of African Americans, as was the party’s integrationist platform, based on the belief that race was a diversionary and divisive tool used to distract the proletariat from the central issue of class. The success of the Russian Revolutions, and the apparent gains that the Russian people enjoyed as a result, demonstrated the potential material improvements available to African Americans, adding to the appeal of communism.[[181]](#footnote-181) The presence of a communist alternative provided African Americans with an opportunity for immediately improving their lives that neither the UNIA nor other Pan-African leaders claimed to offer.

Although the Great Depression, which began in October 1929, further increased the popularity of communism in Northern cities, the subsequent New Deal ultimately weakened the influence of the CPUSA among African Americans. African Americans were disproportionately affected by the Depression, the first to lose employment, and prevented from unionising effectively to defend their jobs and wages. Whilst this initially drew more to communism, Franklin D. Roosevelt elected in 1932, promised a new deal for Americans. Aware of the potential for unrest, his administration immediately introduced measures under the New Deal designed to improve the lives of African Americans. For example, African Americans received greater financial benefits from the government, access to jobs in new industries, and improved trade union representation.[[182]](#footnote-182) The New Deal thus appeared to offer immediate material, social, and political gains through reform rather than sweeping revolutionary methods.[[183]](#footnote-183) The CPUSA’s inability to offer a viable alternative with similar results led to its growing marginalisation in the political life of the African American community, as both leaders and the masses responded positively to the New Deal’s programmes.

For Pan-Africanist leaders and activists, however, communism and the New Deal did not provide a meaningful form of ideological support. Communism’s failure to consider, in explicit terms, the importance of race, and the subjugation of all discourses on race to the level of ‘distraction’ was taken very seriously. For communist supporters, the argument that participation in a broader, global, communist struggle would benefit the race became an even harder position to justify after the signing of the Nazi-Soviet non-Aggression Pact in 1939, and the CPUSA’s support for this.[[184]](#footnote-184) Bill Mullen suggests that by the end of the decade, there had been a substantial cooling of relations between the CPUSA and African Americans, arguing that although the relationship was undeniably a complex one, there had been a broader shift in popular perceptions of the party.[[185]](#footnote-185) The willingness of the CPUSA to back the agreement forced some African American communists to acknowledge the gulf that existed between their views on inequality and those of the Party. In turn, the New Deal co-opted African Americans, providing material relief in exchange for silence and pacifism on political issues. Garvey and Du Bois, and their followers, were increasingly promoting race pride as both a benefit to the African American community and as a tool for improving the standing of the diaspora in international and domestic affairs. It was becoming clear that Pan-Africanism and communism had contrasting, if not conflicting, aims that could not be reconciled.

By the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, Pan-Africanism had failed to sustain the momentum it had enjoyed at the beginning of the inter-war period. It had multiple directives, multiple leaders, and as a result of divisions between organisations and leaders, failed to break new ground and gain momentum, despite the opportunities provided by movements such as the Harlem Renaissance. The influence of national political groups and social movements that sought to improve the material welfare of African Americans (such as access to welfare) especially in the industrial North, diverted attention from more radical ideological movements focused on the identity and place in society of the African American ‘diaspora’. This also reduced the potential for Pan-Africanism to become an ideological vehicle that could represent all African Americans.

## The Post-War Civil Rights Movement and the Decline of the African American Pan-African movement, 1945-1957

Cited as the spark for widespread social and political change around the world, the Second World War and its consequences decisively reshaped the international order, profoundly so in the case of Africa and Pan-Africanism. George Shepperson, the distinguished academic and student of Pan-Africanism, noted in the 1950s: ‘The Boer War, the First World War, the Italian-Ethiopian struggle of the mid-1930s, and then the Second World War of 1939-1945: each has played a role in precipitating pan-African responses but none more than the Second World War.’[[186]](#footnote-186) The radical changes in social and political relations brought about by the conflict were felt everywhere, and necessitated a response.

The war had brought the idea of racial hierarchy to the forefront of debates on political organisation, as the world reflected on the unprecedented levels of human destruction that had occurred. The impact of the Nazis’ racially-based violence forced Western imperial and segregationist states to defend a mode of socio-political organisation that they themselves had ostensibly fought against. The Atlantic Charter, signed by the British and American leaders in 1941, framed the Allied war effort as an act of liberation and defence of national self-determination.[[187]](#footnote-187) Having presented this argument in relation to Europe, this argument was then taken up in the cause of decolonisation around the world. This cause of national independence was furthered by the negotiations leading towards Indian independence, which made the dreams of decolonisation and liberation for many that much more real. Interest in the issue of human rights proliferated with discussions concerning the establishment of the United Nations and its Human Rights Declaration adding to the sense of radical political possibilities and determination to change the status quo that permeated the immediate period after 1945.[[188]](#footnote-188)

The experience of the war for the diaspora was very different to that of the First World War. Though the war arguably created new opportunities for both the African diaspora and for Africans in a manner that the First World War had not, the support that the Allies had enjoyed amongst Pan-African leaders was not repeated. Believing that benefits were not forthcoming after their support for the previous conflict, Du Bois and other leading Pan-Africanists refused to patriotically endorse the conflict so quickly.

The Second World War also resulted in the further radicalisation of Du Bois and other Pan-Africanist thinkers. Eva Darian-Smith has noted that the war ‘helped Du Bois move beyond a schema of black, brown, yellow, and white races, and convinced him that racism based on pseudo-scientific hereditary distinctions of skin-tone classification was empirically unsound.’[[189]](#footnote-189) Not only did such thinking obstruct the progress of race equality, the war demonstrated to Du Bois that notions of racial hierarchy, used by both the Allies and the Nazis, were at the heart of the problem facing Africans and the diaspora. To capture this upsurge in post-war determination and political will, and to further challenge the Western reliance on race constructs, another Pan-Africanist, George Padmore, hastily arranged the next Pan-African Congress, months after the end of hostilities, in Manchester in October 1945, inviting Du Bois to lead the proceedings. It is worthy of note here that Padmore and Du Bois had ideologically moved in opposite directions as a result of the events of the previous decade. Where Du Bois had been radicalised by the wars and conflicts he saw, Padmore had shifted away from Communism as a potential resolution. The Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939, and indeed the invasion of Abyssinia in 1935 (and the resulting lack of action against the aggressor state) had encouraged Padmore’s view that race had to be the primary driving force in any political activities. As Carol Polsgrove has noted, Padmore had left the Comintern, and the Soviet Union, by the mid-1930s, just as his conviction in the need for unified action by Africans and diaspora activists became increasingly apparent.[[190]](#footnote-190)

The Fifth Pan-African Congress (discussed in more detail below) signalled a greater shift towards African representation within the Congress. Since the Paris meeting in 1919, the number of African delegates had been rising, but these had been principally French Africans, who held a relatively influential position within the French colonial order as representatives in the French National Assembly. As a result, the resolutions of these meetings had been typically moderate, and requests were for limited concessions from the colonial powers. The Manchester Congress represented a departure from its predecessors as it embodied the changes of the post-War world. India’s rapidly approaching independence had demonstrated the potential for rapid political change, a popular idea among the African political leaders who attended the Manchester Congress in large numbers.[[191]](#footnote-191) This was an indicator of things to come, as the issue of self-rule in Africa took on a more prominent role in both the Congress and in international affairs. Despite George Padmore and Kwame Nkrumah’s central role in organising the Congress, Du Bois was elected President, supporting the adoption of a radical manifesto for change (this will be discussed in greater detail below). Although Du Bois was still a member of the NAACP leadership, his increasingly vocal commitment to Pan-Africanism alienated him from the organisation.

In contrast to the reorganisation and motivation of the Pan-African Congress, the campaign for African American equality was less dynamic during this period and it would be a decade before what Jacquelyn Dowd Hall refers to as the ‘high point of the civil rights movement,’ the CRM, was reached.[[192]](#footnote-192) Aside from the NAACP and the fragments of the UNIA, there were still very few organisations able to represent African Americans nationally, and the decline of an established Pan-African movement in the United States continued. The UNIA was divided, as it failed to find a leader with the same level of charisma and attraction as Garvey.[[193]](#footnote-193)

With the UNIA effectively removed from the political scene, there was no organisation left to represent African Americans who identified with Pan-Africanism.[[194]](#footnote-194) The ostracism and marginalisation that came to characterise Pan-Africanists’ interactions with the mainstream CRM from 1955 onwards can be dated to the lack of vocal institutional or organisational capacity and dynamism during the inter-war period. The Cold War, which followed quickly on the heels of the Second World War, furthered the socio-political alienation felt by many grass-roots Pan-Africanists, as the Cold War anti-Communist ‘witch-hunts’ targeted all radical elements in American society.[[195]](#footnote-195)

The marginalisation of Pan-Africanist leadership in the USA must be understood as a part of this anti-Communist repression of the early Cold War, seen most clearly in the downfall of Du Bois. Du Bois had struggled to resolve his ideas with those of the moderate NAACP he had helped to establish, but he did not immediately break from the organisation. In the interim he remained a figurehead for Pan-Africanism, yet made no effort to form a separate, distinctly Pan-African organisation in the USA. Du Bois increasingly looked to socialism to provide a blueprint for change.[[196]](#footnote-196) In his seminal work, *Black Reconstruction in America,* he wrote that ‘the emancipation of man is the emancipation of labor and the emancipation of labor is the freeing of that basic majority of workers who are yellow, brown and black.’[[197]](#footnote-197) Yet Du Bois was not blindly following a communist path, or indeed even a Marxist one. In adopting a Marxian analysis of labour relations, Du Bois outlined the limitations of early communism, and its failure to grasp the race issue and work across racial barriers to forge a strong working class.[[198]](#footnote-198) The popularity that the CPUSA had enjoyed in the inter-war years certainly encouraged the belief that its absolutist commitment to equality would benefit African Americans. As the organised Left declined after 1945, Du Bois’ conviction in the need for radical change in the United States remained, thus making him an easy target for McCarthyite attacks.[[199]](#footnote-199) Du Bois’ connections with the CPUSA and the left-wing Council on African Affairs, of which he had been a co-chair, as well as his activities in the Peace Congresses and the Peace Information Council, led to him being tried for sedition and spying for a foreign power in 1951.[[200]](#footnote-200) Although he was acquitted the following year, the widespread support he had enjoyed in previous years abandoned him.[[201]](#footnote-201)

The NAACP’s unwillingness to defend or at least offer support to Du Bois during his trial was a stark indicator of the difficult position faced by many organisations campaigning for radical change. Many NAACP members still saw Du Bois as a champion of African American causes, and he retained credibility and respect as a founder of the organisation. However, its new leadership had to navigate a precarious situation, at a time when there were few safeguards against accusations of communist ‘fellow-travelling’.[[202]](#footnote-202) It was clear that if a national organisation such as the NAACP was unprepared to defend someone as prestigious as Du Bois, no one else would support him either.[[203]](#footnote-203) This provided Pan-Africanists with further evidence that moderates and white liberals were moving too slowly, and took too narrow a view of civil rights, failing as they did to adopt the more radical notion of ‘liberation’ as their aim.

The events that sparked the CRM happened suddenly, catching many African American leaders by surprise, with their leadership struggling to catch up with a spontaneous act of civil disobedience on a bus in Alabama that spread rapidly across the country. From the Montgomery Bus Boycotts in November 1955 onwards, the ideas and tactics that underpinned the new nationwide CRM tended to ostracise Pan-Africanists from both American society and African American mainstream politics.[[204]](#footnote-204) The CRM sought specific political gains for African Americans without the risk or uncertainty that the more existential/radical notions and the demands that Pan-Africanism carried with it. In adopting a model of non-violent protest, using sit-ins, marches, and boycotts of pro-segregationist stores and businesses, the CRM drew on Christian teachings, something with which the African American community could easily identify and relate. Within a few years, organisations such as the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) had been established to spread the message of non-violent confrontation and maintain the momentum of the campaign. The methods adopted by the new groups targeted the masses, both black and white, incorporating them into the heart of the movement, rather than speaking for them.[[205]](#footnote-205) This is not to say that figureheads and national leaders did not emerge. But the remarkable force with which the CRM developed was based on the huge numbers involved, and its ability to translate a national message of legislative change into local contexts through the numerous branches and organisations which promoted positive action across the country. For the majority of African Americans, Pan-Africanism was thus an inherently unattractive option, in a context where many thought they could best achieve some political progress through non-violent methods focused on specific, limited aims.

The overall result of these changes was the increased marginalisation of Pan-Africanism as a driving force in African American affairs, and (initially at least) of more radical approaches within the CRM itself. As the NAACP had demonstrated in its reaction to Du Bois’ trial, the leading CRM organisations actively avoided engagement with groups and individuals that were deemed ‘radical,’ for fear that they too would fall foul of the authorities. Pan-Africanism’s global perspective, its association with revolutionary politics and methods, and its involvement with left-wing groups, all clashed with the dominant anti-communist rhetoric of the mid-1950s, in which anyone supportive of Pan-Africanist ideas was branded a radical and a threat to the United States.[[206]](#footnote-206) Pan-Africanists were isolated from organisational participation and excluded from debates on the improvement of the African American life, and for the first time in many decades, the dominant narrative of diaspora life was largely disconnected from advancements by Africans on the continent. Though Africa remained on the periphery of African American affairs, a legacy of the earlier popularity of Pan-Africanism, it was displaced by a national narrative of remedial changes, separate yet supportive of what was perceived as a different struggle on the continent.

However, as the position of Pan-Africanists in the fight for civil rights became increasingly marginal, the African-led Pan-Africanist movement was rapidly spreading, providing African Americans with a new source of support and inspiration. The focus of this new wave of Pan-Africanism was different, in that it was African-based rather than explicitly global and anti-colonialist. Though this interpretation of Pan-Africanism represented a significant shift from earlier diaspora-dominated interpretations, it was not a total break. Both Garvey and Du Bois had regarded the achievement of African independence from colonialism as a necessary precursor to the (spiritual and social) liberation of the diaspora.[[207]](#footnote-207) As a result, diaspora Pan-Africanists increasingly turned their attention to the continent, and the potential role that they could play in the future of African liberation.

## Conclusion

In order to develop a coherent understanding of the development of the Pan-African meta-narrative, which reflects the fluidity and flexibility inherent in it, it is necessary, although problematic, to adopt a ‘long view.’ One problematic aspect of this long view is identifying a starting point for the formation of the meta-narrative. First emerging from a series of discourses in the mid-nineteenth century, concerns and curiosity about the African-diaspora relationship were framed in and by the diaspora experience. Those earliest thinkers who contributed to the content of the meta-narrative were principally from an elite; well-educated intellectuals who perceived of themselves as African-American or Caribbean leaders. Despite some differences in ideas about Pan-Africanism, at its heart participants agreed that a shared history of violence and brutality, in the forms of colonisation and slavery, laid the foundations for future co-operation and development. This view was developed by diaspora leaders such as Sylvester-Williams and Du Bois, who saw themselves as leaders and teachers. They argued that this privileged position allowed them the knowledge and skills necessary to direct both the diaspora masses, and Africans on the continent, to full equality and emancipation. As such, the earliest interpretations of Pan-Africanism were characterised by a paternalistic interpretation of the continental-diaspora relationship.

Such a paternalistic imagining of the relationship was not without its critics, and there were early divisions with Pan-Africanist circles about how such a meta-narrative could advance the causes of independence and racial equality. Marcus Garvey’s arrival in the USA during the First World War and his subsequent interpretations of Pan-Africanism raised a new series of opportunities and problems for the meta-narrative. Garvey moved away from the intellectual circles of Du Bois and Garvey, instead using the UNIA as a vehicle for popularising his distinctive interpretation of Pan-Africanism. Although almost universally rejected by his intellectual opponents as a dangerous radical, Garvey succeeded in inspiring many African Americans who had previously been excluded from discourses on the future of their communities to participate in Pan-African campaigns. To do this, he refocused the meta-narrative around ideas of separatist race-pride and self-sufficiency, ideas that appealed to a wider audience.

Regardless of the ideas and activities of these Pan-Africanist leaders, broader socio-economic shifts in the United States fundamentally changed the role that they played amongst the majority of African Americans. The rise of communism after 1919, which offered absolute equality and the potential for immediate material gain, reduced the appeal of Pan-Africanism, which lacked credibility as a practical method of political change and economic improvement. The concessions granted under the New Deal and the shifting emphasis towards integrationist participation, especially in the labour movement, moved debates on freedom and equality away from radical, global solutions, towards a nationally defined reformist programme. This was supplemented by the Harlem Renaissance, which, though intellectual, explored the nature of African American life and personality highlighting the perceived divide between the continent and the diaspora. It appeared that there were few if any gains to be made through practical co-operation with continental Africans. The inter-war years were thus a period of contradiction for Pan-Africanism. Whilst organisational affiliation and support for the meta-narrative in the USA reached their height in these years, it also began its decline as a guiding principle in debates on race relations.

In the years after the Second World War, the decline of organised Pan-Africanism accelerated, expedited by the emergence of a nationally-focussed, pacifist movement that gained the attention of the nation and the world. The declining importance of Pan-Africanism in the eyes of African Americans was met with a growing sense of isolation and marginalisation among Pan-Africanist thinkers and leaders. As their gaze turned outwards from the United States, it focused on the upsurge of African anti-colonial and nationalist sentiment. The emergence of nationalism as a determining meta-narrative in political life stemmed from a series of discourses that had developed from the 1870s onwards, and much like diaspora Pan-Africanism, the development of the meta-narratives had been influenced by a series of political thinkers and activists, and by both domestic and international events. The next chapter considers the origins of these discourses within the Gold Coast prior to independence, to understand how and why a new form of Pan-Africanism, one closely intertwined with nationalism, emerged.

# **Chapter 2. Nationalism and Pan-Africanism: Meta-Narratives in Action in the Gold Coast/Ghana, 1890s-1957**

*The people of the Golf Coast observe that for nearly a century you have been trying to mould for them their institutions, and that you have most signally failed… They say to you “We are anxious to take part in the race of nations towards the attainment of higher ideals…” But no, you will continue to regard them as innocents, and they, the pigmies, must march with you,*

*the Colossus…*

* Joseph Casely-Hayford, *Gold Coast Native Institutions* (1903)

Through a brief overview of the early development of Pan-Africanism, it is clear that its origins lay squarely within the diaspora, growing from mid-nineteenth century discourses on emancipation and race equality. These debates were initially framed in a national context, but Pan-Africanists, in attempting to understand the limitations of emancipation and (political) liberation on the material and spiritual growth of diaspora Africans, increasingly looked to Africa as a source of inspiration and support. Each participant in these Pan-African debates articulated a set of ideas about the content and nature of the diaspora-African relationship, in an attempt to understand and develop it into a blueprint for political action.

Yet discourses and debates over race, identity, and even national belonging were by no means limited to the diaspora. Within the Gold Coast colonies, a parallel series of debates emerged in the same time period, concerning the direction of colonialism, the role of indigenous power structures, and the modernisation of the colony (politically, economically, and socially). Though not explicitly Pan-Africanist, or even consciously nationalist, they laid the foundations for the development of both Pan-African and nationalist narratives in a distinctly African context. Nationalism developed from a series of debates concerning the advancement of Africans within the colony, focussing primarily on local and territory-wide issues. Activists and thinkers in the Gold Coast developed their own, as well as borrowed, adapted, and reconstructed ideas of Pan-Africanism, nationhood, and nationalism to create new hybrid strands of the meta-narratives that would come to dominate Gold Coast (and later Ghanaian) political life from the mid-1940s onwards. An examination of these developments will explain how, why and in what form these meta-narratives emerged in the Gold Coast, and how these interpretations were applied in attempts to understand, control and direct the political development of a rapidly changing society and state.

The rapidly changing internal dynamics of the Gold Coast in the last years of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth forced a reconsideration of political life in the colony, in which African participation and representation was unsurprisingly a contentious issue. Developing new ideas of self and belonging provided indigenous elites with a range of means to engage more effectively with the colonial authorities and seek to attract new audiences. A Gold Coast ‘reconstruction’ of Pan-Africanism allowed for a redirection of the meta-narrative away from the control and leadership of the diaspora and towards the African continent. This new conceptualisation of Pan-Africanism differed from earlier incarnations as it had to contend with the absence of an established nation, and thus it incorporated ideas commonly associated with the meta-narrative to provide an explanation of both.

The development of nationalism as it emerged in the Gold Coast requires special attention. The context of diaspora Pan-Africanism in the USA was defined by its emergence within a pre-existing nation and nationalism. Within the Gold Coast’s artificially created borders was a state, but one inhabited by numerous groups with distinct and dynamic communal identities (albeit ones which were internally flexible). Thus the process of creating a ‘nation’ that might be shared by all subjects in the territory was, in this sense, a new one. In the Gold Coast, Pan-Africanism developed in response to the same issues and concerns that had prompted a discourse of nationalism. It shall be argued here that it was through the rhetoric of a small group of political actors that these meta-narratives came to be seen as sharing key attributes. Their emergence within the same, very small, sphere of political debate resulted in them often being deployed in conjunction. By the late 1950s, they would be employed in the defining of official positions, policies (and policy changes), and in many ways came to define more than just formal government policy. They influenced social organisation and relations, and were used to ‘create’ a sense of post-colonial Ghanaian identity. As this chapter will demonstrate, the conjoined influence of nationalism and Pan-Africanism meant that Ghanaian independence and African unity were not generally considered distinct goals. Rather, they were interdependent political ambitions, brought together as a hybrid meta-narrative that borrowed, adopted, and adapted elements from both concepts.

This Chapter will explore how Pan-Africanist and nationalist frameworks of understanding in the Gold Coast were constructed from a repository of ideas that emerged in the last decades of the nineteenth century. In analysing how they developed through an examination of individuals and organisations, it is also necessary to consider how these distinct meta-narratives were brought and deployed together, reinforcing seemingly contradictory notions of nationhood and universal belonging. To do this, a chronological analysis allows for an examination of the ways in which the ideas and meta-narratives were engaged by different actors who revised existing arguments in changing contexts. Exploring first the early development of discourses on the nation and nationalism, this chapter will then look at the development of Kwame Nkrumah’s own strand of Pan-Africanism, specifically examining his time overseas in the United States and Britain in the 1930s and 1940s. Finally this chapter will examine the period from Nkrumah’s return to the Gold Coast in 1947 to the attainment of Independence in 1957, during which time his understanding of Pan-Africanism and nationalism was fundamentally altered.

Nationalism in the Gold Coast, 1897 – 1947

The development of indigenous political discourses in the colonial Gold Coast necessarily focused on the issue of political unity amongst African subjects, and the actual and potential methods of representing them to the colonial authorities. This focus on the issue of representation was perhaps an inevitable development when one considers the centrality of colonisation in defining the boundaries of the physical and intellectual space in which early proto-nationalist actors acted. These actors sought to challenge the deployment of artificial colonial borders and assert an understanding of unity which united the Gold Coast, territorially and socially, into a single space, rather than the three administrative territories into which it was divided. The Gold Coast, Asante and the Northern Territories fell under the purview of the same Governor, but were administratively separate from one another. Thus those African intellectuals who sought to represent all Africans to the Governor had to overcome these colonial borders and the ethnic/administrative differences that existed between the three areas. As a result, these efforts have come to be seen as an early attempt to introduce nationalism into political discourses.[[208]](#footnote-208) As with Pan-Africanism, nationalism is a meta-narrative that cannot be identified as a single construct, with singular meaning and application. In her seminal study of the Asante, Jean Allman has highlighted the challenge of identifying both the constituent parts of, and a starting point for, nationalism: ‘That there has been some sort of sentiment we can label “Asante” or “Asanteness” most scholars would agree. But on the historicity of that sentiment and on whether it is best termed, at a given historical juncture, *ethnic*, *tribal, primordial,* or *national* consciousness, there is little concurrence.’[[209]](#footnote-209)

The same is true of identifying nationalisms or proto-nationalisms in the Gold Coast more generally. Early scholars of nationalism in the Gold Coast and Africa relied heavily on European models of the nation, thus overlooking or downplaying certain characteristics that did not fit with the universalising concept of nation-statehood dominant in the twentieth century, specifically that ‘historicity’ which Allman discusses.[[210]](#footnote-210) Whilst scholarship on nationalisms in Africa and the Gold Coast have certainly developed more nuanced theories and approaches, the tendency remains to view the independent African nation-state, nationalism, and organisations engaged with these ideas, as static, self-evident, and a pre-defined outcome.[[211]](#footnote-211) As John Parker has argued, the tendency to identify nationalism backward through Gold Coast history overlooks complex social and economic forces which framed interactions between the colonial state and Gold Coast subjects: ‘elite aspirations interacted with those of the common townspeople, producing political action that was neither unambiguously “modern” nor “traditional.”’[[212]](#footnote-212) Because of this, trying to identify a specific date for the beginnings of nationalism in the Gold Coast is a challenging task. This section will examine how specific political actors and organisations first expressed the ideas of nation and nationalism, and subsequently constructed meta-narratives around them in political affairs to unite disparate groups throughout the Gold Coast and Ashanti in the period leading up to 1951.[[213]](#footnote-213)

By the first decade of the twentieth century, major social and economic changes in the Gold Coast, Asante, and the Northern Territories had resulted in the development of a small community of educated Africans, who had begun to develop a discourse which would later come to be identified with nationalism.[[214]](#footnote-214) The Gold Coast’s earliest ‘proto-nationalist’ organisation was the Aborigines’ Rights Protection Society (ARPS), established in 1897. Although characterised by Parker as a vehicle for ethnic Fante advancement, the organisation was officially established to represent all peoples of the Gold Coast to the colonial authorities, to protest government land ownership policies.[[215]](#footnote-215) The founders of the ARPS were from the Fante elite, including Joseph Casely-Hayford and John Mensah Sarbah, who would later come to be seen as the first Gold Coast nationalists.[[216]](#footnote-216) This description raises an important challenge for the historian, as neither man identified himself as a nationalist.[[217]](#footnote-217) Much like Edward Blyden, who did not identify himself as a Pan-Africanist, Casely-Hayford and Mensah Sarbah saw themselves as a modernising force, intermediaries between the ‘traditional’ power of the chiefs and the modern power of the colonial authorities.[[218]](#footnote-218) Despite their modernist orientation, these men presented an ambiguity in this regard – using chiefly power structures to advance a conceptualisation of community that did not rely on these same sources of legitimacy for its existence. Nevertheless, their contributions to political thought in the Gold Coast created an intellectual space in which ideas of the nation would emerge and be refined.

Further paralleling Edward Blyden, the lives and careers of these two men were defined by the education they received, whilst their beliefs were informed by their exclusion from positions of power by colonial authorities. Coming from distinguished Fante families, they benefitted from a Western missionary education. This brought them into contact with new ideas and models for political representation that incorporated chiefly authority whilst also allowing for a broader notion of inclusion – the nation, in a more modern, representative form.[[219]](#footnote-219) The society which they aspired to build reflected their position in society: it replicated the elite, colonially-influenced ideal of paternalistic authority, but in the developing socio-economic and political atmosphere, they attempted to insert themselves into this as indigenous leaders. Independent of the colonial and chiefly political hierarchy, yet holding powerful positions in urban Gold Coast, they asserted themselves as a modern bridge between the masses and the government, and despite their reliance on the support of the chiefs, an alternative in this respect to chiefly authorities. As a result of their liminal position, these men, and the organisation they established, were in a position to articulate a political discourse on representation and unity which would develop into the overt nationalism of the 1940s and 1950s. The process of relocating nationalism from its European origins to a new African context had begun.

This relocation involved the imagining by the ARPS of a community, not in terms of ethnic or language groups, but instead as one linked by the shared space delineated by colonial borders. It presented all peoples in the Gold Coast as having shared interests. H. Conway Belfield, a high ranking civil servant, noted in a report on the reaction within the Gold Coast to changes in the Colonial Land Acts (1897):

It appears that the chiefs, being possibly elated by the result of their intervention in that instance [the Lands Bill of 1897], expressed a desire for the formation of a body which should watch their interests and ensure united action in the event of any policy being proposed in the future to which they might see fit to object.[[220]](#footnote-220)

Conway was concerned that such a reaction to the Lands Act might generate a broader anti-British sentiment which would go beyond the confines of the elites, generating more widespread discontent amongst their Gold Coast subjects.[[221]](#footnote-221) Although the ARPS was moderately critical of elements of Britain’s colonial policies it did not encourage a radical change in governance, let alone demand the decolonisation of the Gold Coast. By seeking to represent all the peoples of the Gold Coast to the colonial authorities, the notion of a unified indigenous Gold Coast identity found its first expression in the ARPS’ attempts to move away from isolated ethnic representation.[[222]](#footnote-222) When Casely-Hayford wrote *Gold Coast Native Institutions* in 1903, it was not a call for anti-colonial agitation. The book encouraged a more balanced relationship between the colonial authorities and Gold Coast and Ashanti subjects, yet hinted at the potential power of the indigenous population, if provoked, which Casely-Hayford defined in autochthonous terms. He warned:

We scorn to descend into puerilities in refutation of those ill-advised deliverances which regard the natives of this country as foreigners because forsooth our forebears were immigrants… We do maintain with the emphasis of simplicity that we are *ab origins*, and that, therefore, every inch of ground is ours and ours irrevocably.[[223]](#footnote-223)

Employing the language and rhetoric of nationalism, Casely-Hayford wrote that ‘you may destroy a nation, but it is another thing to destroy the spirit of nationality.’[[224]](#footnote-224) Here, again, the ambiguous nature of the ARPS becomes apparent. Casely-Hayford engaged the language of nationalism, but in reference to ethnic rather than territorial nationalism. The Fante and the Asante were not subsumed into one new community, indeed their individual identities were celebrated. Rather, in arguing that these communities faced the same problems, they introduced the idea of shared experience as a basis for further action and development. The contribution of the ARPS to discourses on nationalism was not to be found in a reimagining of the nation, but in the promotion of a sense of unity. Its bridging of the old and new ideas, a reliance on chiefly authorities and a new imagining of the peoples of the Gold Coast, allowed it to navigate a new line articulate a new approach to colonial politics. The ARPS adopted a moderate position in interactions with the colonial authorities, accepting the key role of the chiefs in leading the people and their institutions as the rightful source of legitimacy and power. It nevertheless challenged the assumptions by which colonialism governed Gold Coast Africans in seeking a voice in modern policy-making.

The ARPS contributed to more than just the development of nationalist discourses. It also provided an early model of organisation, one which would later be developed by the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) in the 1940s. By establishing an organisation which, in principle, spoke for all people in the Gold Coast, the ARPS created a new model for political representation that, notwithstanding its recognition of chiefly authority, developed outside the confines of that authority.[[225]](#footnote-225) The chiefs provided a source of legitimacy to the ARPS as well as an avenue into politics, because chiefs were recognised as legitimate representatives of African opinion to the colonial State. Nevertheless, the ARPS established a model of political organisation, led by urban, Western-educated, self-consciously ‘modern’ men. As the chiefs came increasingly to be seen as tools of colonialism, this new group of men, who had benefitted from missionary education but whose progress in colonial society was heavily restricted, sought to take Gold Coast society and politics in a new direction. By the 1910s, a language, a space, and a series of ideas for discussing citizenship and identity had been identified and the notion of shared experience as the basis for a Gold Coast nationalism had become a subject of debate amongst the territory’s educated elite.[[226]](#footnote-226) This was necessary both for effectively confronting colonial power and for challenging chiefly authority.[[227]](#footnote-227) The ARPS had begun a process of redefining the political landscape, a process hastened by global changes.[[228]](#footnote-228)

Killingray has demonstrated the extent to which colonial intervention in Gold Coast life during the First World War altered the relationship between the colonial state and all its subjects.[[229]](#footnote-229) Tentative steps were made by Governor Hugh Clifford to extend political (though not electoral) representation to the majority of Gold Coast Africans.[[230]](#footnote-230) These efforts sought to placate disgruntlement about colonial incursion into the Gold Coast economy. A protective policy on trade in raw materials was proposed by the British government in 1916-1917, to which Clifford responded that ‘the resulting sacrifice should be borne, exclusively by those countries which stand to benefit by the policy in question, and not by the producing Colonies whose interests are bound to be injured by its adoption.’[[231]](#footnote-231) He argued that the British had a responsibility to protect the interests of the colonial subjects, warning that ‘the natives themselves are keenly alive to this aspect of the question.’[[232]](#footnote-232)

In the inter-war period, further attempts were made to improve indigenous representation, including the introduction of a new constitution in 1926.[[233]](#footnote-233) This brought a larger group of Africans into the political structure, primarily via the increased number of African representatives in the Legislative Council. The Council would now include nine African members, together with five unofficial European members. Three Provincial Councils (in Eastern, Central and Western Provinces) were made up of chiefs, who would elect six Head Chiefs to sit on the Council. The other three African members, from the municipalities of Accra, Cape Coast and Sekondi, were to be directly elected by inhabitants of the cities.[[234]](#footnote-234) These efforts on the part of the colonial authorities were intended to appease the politically active intelligentsia, as a form of compensation for their support during the War, and this appeared to be effective for much of the inter-war period.[[235]](#footnote-235) The outbreak of the Second World War, however, halted efforts in this regard.

The impact of the Second World War on political change in the Gold Coast has been analysed in great detail elsewhere, but it bears some repeating due to its impact.[[236]](#footnote-236) It has long been argued that demobilised Gold Coast soldiers, having served alongside white troops, brought back with them new ideas about race relations.[[237]](#footnote-237) They also arrived home with new ideas of social organisation and questions about the validity of colonial rule, which then resonated with the communities to which they returned. There are elements of truth in this narrative, but as Adrienne Israel notes, the impact of the Second World War on Britain’s African colonies was far more complex.[[238]](#footnote-238) The war effort also affected civilian populations in the colonies in a manner that the First World War had not. For example, there was large-scale conscription, both military and labour, though a lack of skilled (or at least trained) tradesmen somewhat frustrated these efforts.[[239]](#footnote-239) Commodity shortages occurred regularly; interrupted food supplies led to periodic protests, especially in the growing cities.[[240]](#footnote-240) Perhaps the greatest impact on the civilian population, and certainly the one that caused the most anger, was the government takeover of cocoa sales and the establishment of the Cocoa Marketing Boards in 1939, which set the market rate for all cocoa sales.[[241]](#footnote-241) As cocoa was one of the Gold Coast’s largest export commodities, this policy alienated one of the most economically (and by extension socially) powerful blocs in Gold Coast society – the cocoa producers – by limiting their ability to barter and raise profits.[[242]](#footnote-242) Such unpopular policies led a growing number of Africans to question the legitimacy and capability of the colonial authorities.

Thus it is clear that, by 1945, a range of factors combined to create an atmosphere conducive to anti-colonial activities. The increased official control over Gold Coast society during wartime brought more people into direct interaction with colonial authority. Interventions in labour, cocoa production and sales, and forestry all had a profound effect on social relations, social mobility, and economic development. As Reginald Cline-Cole has noted, the policy of indirect rule that had prevailed prior to the wars was rapidly undone during this period, creating growing tensions between the government and its subjects.[[243]](#footnote-243) Political representation of the African population remained extremely limited. The existence of the ARPS, which claimed to represent all peoples in the Gold Coast colonies, provided a potential vehicle for such activism. The ARPS’s membership was however still drawn from the educated elites, and it made no effort to encourage direct mass participation in the political process.

Proclaimed as an advancement rewarding the Gold Coast’s contribution to the war effort (though also in line with ongoing constitutional developments across the empire), the colonial government introduced the 1946 Constitution.[[244]](#footnote-244) This created a new Legislative Assembly which had a majority of African members for the first time. Whilst most seats were reserved for chiefs’ representatives, it was a significant step towards representative government.[[245]](#footnote-245) In a report to his constituents on the opening of the new Assembly, J.B. Danquah, an Accra lawyer and Assemblyman (and later founder of the UGCC) wrote that: ‘God must have had a purpose in making Africans black so that their blush may be unseen. We Africans have so much to do to catch up with the others, we can have no time to blush.’[[246]](#footnote-246) Danquah, whilst supporting the new constitution, recognised its limitations. Firstly, the constitution’s limited extension of self-governance to Gold Coast subjects was perhaps a necessary stage to be endured. Secondly, the constitution alone was not enough to satisfy the demands and aspirations of Gold Coast Africans. Sir Reginald Saloway, Chief Secretary of Defence and External Affairs in the Gold Coast, subsequently claimed that ‘what was intended to be, and indeed was, an important step towards self-government did in practice put a clapper on a head of steam emanating from the post-war nationalist fervour among the semi-educated youth and particularly among the ex-servicemen.’[[247]](#footnote-247) In practice however, this simmering urban discontent continued to build. Urban communities, and especially young people, increasingly clashed with the colonial system, both directly with government authority and indirectly with the chiefs who formed an intrinsic part of it.

In an attempt to capture the support of this new ‘detribalised’ constituency, the UGCC was established in August 1947. The UGCC was the first ‘national’ political party largely divorced from the system of traditional authorities. Like the ARPS’s leaders however, the founders of the UGCC were lawyers and civil servants, themselves often closely related to royal families. They envisaged the UGCC as a moderate party, navigating between the ‘traditional’ politics of the chiefs and the urban detribalised masses. The UGCC was not, however, a mass organisation: whilst its leaders wanted to appeal to the general population, they did not see the UGCC as being led by the masses. In its paternalistic view, a select group of educated individuals would lead the nation, and not the other way around. [[248]](#footnote-248) As T. Peter Omari later wrote:

... [T]he United Gold Coast Convention and its leaders… had every intention of continuing in the time-honoured traditions of British parliamentarianship. But, largely through the attitude they displayed towards the “uneducated” classes, the educated class of the Gold Coast alienated and continued to alienate themselves from the mass of the people…[[249]](#footnote-249)

Most Africans were, the UGCC believed, still unprepared for meaningful participation in the political process, a belief that marginalised a large section of Gold Coast society, in particular rural farmers, and ultimately sowed the seeds of the UGCC’s decline.[[250]](#footnote-250) Independence, they hoped, would come gradually, in a series of steps agreed between themselves and the colonial authorities, upon which they would apply a degree of political pressure. With Danquah elected as the party leader, Ebenezer Ako-Adjei encouraged his colleagues in the UGCC leadership to appoint his former college friend, Kwame Nkrumah, as its General Secretary. Ako-Adjei cited his friend’s organisational skills, powerful oratorical style, and enthusiasm for political change as reasons to bring him into the party leadership.[[251]](#footnote-251) In December 1947, Kwame Nkrumah accordingly returned home after eleven years overseas to become the General Secretary of the UGCC.

Kwame Nkrumah in the United States and Britain, 1936-1947

[Those going to England] had no nationalist spirit but looked upon England as their home… Our idea was complete independence… It was schools like Lincoln that trained black young men to stand on their own feet.[[252]](#footnote-252)

Despite Nkrumah’s prominence in both Ghanaian and African historiography, little has been written about his early life, and, in particular, the time he spent overseas, in the United States and Britain. Although Nkrumah wrote about this period in his autobiography, *Ghana: the Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (1957), he provides little detail about his academic experiences.[[253]](#footnote-253) A significant exception to this notable absence is Marika Sherwood’s study of Nkrumah’s years abroad.[[254]](#footnote-254) Through interviews with former teachers and college peers, Sherwood provides a nuanced, in-depth understanding of the impact of this period on Nkrumah’s political development. Whilst he was in the US and Britain, Nkrumah earned two Bachelors’ Degrees (1939 and 1942) and two Masters’ Degrees (1942 and 1943). He also started three doctoral degrees, though none was completed. It was during this period that Nkrumah established the international network of supporters, admirers, and colleagues that would prove so important for his later political career. This was also when he first practised political organising, and developed his own political orientation.

Francis Kwame Nkrumah was born in Nkroful, in the Western Region of the Gold Coast, in 1909. He left Nkroful for Accra in 1930, where he trained to be a teacher at Achimota Teaching College. He subsequently worked as a teacher for several years. Nkrumah initially planned to continue his education in the UK, but he failed the entrance exams, and instead turned his attention to the United States. During this period, there is no evidence of Nkrumah being either active or interested in politics. This suggests that Nkrumah’s time abroad was critical in his political development, and in his transition from scholar to political actor. Indeed, Sherwood highlights the centrality of Nkrumah’s experiences overseas to the development of his ideological position.[[255]](#footnote-255)

Nkrumah left the Gold Coast in October 1935, for Lincoln University, a historically black college in Lincoln, Pennsylvania.[[256]](#footnote-256) Despite initial financial difficulties, he enrolled in a three-year degree programme as a mature student, and threw himself into his studies.[[257]](#footnote-257) Whilst it would be tempting to explain his political activism as resulting from his arrival at Lincoln, this was not the case. In the 1930s, Lincoln was a relatively conservative university, catering principally to the children of middle-class African American professionals.[[258]](#footnote-258) Students were discouraged from engaging in any form of ‘radical’ politics.[[259]](#footnote-259) These American students were described by another African student of the time as arrogant, lazy, and not particularly interested in passing exams.[[260]](#footnote-260) In contrast, Nkrumah was hard working and dedicated to his studies. The distinction and difference that Nkrumah described in relation to African Americans was further amplified by his personality. According to fellow students and university staff, he was ambitious, yet also quiet and somewhat withdrawn.[[261]](#footnote-261) Nkrumah’s English professor noted that he “mixed with Afro-American students in a limited fashion.”[[262]](#footnote-262)

In truth, Nkrumah only ‘mixed’ with a select few. Even at this early point in his intellectual development, Nkrumah appears to have identified differences between African and African Americans that would subsequently be reflected in his ideological position. This stemmed from both his academic experiences and from his social activities during this period. He was remote from most African American students and interacted more with fellow Africans on campus.[[263]](#footnote-263) This identification with Africans (as opposed to ‘Negros’) would influence Nkrumah’s conception of Africa and his understanding of political leadership.[[264]](#footnote-264) Such a distinction is best demonstrated through references in his autobiography to the Gold Coast population in general, and himself in particular, as the primary fighters against colonialism, reflecting his conviction that there was no ‘natural’ or instinctive affinity between Africans and African Americans. [[265]](#footnote-265) The absence of strong Pan-African leadership in the USA at this time is also apparent in the autobiography. The decline of the Pan-African movement in the United States, specifically the Garveyite movement, and the changing nature of African American discourses on race and equality, limited the influence that diaspora thinkers had on the development of Nkrumah’s own strand of the meta-narrative. Though in later years he claimed that he had hoped to meet Marcus Garvey, his focus and interest did not appear to be on the Pan-Africanism of the diaspora. This absence also informed the initial framework for the distinct version of Pan-Africanism that Nkrumah would go on to develop.[[266]](#footnote-266) He increasingly saw a division not in terms of race (black and white) as Du Bois and Garvey did, but in terms of geography. Whilst there was still space for diaspora involvement in African liberation, Nkrumah saw continental Africa as the focus of his political imagination.

This point is noteworthy because of Nkrumah’s subsequent efforts to assert a shared identity between himself and the ‘masses,’ both in the Gold Coast and across Africa.[[267]](#footnote-267) By highlighting his position within the ‘oppressed minority’ in the United States, as a man of colour and as a foreigner, Nkrumah sought to stress his affinity with the mass of Gold Coast subjects.[[268]](#footnote-268) In reality of course, only a tiny number of Africans, even from the relatively well educated Gold Coast, received university-level education. Nkrumah did not see himself as a part of this elite, but his privileged position nevertheless allowed him to view Africa from the outside and to gain first-hand insight into how Westerners viewed the continent and its peoples (a closer examination of this outsider perspective on African affairs is undertaken in Chapter 3).

Despite this privilege, Nkrumah was not immune to the racism that typified life for African Americans in the 1940s. His employment in menial work during college vacations provided an experience of and closer insight into the realities of American society and life for most African Americans. Yet Nkrumah’s periodic experiences of racism did not lead him to express empathy with African Americans. Instead, he linked these experiences to the treatment of Africans in the colonial order. He wrote in his autobiography that his experiences in the United States inspired him to write *Towards Colonial Freedom*, published in London in 1947.[[269]](#footnote-269) His ideas of this period reinforced the adoption by Nkrumah of membership of an ‘oppressed minority’, which allowed him to reconstruct race relations around political conceptions of ‘Western’ and ‘African’, rather than ‘white and black.’ This distinction was vital to Nkrumah’s later development of Pan-Africanist nationalism, especially after Ghanaian independence, but at this point it was a fledgling idea, best understood as a *de facto* or subconscious exclusion, in that Nkrumah did not seek to overtly exclude the diaspora from his definition of the oppressed. Rather, a singular focus on Africa left little space for diaspora voices in Nkrumah’s construction of African liberation.

Nkrumah’s time overseas enabled him to develop and refine his own ideological position and beliefs, and it was also vital to his understanding and practice of political organisation. By 1936, he was already honing his public speaking skills, coming in second place in the Kappa Alpha Psi Oratorical contest at Lincoln University.[[270]](#footnote-270) While studying for a Master’s degree at the University of Pennsylvania, Nkrumah turned his hand to student politics.[[271]](#footnote-271) He became associated with the founding of the African Students’ Association of America and Canada, and was its first elected president.[[272]](#footnote-272) He himself recalled this as ‘the beginning of my political activities in the United States. When I first arrived this Association was only a small gathering of African students who used to meet occasionally but who, because of lack of organization, were not strong enough to achieve anything effective.’[[273]](#footnote-273) Nkrumah sought to turn the Association into a proactive body: ‘I arranged for the publication of the Association’s official newspaper which was called the *African Interpreter.* Through the medium of this newspaper we tried to revive a spirit of nationalism.’[[274]](#footnote-274) Nkrumah identified the Association as an important source of support for African nationalism, which he believed was already in existence, and lay beyond the control of the colonial authorities. Nkrumah, Ako-Adjei and K.A.B. Jones-Quartey, all from the Gold Coast, produced *The African Interpreter* and organised conferences for the Association.[[275]](#footnote-275) Most indicative of his organisational ideas was his expansion of the Association’s membership beyond students, inviting all US-resident Africans, regardless of their employment status, to join. Nkrumah’s changes suggest an early attempt to incorporate non-elite Africans into a more active Association. This approach would become central to his political activism in the Gold Coast. Nkrumah held the position of President of the Association until 1945, when he left the United States to continue his studies in Britain.[[276]](#footnote-276)

It was in the early 1940s, as Nkrumah started his postgraduate studies, that he began to formulate and present his own political ideas. This can be seen in the research he undertook for his (incomplete) Doctoral degree. Although he applied to study philosophy at the University of Pennsylvania, Nkrumah wanted to examine colonial rule, anti-colonialism and self-rule in Africa. Although this raised concern among faculty and sponsors, he was allowed to continue (he never submitted a dissertation, and the degree was therefore never conferred).[[277]](#footnote-277) By the time he left the United States for England in 1945, Nkrumah had a much clearer conceptualisation of Pan-Africanism and political activism. The experience of racism in daily life, both direct and indirect, had added to Nkrumah’s frustrations with colonialism as a political and social experience. The limited support for anti-colonial activities amongst both black and white Americans encouraged him to engage in political organisation, at which he excelled. His interaction in the US and Britain with a range of Africans from different colonies, interested in similar issues, allowed him to conceive of issues of race and nationhood in a broader framework, moving away from the Gold Coast and towards continent-wide interpretations.[[278]](#footnote-278) He increasingly identified the potential power of uniting with anti-colonial groups from across the African continent into one movement.

Throughout his time overseas, Nkrumah developed new understandings of both the nation and Pan-Africanism, searching for what may be understood as a ‘third way,’ an umbrella under which the two notions could co-exist. To a certain extent, this umbrella was provided by the growing strength of anti-colonial movements and ideas during the Second World War. His opportunity to put these new ideas to the test came in 1945, when, a few months after he moved to England, he was invited by the Trinidadian Pan-Africanist George Padmore to help organise a Pan-African Congress in Manchester. Padmore had been introduced to Nkrumah’s activities organising African students by his childhood friend and fellow Pan-Africanist C.L.R. James, and was impressed by the young man’s organisational skills. Nkrumah took this opportunity to give concrete expression of his conceptualisation of Pan-Africanism in the practical organisation and formal policies of the Congress.[[279]](#footnote-279) The Pan-African Congress, a landmark event in the history of African nationalism, agreed to support what was termed ‘African socialism’ (of which Nkrumah was the strongest advocate) as a notion that bridged the ideological divisions between delegates.[[280]](#footnote-280) Nkrumah’s organisational prominence was evidenced by the delegates who attended. St. Clair Drake and George Shepperson later recalled that ‘the leadership of the … Congress of 1945 was passing [a]way from Afro-Americans, [and] it is also clear that, although West Indians were very influential at it, Africans themselves assumed prominent positions of leadership.’[[281]](#footnote-281) As well as Nkrumah, African representatives at the conference included Jomo Kenyatta, Milton Obote (from Kenya and Uganda respectively), and South African author Peter Abrahams. The only African American in a leadership position was Du Bois, elected President of the Congress. As Nkrumah wrote, ‘while the four previous conferences were both promoted and supported mainly by middle-class intellectuals and bourgeois Negro reformists, this … Congress was attended by workers, trade unionists, farmers, co-operative societies and by African and other coloured students.’[[282]](#footnote-282) Whilst this is factually inaccurate (there were no farmers present, for example), such a statement certainly reflected the position Nkrumah hoped both he and the Congress would play in the future of continental affairs.[[283]](#footnote-283)

Nkrumah’s influence over the proceedings of the Congress is evident in its main resolutions, which were clearly focused on Africa, not the diaspora. In its ‘Declaration to the Colonial Peoples,’ the Congress stated:

The object of imperialist Powers is to exploit. By granting the right to colonial peoples to govern themselves that object is defeated. Therefore, the struggle for political power by colonial and subject peoples is the first step towards, and the necessary prerequisite to, complete social, economic and political emancipation. The Fifth Pan-African Congress therefore calls on the workers and farmers of the Colonies to organise effectively. Colonial workers must be in the front of the battle against imperialism. Your weapons – the strike and the boycott – are invincible.[[284]](#footnote-284)

Opoku Agyeman has argued that ‘the age of Nkrumah’ began with his involvement in the Manchester Congress.[[285]](#footnote-285) By its conclusion on 21 October 1945, Nkrumah had established himself as a significant African leader, dedicated to the liberation of all Africa and to Pan-African unity. Notwithstanding Nkrumah’s emergent position as a leader of Africa, it is noteworthy that up to this point, he had established his authority entirely outside Africa itself. His political thought and organisation had been located in and framed by an émigré experience. Removed from the continent, he relied on a constructed imagining of Africa and the Gold Coast. Though informed by his own experiences and memories of the Gold Coast, Nkrumah was nonetheless able to construct and present an ‘Africa’ with the characteristics he identified. This construct was further validated by the colleagues and associates he met and worked with overseas, who supported not only the image of present-day Africa, but also the vision of a future Africa that Nkrumah presented. The confidence and conviction that Nkrumah had in his ideas had yet to be challenged by the realities of effecting political change, oppositional ideas and organisations in Africa itself, let alone the reality of mass engagement. Though he had arguably demonstrated his commitment to the importance of mass participation and parliamentary debate, it was not until his return to the Gold Coast in 1947 that the ambiguity which existed between his personal experience and his beliefs came to the fore.

The Road to Independence, 1947-1957

Elliot Rudwick wrote of W.E.B. Du Bois that: ‘Frequently, an advocate leader is an authoritarian to the extent that he is certain that his propaganda is the panacea. This type tends to have an omniscient conception of his role and frequently believes in the omnipotence of his ideas.[[286]](#footnote-286) But, it is a characterisation that can equally be applied to Nkrumah. After his return to the Gold Coast in 1947 and appointment as Leader of Government Business in 1951 (which will be discussed in more detail below), Nkrumah was thrown into the world of public politics, first opposing and then working with the colonial authorities. During the decade between 1947 and the attainment of Ghanaian independence in March 1957, Nkrumah’s ideas about nationalism and Pan-Africanism underwent further development and clarification, becoming increasingly evident in his plans for both Ghana and Africa as a whole.

Almost as soon as Nkrumah became UGCC General Secretary in 1947, the authorities became alarmed at his anti-colonial rhetoric, his demands for immediate independence, and the seeming inability of other UGCC leaders to control him.[[287]](#footnote-287) Whilst ethnic affiliation and support for traditional leaders remained strong in rural areas, there was, as noted above, an increasingly unified anti-colonial sentiment spreading in urban areas. It was in this context that Nkrumah articulated and projected a new understanding of the nation, specifically aimed at those groups who viewed themselves as most adversely affected by colonial policies. These included the urban youth, who faced growing unemployment; ex-soldiers, disillusioned by what they saw as their abandonment following demobilisation; and market women and business owners, dissatisfied with economic policies that continued to favour British and European businesses.

Yet the event that would enable Nkrumah to emerge as *the* nationalist leader in Ghana was not in fact organised by him. The problems of wartime shortages had not ended, and shopkeepers in Accra and Kumasi believed that the government was doing too little support them, whilst encouraging the growth of foreign businesses in the Gold Coast. A boycott of European-owned stores, organised by Nii Kwabena Bonne III, a Ga chief and prominent Accra businessman, began on 26 January 1948. When the boycotts captured the public imagination, the UGCC’s leaders offered their limited support.[[288]](#footnote-288) But events took a dramatic turn on 28 February, when war veterans organised their own protest. They planned to march to the Governor’s residence at Christiansborg Castle and present him with their complaints. The march of ex-servicemen was joined by others, intent on supporting the protestors and expressing their additional frustrations directly to the government. When the protest reached the crossroads in front of Christiansborg Castle, members of the Colonial Police Service opened fire, killing two protestors and injuring four or five.[[289]](#footnote-289) When word of what had happened reached central Accra, spontaneous riots broke out across the city. Within a few days, riots were also reported in Kumasi and Tamale. Despite the UGCC’s lukewarm response to the protests, the ‘Big Six’ (the founding members of the UGCC and Nkrumah) were arrested for agitating. Reginald Saloway, Officer in Charge of Administering Government of the Gold Coast and later member of the House of Lords, subsequently recalled that ‘the most disturbing thing to me about the 1948 riots was that the government had virtually no effective support among the people and the forces of law and order were utterly inadequate to control the situation.’[[290]](#footnote-290)

The colonial authorities appeared shocked by this sudden demonstration of anti-colonial sentiment among the wider population. The UGCC leadership were equally surprised by these events and were unwilling to support the sentiments of the protestors. Nkrumah, however, saw this as an opportunity to develop his own political strategy, based on and legitimised by mass urban mobilisation rather than intellectual argument. Prior to the riots, he had disagreed with other UGCC leaders about the involvement of the wider population in the party: as noted, the latter looked to a moderate, elite constituency, including some of the chiefs and the educated urban elite. Nkrumah, on the other hand, sought to mobilise a much larger and very different constituency. This ‘populist’ approach caused concern among the UGCC leaders and the colonial government. Nkrumah now seized the opportunity of creating a new mass political party, with a very different composition to the UGCC.

In the wake of the riots, the British government authorised a commission of Gold Coast Africans to investigate them and to suggest reforms. Several UGCC leaders, arrested for their alleged role in the boycott and riots, were appointed to the Coussey Commission, which would, within two years, recommend significant reforms to the Gold Coast political system.[[291]](#footnote-291) Crucially, Nkrumah was excluded from the Commission.[[292]](#footnote-292) For UGCC moderates, the Commission’s recommendations seemed appropriate. The number of elected positions in the Legislative Assembly would be increased, as well as the range of powers granted to the Cabinet.[[293]](#footnote-293) This, they believed, would advance the cause of reform whilst allowing the existing elites, the traditional chiefs and the educated intellectuals, to maintain their control over African political life and ultimately to lead the post-colonial state.

In July 1949, Nkrumah’s dissatisfaction with the UGCC and their emphasis on gradual reform peaked. He formally left the UGCC and, along with other disgruntled former members, established the Convention Peoples Party (CPP).[[294]](#footnote-294) The CPP quickly established a prominent position in Gold Coast politics, partly by attacking what it saw as the inadequacy of the Coussey Commission recommendations, published in December 1949. His work with the UGCC had already given Nkrumah ample opportunity to hone his political skills: fiery speeches extolling the power of the working classes, and demanding immediate independence as the remedy to all the Gold Coast’s ills, made him immensely popular among the urban poor and unemployed. Nkrumah succeeded in incorporating a large number of separate groups opposed to colonial authority into a single broad association. As he later recalled, he sought to unite the urban poor, youth, market women, and farmers, under the banner of his leadership, though without explicitly rejecting a role for ‘traditional’ authorities:

On behalf of the [Committee on Youth Organisation], in the name of the chiefs, the people, the rank and file of the Convention, the Labour Movement, our valiant ex-servicemen, the youth movement… the man in the street, … the new Ghana that is to be, … I declared to the crowd the birth of the Convention People’s Party…[[295]](#footnote-295)

In the context of a rising anti-colonial movement, the CPP united what it portrayed as an undifferentiated African population against a common enemy and for a common goal – self-rule. Any differences between its supporters were obscured by the banner of ‘self-government now!’

This new version of mass nationalism gained widespread support for a number of reasons. It attacked not only the colonial government, but also challenged the indigenous offspring of that government – its system of chiefly authority and the educated elite. The CPP attacked these two groups because of their ties to the British. Although Rathbone and Allman have rightly noted the complexity of Nkrumah’s relationship with the chiefs, CPP propaganda at this time portrayed chiefs as pawns of the colonisers, enforcing and thereby supporting colonial law.[[296]](#footnote-296) The chiefs were marginalised by the CPP and their supporters as outdated and unnecessary. Nkrumah presented them as inherently tied to the past, downplaying the real divisions amongst the chiefs in regard to colonialism, and indeed the role that some chiefs had played in organising and supporting the boycotts.[[297]](#footnote-297) By presenting himself as a modern alternative to, and a greater leader than, the chiefs, Nkrumah portrayed the CPP as the *only* valid representative of ‘the Ghanaian people.’

Building on the effectiveness of this argument, Nkrumah turned his firepower on the UGCC. As CPP leader, he attacked the UGCC for its reliance on educated and political elites, arguing that the party was, in advocating a moderate pace of reform, effectively supporting the unnecessary continuation of colonialism to ensure its leaders’ own privileged position in politics. Nkrumah argued that his former colleagues, by participating in the Coussey Committee, were legitimising British administration, and therefore delaying independence.[[298]](#footnote-298) As St Clair Drake noted, one of the CPP’s first popular slogans was “self-government *now*!”[[299]](#footnote-299)

To further mobilise and unify its support base, the CPP organised the ‘Positive Action’ campaign, starting in 1950. Nkrumah cited Gandhi as his inspiration for the campaign, which sought to bring the urban masses directly into political action, in doing so marginalising the UGCC as elitist and disinterested in the welfare of ordinary Gold Coast subjects. In December 1949, Nkrumah wrote an editorial for the *Accra Evening News* entitled ‘The Era of Positive Action Draws Nigh.’ He claimed in bitter tones that:

Day in, day out, we have been crying and agitating against this out-dated system of rule that has seethed the spirit of the nation for the past two years, but today, now that the opportunity has come that we too should taste the fruits of freedom, our own men have let us down.[[300]](#footnote-300)

Nkrumah now identified the UGCC as the main obstacle to immediate self-government and encouraged his supporters to take action against the party. On 15 December 1949, The CPP informed the colonial authorities that failure to meet with Nkrumah and other nationalist leaders would result in a ‘campaign of POSITIVE ACTION based on non-violence and non-co-operation.’[[301]](#footnote-301) On 8 January 1950, Nkrumah announced to a packed arena of supporters that from midnight, the Positive Action campaign would begin.[[302]](#footnote-302) A strike by the Gold Coast Trade Unions Congress at the same time (though organised independently) added to the tensions in the country, increased the visibility of the positive action campaign, and lent legitimacy to the CPP’s claims to represent the labouring masses.[[303]](#footnote-303) Over the following days, Nkrumah recounted that ‘all the stores were closed, the trains were stationary, all Government services had closed down and the workers were sitting at home. The whole economic life of the country was at a standstill.’[[304]](#footnote-304) A state of emergency was declared, and curfews were imposed across the country, yet the tension did not dissipate, and public protests continued. Reflecting on the period, journalist Yaa Asantewaa noted (in somewhat histrionic terms):

Self-preservation is the strongest instinct in man and yet despite the fear and terror of being hounded and victimised, the common men and women of the Gold Coast challenged the might of a Colonial Power, and showed to the world that the spirit of man is indestructible, and that the most cruelly treated race in the world – the Negro – had the quality of heroism and the courage to stand up for his right against the force and might of Imperialism.[[305]](#footnote-305)

On 17 January, violence, reminiscent of the 1948 protests, broke out between protestors and police on the road to Christiansborg Castle. The authorities took this opportunity to round up leaders of the CPP, arresting Nkrumah and his associates on 21 January 1950.[[306]](#footnote-306)

By the end of the Positive Action campaign, the foundations of Nkrumah’s vision of the Ghanaian nation were firmly established. He had articulated the binary identities that were central to the nationalism that swept through the Gold Coast (and Africa) in the 1950s. Like many such binaries articulated in political discourses, these were based on negative characterisations of the ‘other.’ Nkrumah presented himself and the CPP as the leaders of a modern nation in the making, a nation devoid of meaningful ethnic differences and deserving of immediate independence. In contrast, the UGCC and the chiefs were antiquated; a left-over from a bygone era, along with their elitist representatives, that had no place in a modern African nation. Indeed, the CPP increasingly equated all internal opponents with colonialism. Any individual or organisation that opposed Nkrumah’s vision was committing a kind of treason against a Ghanaian nation that was not yet born.[[307]](#footnote-307) The CPP manifesto for the 1956 election stated: ‘Unless you are very careful in the way you cast your votes on Election Day, this beloved country of ours will have lost the chance of gaining its freedom, sovereignty and independence for many years to come.’[[308]](#footnote-308)

Despite (or perhaps because of) the arrest of Nkrumah and other CPP leaders during the Positive Action campaign, the party continued to gain widespread support.[[309]](#footnote-309) In 1951, the recommendations of the Coussey Report came into effect, and elections were held for the new Legislative Assembly. The CPP gained an overwhelming majority, winning 34 of 38 popularly elected seats and claiming 56 of a total 84 seats.[[310]](#footnote-310) Nkrumah was released from Fort James Prison, Accra, on 12 February, amid much fanfare, and asked to form a government by the Governor-General. On 20 February 1951, Kwame Nkrumah was sworn in to the new position of Leader of Government Business. He had achieved his first step on the road to power, and over the following six years he worked with the colonial authorities to accelerate the transition to independence. During this period, he played down his previously radical anti-colonial stance, instead working within the confines of the colonial system with the British to end the latter’s presence in Gold Coast as swiftly as possible. As he played the role of the reliable young statesman, he also articulated what was, for the Gold Coast, a relatively new ideology, namely Pan-Africanism.

In the period leading up to the 1951 election, Gold Coast subjects had become increasingly unified in their opposition to colonialism, and receptive to Nkrumah’s ideas.[[311]](#footnote-311) During his eleven year absence from the Gold Coast, Nkrumah had developed his own understanding of Pan-Africanism, as a general vision for the future of the country and the continent. The twin meta-narratives of Pan-Africanism and nationalism had developed, by 1950, into a more distinct vision, later to be labelled ‘Nkrumahism.’ Despite the singular notion that this title suggests, the two ideas were never amalgamated into a single ideology. They were not mutually exclusive, yet neither did they form a coherent whole. It was in the period from 1951 to 1957 that the deployment of these two narratives, in both dogmatic and pragmatic ways, can be most clearly shown. By consistently referencing both the ‘nation’ and ‘Africa’, Nkrumah and his colleagues created powerful rhetorical tools – they required little explanation, and held powerful meanings for his audience that resonated with their personal experiences. The CPP asserted ownership of these narratives. By enabling people to interpret nationalism and Pan-Africanism through their personal experiences, Nkrumah avoided the need to give them more concrete definitions. Indeed, as will be demonstrated in subsequent chapters, Nkrumah was able to alter the meaning and content of ‘nation’ and ‘Africa’ to suit changing circumstances.

The overall success of Nkrumah’s attempts to unite the peoples of the Gold Coast around his political ideology, to introduce Pan-Africanism as a popular idea, was remarkable. Yet in the aftermath of the 1966 coup and his fall from power, his influence and ideas were dismissed by contemporary observers and historians as overly ambitious and bound to end in failure.[[312]](#footnote-312) However, this argument overlooks the fact that the rapid rise of the CPP was achieved in part because of its leaders’ ability to convey aspects of these paradigms through accessible language and recognisable ideas that held tangible meaning for their audience. The CPP’s success in delivering these ideas was first demonstrated in the 1951 election, and continued to gain momentum up to independence in 1957.[[313]](#footnote-313)

The nationalist meta-narrative articulated by Nkrumah and the CPP leadership was however partly redefined following the 1951 election. The nation had previously been conceptually linked to the politics of self-rule and anti-colonialism. Nkrumah represented himself and the CPP in the build-up to the election as outsiders, the leaders of the urban poor, the young and the excluded.[[314]](#footnote-314) He and his party demanded immediate independence and argued that the UGCC was collaborating with the British to maintain colonial authority.[[315]](#footnote-315) CPP propaganda suggested that the party sought to isolate and remove all vestiges of previous ruling classes. The new nation was to be thoroughly modern, free from its colonial past.[[316]](#footnote-316) The strategy of ‘amalgamation’, which attempted to conflate the party leader with the nation-as-outsider, was highly successful, but could not function so effectively once Nkrumah became Leader of Government Business. The CPP was now the majority party, and Nkrumah himself acquired a government record against which he could, and would, be judged. Working with the colonial authorities thereby necessitated a re-working of CPP discourse. Increasingly, the party adopted a more nuanced conceptualisation which drew on its greatest strength – Nkrumah himself. In adopting this approach, the CPP leadership developed what Omari argues ultimately became a fully-fledged personality cult around Nkrumah.[[317]](#footnote-317) Though there had been signs of this at the very outset of the CPP, in the early 1950s the campaign for independence was conceived and promoted in such a manner that Nkrumah and the wider movement were inseparable, and Nkrumah’s leadership was presented as fundamental to its success.[[318]](#footnote-318)

The CPP’s characterisation of the UGCC was similarly restructured to take account of the party’s new position as national leader. The UGCC’s alleged associations with the British authorities were now played down and instead the ties between the UGCC and the Paramount Chiefs were identified as the former’s key weakness. This linked them to what Nkrumah argued was an outdated society. The only reason that the Paramount Chiefs continued to wield such power, the CPP argued, was because of the colonial system. As CPP supporter Yaa Asantewa argued:

...[W]e have in our midst the same old Reactionaries of bygone days now posing as the saviours of the common people, if they were working alone as we did in the past we would look on them with friendliness but by their association with foreign journalists and certain die-hard capitalists, we find that they too are working with the imperialists not in the open but underground.[[319]](#footnote-319)

As a complement to this, Nkrumah further sowed the seeds of disunity by suggesting that more junior chiefs should turn their backs on the Paramount Chiefs and join with the CPP.[[320]](#footnote-320)

The details of what the modern nation of Ghana would look like remained necessarily vague. This was unknown territory for both the African politicians and the colonial authorities.[[321]](#footnote-321) Whilst each actor sought to carve out political space for themselves, uncertainty about the future made it difficult to define exactly what each group stood for. Nkrumah’s slogan ‘seek ye first the political kingdom’ is commonly used to exemplify his political ambition, yet it also highlights the reluctance of Nkrumah to define any clear policies. The phrase served to encompass the complex struggles of this period into one cause – national freedom from imperialism. In 1954, Nkrumah reiterated the simultaneously clear and vague sentiment when he stated:

Freedom is the badge, the inspiration and the goal of the titanic struggle which we as a nation have been waging against the forces of imperialism and reaction in our midst. It is the magic name of freedom which has motivated us to serve and to suffer on behalf of our beloved country…[[322]](#footnote-322)

Yet the struggle did not simply involve the transition to independence: Nkrumah and his allies fought for the right to define the identity of the new nation. As one element of this, Nkrumah sought to establish the foreign policy position of the new Ghanaian nation-state. Whilst the opposition sought to maintain close ties with Britain and the West, Nkrumah and his allies began to define a new non-aligned Afrocentric path of foreign relations, designed to achieve what they saw as the attainable goal of independence from colonial and outside influence. The rhetoric of the CPP reduced these highly complex debates into one single binary choice – the CPP and African independence versus the opposition, the Chiefs, and the West.

Whilst the CPP leadership publicly claimed to be setting the Gold Coast on a new radical path, Nkrumah and his allies were negotiating the key steps towards independence, largely in cooperation with the colonial authorities. The first such step came on 5 March 1952, when the Governor announced, in response to a request from Nkrumah, that the Legislative Assembly would elect a Prime Minister to replace the position of Leader of Government Business. The Prime Minister would, in conjunction with the Governor, nominate a Cabinet with clearly-defined portfolios.[[323]](#footnote-323) This new job title did not significantly alter the powers of the leader, but the change was of great symbolic importance, as the new title conveyed the idea of a sovereign nation.[[324]](#footnote-324) Nkrumah won an Assembly vote and officially became the first Prime Minister in Gold Coast history. When these events were discussed in an Assembly debate in 1953, Nkrumah recalled:

I was accused … of personal ambition in seeking the title of Prime Minister. We can now, Mr. Speaker, see the results for ourselves. (Hear! Hear!) Certainly nobody outside the Gold Coast has regarded my position as anything but what the name implies. The prestige of the Gold Coast overseas has, in fact, been enhanced by this change.[[325]](#footnote-325)

In December 1952, the CPP launched a Party magazine, *FREEDOM*, for party members and the wider public. In the first edition, the editorial spelt out the Party’s position on nationalism and the role of the CPP:

Three years of hard work under the banner of the Convention People’s Party led by the indomitable Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, have brought the peoples of the country knocking hopefully at the door of Self-Determination… Three years of imprisonments, detentions and libel actions against the nationalist leaders engaged in the Liberation Movement have immunised the Convention People’s Party against ordeals and threats and to-day the word “freedom” is on the lips of all Ghanaians.[[326]](#footnote-326)

Thus CPP literature portrayed Nkrumah and the party as the natural leaders of the nation. Inherent in such statements was the assertion that only Nkrumah was working solely for the liberation of the nation, and no other party or person was doing as much as he was. This was evidenced by the perceived harassment that the party faced, despite its leading role in government, from the colonial authorities and other parties.[[327]](#footnote-327) In the same magazine, Yaa Asantewa drew an even closer correlation between the CPP and nationalism when he wrote that ‘Nationalism blazed with imprisonment of the leaders of the C.P.P. as an over-healthy baby [which] never crawled but walked and leaped into thousands and hundreds of thousands [of] national enthusiasts.’[[328]](#footnote-328)

Nkrumah’s slogan ‘Seek ye first the political kingdom’ had a dual meaning, one that linked the nationalism of the CPP to wider notions of Pan-Africanism, without merging the two absolutely. As the nationalism, and the nation, that Nkrumah imagined was the binary opposite of colonialism and imperialism, it was logical from a Pan-Africanist perspective that no single African state could be truly free until colonialism in all its guises was banished from the continent. Nkrumah therefore argued that it was the duty of the Gold Coast to commit itself absolutely to the independence of all Africa before freedom could truly exist. The resources of the Gold Coast – political, economic, natural, and societal - would be directed toward the achievement of independence for the entire African continent. For Nkrumah, the necessary sacrifices would be willingly made by the Ghanaian people because of their supposed endorsement of a vision that inextricably linked nationalism to Pan-Africanism.

In drawing together the achievement of independence of the Gold Coast (already being referred to by nationalists as ‘Ghana’ by the early 1950s) to the future of Africa as a whole, Nkrumah successfully asserted his own reputation as the leader of the continent. In the process, he fundamentally changed earlier perspectives on Pan-Africanism, in ways which would become clearer after Ghanaian independence. The most notable change was to the geographical focus of Pan-Africanism. Where previously the focus had been on the diaspora, and the role that it could play in relation to Africa, Nkrumah reoriented it firmly within continental boundaries. More than this, he placed himself, and the CPP, at the head of this new Pan-African movement. Writing in 1952, K.A. Afriyie, then the Party Secretary, stated: ‘The fact that all leading organisations in Africa look upon the C.P.P. as their source of inspiration and incentive in the national liberation struggle is a healthy sign which should encourage the Party and spur it on to achieve greater things.’[[329]](#footnote-329) Whether there was an accurate claim is less important than the fact that Nkrumah felt able to assert his role as an Africa-wide leader.

The extent to which Nkrumah wanted (or indeed expected) Africa to unite under one government was not however fully evident in the early 1950s; the struggle for national independence had to come first. Nkrumah certainly saw the value and necessity of supporting other African liberation and nationalist movements. This was not in itself a definitive break from earlier interpretations of Pan-Africanism: as discussed in Chapter 1, both Garvey and Du Bois had regarded the achievement of African independence from colonialism as a necessary precursor to the spiritual and social liberation of the diaspora.[[330]](#footnote-330) Yet Nkrumah’s conceptualisation of Pan-Africanism was a significant departure from these predecessors, in that he downplayed the role of the diaspora in shaping any such future. The absence of references to the global black community from his speeches and writing severely marginalised the diaspora from his reconstruction of the Pan-African meta-narrative. Nkrumah placed Africans, and Ghanaians in particular, at the heart of Pan-Africanism: they were to be the driving force behind this new movement for African freedom.

In this distancing of the diaspora, Nkrumah inadvertently highlighted an existing division between cultural and political interpretations of Pan-Africanism. Du Bois had championed cultural Pan-Africanism, highlighting the shared history and cultural unity of all peoples of African descent. Du Bois did not disavow political unity nor reject its potential, but he understood the basis of Pan-Africanism to be essentially cultural.[[331]](#footnote-331) In contrast, Garvey’s interpretation was specifically political, expounding political freedom as a necessary first step to unity between Africa and the diaspora.[[332]](#footnote-332) Nkrumah’s understanding of Pan-Africanism was far more political than cultural, and he made clear the primacy of political Pan-Africanism above and before all other issues.[[333]](#footnote-333) This reinforced the importance of nationalism to Pan-Africanism to such an extent that national self-government was a necessary precursor for Pan-Africanism.

The claim that political independence would usher in a utopian era for the Gold Coast provided a simple message, setting forth both the principal aim of the CPP and offering the potential for future development, without the need for detailed policy directives that may have caused dissatisfaction and disunity within the Gold Coast.[[334]](#footnote-334) Yet the message was not without considerable problems, and did generate significant opposition. By 1954, opposition parties were challenging the universalist claims of Nkrumah and the CPP to speak for, and to embody, the nascent Ghanaian nation. A particularly strong threat was provided by the Northern People’s Party (NPP), which claimed to represent peoples in the Northern Territories as a distinct ethno-regional group. Similarly, the Togoland Congress claimed to be the only legitimate leaders of the Ewe peoples, and the National Liberation Movement (NLM) made similar claims in Asante. Using the term ‘Asante nationalism,’ Allman argues for a broader conceptualisation of the nation, which allows for the interaction between cultural conceptualisations of community identity and the politics of the nation.[[335]](#footnote-335) In this sense, then, organisations such as the Togoland Congress, the NPP and the NLM, which attempted to provide alternatives to the larger political nationalism of the CPP, challenged the authority of Nkrumah’s party to define the Ghana nation in its own terms.[[336]](#footnote-336)

Although Nkrumah tried to dismiss these opposition candidates as ‘rebels,’ the call for increased regional representation threatened the CPP message.[[337]](#footnote-337) Though it had little impact on the outcome of the 1954 elections, it resulted in low CPP parliamentary representation in the regions in which these parties sought support. Because Nkrumah and the CPP asserted themselves as the voice of *all* Ghanaians, a simple electoral majority was insufficient; Nkrumah needed to demonstrate widespread support in every region of the Gold Coast.

Despite the emergence and popularity of opposition parties and alternative models of nationalism, Nkrumah’s form of nationalist Pan-Africanism remained overwhelmingly popular. The clearest demonstration of this popularity must surely be the election in July 1956, which functioned as both a conventional general election and an effective plebiscite on independence. After Nkrumah introduced a White Paper on independence to the Legislative Assembly, the Colonial Office agreed to initiate independence if the forthcoming election secured a majority for pro-independence candidates in the Assembly. The overwhelming popularity of the CPP was certainly demonstrated, as it won with 71 of a possible 104 seats.[[338]](#footnote-338) However, this was a lower share of seats than the CPP had secured in previous elections. In the wake of the sweeping 1949 CPP election victory, weak and dislocated opposition parties had lacked a strong coherent leadership and message. By 1954 however, a new opposition movement had developed; the establishment of ‘territorial nationalisms’ in the Northern Territories, Togoland, and Asante (see above) had succeeded in reducing the CPP majority.[[339]](#footnote-339) Its message of ‘self-government now’ had nevertheless been successful: on 6March 1957, the British flag was lowered for the last time. At midnight, the nation of Ghana was brought into existence.

## Conclusion

The appearance and articulation of meta-narratives of Pan-Africanism and nationalism in the Gold Coast was not simply a product of wartime and post-war social changes or international affairs. Ideas of a nation and nationalism had arguably been in existence for as long as there had been opposition to colonial rule. In the 1890s this developed an organisational form. The ARPS encouraged a shared identity among its activists/members, and it projected this united identity onto the peoples of the Gold Coast. The interaction between the colonial authorities and the ARPS also reinforced the idea of a nation within the borders of the Gold Coast. It was however not until 1947, when the experiences of the Second World War and the radical changes of the post-war years were in effect, that a formal political party was established that claimed to represent this nation.

In that year, Kwame Nkrumah returned to the Gold Coast after twelve years in the United States and Britain. During that period, his ideas about nationalism and Pan-Africanism developed in ways that would have a major impact on the development of Gold Coast anti-colonial nationalism. Though he showed interest in African affairs before he left the Gold Coast in 1935, his time overseas provided him with the opportunity to develop his understanding of the nation, and a quite distinct interpretation of nationalism. This nationalism moved away from the established model of elite leadership of individual ethnic groups, and adopted a more ‘modern’ association between the territory of the nation-state and all the peoples who lived within it. Nkrumah’s nationalism also differed from that of Africans who had previously asserted claims to represent the Gold Coast, in that it was closely tied to mass anti-colonial agitation and demands for independence. He quickly advanced this new interpretation in the organisation of the African Students Association. His expansion of membership beyond students to all Africans working in the United States was mirrored in Nkrumah’s subsequent break from the UGCC and establishment of the CPP as a mass nationalist party.

It was also during his years overseas that Nkrumah began to develop a new Afrocentric interpretation of Pan-Africanism. By the time he left London to return to the Gold Coast he was already identified as a Pan-African leader, closely associated with Du Bois and Padmore. Nkrumah however reconstituted Pan-Africanism along continental lines, limiting the importance of the diaspora in his world view. The primacy of political unity across Africa likewise replaced notions of cultural or social unity as a precursor for ‘freedom,’ a sharp departure from the Pan-Africanism of Du Bois. His prominent role in organising the Manchester Pan-African Congress in 1945 cemented his reputation as a leading figure in the global Pan-Africanist movement.

On his return to the Gold Coast, Nkrumah immediately attempted to bring the UGCC’s nationalist message to a new mass, largely urban audience. Though it proved difficult to convince the UGCC leadership that these new audiences were vital to the legitimacy and effectiveness of nationalism, Nkrumah’s targeting of the ‘maligned elements’ of Gold Coast society pioneered the approach he later developed in the CPP. Throughout the 1950s, Nkrumah realigned nationalism and Pan-Africanism in his image. He was *the* leader and the embodiment of the nation-to-be. The CPP provided the machinery, but ultimately it was Nkrumah himself who, it was envisaged, could bring about independence and development in the Gold Coast. As will be discussed in subsequent chapters, this correlation and conflation between Nkrumah and the nation-state would be further asserted in the years after independence.

CPP propaganda also characterised Nkrumah as the leader of the continent-wide movement for independence and African unity, especially through his efforts to promote Africa-wide political co-operation to end colonialism, and subsequent union after independence. Nkrumah placed himself as the leader of this African liberation movement. National and African liberation and development were both regarded as dependent on Nkrumah’s leadership. The implication of these changes in the Gold Coast was to place Africa-wide issues on a par with domestic policies. As will be discussed in subsequent chapters, it became increasingly difficult to discuss issues of national importance without relating them to broader questions of African independence.

Nkrumah had, by 1957, set the stage for Ghana to become the first independent post-colonial African state, with policy decisions framed by Pan-Africanist and nationalist political language. Though he had played down his initially radical rhetoric after 1951, by establishing Pan-Africanism as a core tenet of his worldview, he would open up Ghana to members of the diaspora still committed to Pan-Africanism. Despite its declining popularity in the West, there were still many African Americans who believed that Pan-Africanism and closer relations with the continent would provide the best opportunity for social and material improvement. Having already examined the intellectuals who contributed to the development of Pan-Africanist thought in the west, the following chapter will consider the attitudes of the popular press in the USA towards Africa, and how various imaginings of the continent demonstrated a changing understanding of the relationship between Africa and her diaspora. In order to understand the ongoing relationship between Ghana, Pan-Africanism, and the diaspora, the next chapter will also consider the lives of several African Americans who would later move to Ghana, examining their relationships with Pan-Africanism and their individual perceptions of Ghana.

**Chapter 3. African American views of Africa, 1945-1959**

*These [Africans] are awakening from a long sleep, with the eager, impatient spirit of youth. Africa may, in the next few years, be bursting with explosive problems, conflicts and headlines. Then, Mr. Average American will be worrying about them whether he wants or not.*

* Horace R. Cayton, *The Pittsburgh Courier* (11 June, 1955)

Studying the development of Pan-Africanism in the first half of the twentieth century, through the contributions made by some of its key proponents in both the Gold Coast and the African diaspora, enables us to chart the historical development of the meta-narrative, a development that reflects the contradictions and fluctuations inherent in the conceptualisation and articulation of such meta-narratives. In doing so, this thesis has so far focused on a small network of Pan-Africanist individuals and organisations located in the diaspora. Whilst this allows for a clear understanding of the content and historical, pre-Nkrumah, deployment of Pan-Africanism, it might suggest that Pan-Africanism was shaped by and influential amongst only a small group of people, particularly following the decline in its influence for the reasons explained in Chapter 1.

However, as suggested in the previous two chapters, Pan-Africanism, like nationalism, was a potent force in global black politics precisely because it had a wide base of support. As evinced by the popularity of the UNIA in the early inter-war period, the ideas and promises of Pan-Africanism tapped into the beliefs and perceptions of a wide section of the African American population. Even after the decline of the UNIA, there remained an African American constituency that was receptive to the ideas of Pan-Africanism. This is however a constituency whose position in the development of Pan-Africanist thinking has yet to receive serious scholarly attention.[[340]](#footnote-340) In the absence of a significant Pan-African organisation during the post-Second World War period, the ongoing presence and influence of Pan-Africanism is best studied by a two-stage approach. First, the Chapter offers a close analysis of one of the main outlets for African American ideas and aspirations, namely newspapers owned and/or targeted towards African Americans. Secondly, a close examination of individuals receptive to Pan-Africanist ideas, the audience as it were, will provide insight into how Pan-Africanism and popular narrative of ‘Africa’ were understood in relation to local and individual issues and concerns, and why people chose to support the meta-narrative.

In the late 1940s and 1950s, the black press provided one of the few avenues for African American political thought to be articulated and transferred between a small intellectual elite and the wider black population, and it played a crucial role in the production of knowledge on Africa. For those with little or no direct experience of the continent, ‘Africa’ essentially functioned as a construction. The African American experience of ‘Africa’ was thus built around and informed by stories, news, and pictures. It encapsulated the prevalent contemporary attitudes towards Africa, and the perceived relationship between the continent and the diaspora. As such, a consideration of how ‘Africa’ was constructed in the mainstream African American press will highlight the ways in which the continent, and Gold Coast/Ghana in particular, was constructed in relation to certain political ideas. It will also demonstrate the interest in Pan-African ideas amongst the readers of these newspapers, though to suggest that these can be extended to demonstrate the popularity of the ideas would be a mistake. The extent to which it did inform opinions is of course impossible to measure. The act of buying the newspaper, on which there is data, is not directly indicative of readers’ responses to the articles. The publication of editorial opinion pieces and stories does, however, give an indication of leaders’ attitudes, and it is on these that the analysis will focus. An examination of the African American press will provide an in-depth analysis of how representations of ‘Africa’ changed over time, reflecting the changing context of African American politics. Further analysis of *The Crisis,* the newspaper of the NAACP, will demonstrate the extent to which changing narratives of ‘Africa’ influenced more than simply the radical elements of African American society. *The Crisis* was not a mainstream newspaper, and the NAACP was actively promoting a moderate, nationally-defined, programme of change, yet *The Crisis* consistently reported on African affairs, further demonstrating the broader impact of Pan-Africanism in African American circles.

This chapter will then analyse the ideas and experiences of a number of individual African Americans who ultimately moved to the Gold Coast/Ghana. Their reasons for going to the Gold Coast/Ghana, their perceptions of the country and of Africa more generally, were, it is argued in this chapter, shaped by their personal experiences and various understandings of Pan-Africanist thought, as presented by popular imaginings of ‘Africa’. This created a range of perceptions that, whilst decidedly individual, nevertheless converged around certain notions of race and identity that would come to define their understanding of Pan-Africanism, how they were engaged in and with it, and what Ghana could offer to them. Considering the positions and ideas of leaders (W.E.B. Du Bois and George Padmore), scholars (Horace Mann Bond and St Clair Drake), and activists (Julian Mayfield and Maya Angelou) will demonstrate the different ways in which Pan-Africanism was understood and used by a wide variety of people to explain the world as they saw it around them.

The Black Press, *The Crisi*s, and African American attitudes about Africa, 1930s-1959

The impact of Pan-Africanist ideas in the United States was both subtle and broad. The growth of the UNIA between 1918 and the mid-1920s demonstrated the level of popular support that these ideas appeared to have. But the impact of Pan-Africanism went beyond the UNIA’s immediate support base, encouraging as it did the articulation and examination of relations between the continent and diaspora, raising questions about the nature of race and identity, and finding not only a receptive audience but also a wider range of intellectual and cultural participants. Many of those participants did not explicitly identify with Pan-Africanism, but they were not isolated from its effects, indeed they were supportive of certain tenets within it. The Harlem Renaissance (1920-1930) in particular had moved discourses on Africa away from a purely political notion of Pan-Africanism, engaging cultural approaches to analyse the complex relationship between African Americans and the African continent. Though the heights of this intellectual and artistic Renaissance had ended, popular interest in Africa endured amongst African Americans. This aspect of Pan-Africanism is most visible in the African American press, and its coverage of Africa. Much like Pan-Africanism more generally, the ways in which Africa was constructed in the press underwent a process of transformation, moving from a topic of education in the 1920s and 1930s to an inspirational model by the late 1950s. A brief examination of the function of the African American press, the role and purpose of newspapers, will demonstrate this transforming characterisation of ‘Africa.’

*The Black Press*

By the 1940s, the African American press constituted a powerful and popular form of information and knowledge dissemination. As such, it provides an invaluable source on the broader impact and indeed the legacy of Pan-Africanism. Newspapers in particular can give an impression of the relative importance of Africa in the decades after the Second World War, at least for journalists if not for readers, and provide insight into how Africa was perceived in discourses on African American issues (and the potential role that Africa was expected to play in the future of the African American diaspora). Before undertaking any analysis of the content of these newspapers, it is first necessary to consider what the African American press was and how it functioned. It is of course obvious that there was significant diversity within the black press, with newspapers catering to very different audiences. The press that had emerged by the 1940s was primarily city-based; most newspapers served the African American population of one city and its surrounding areas. As such, each publication tended to focus on local issues. In the geographically diverse United States, northern publications were therefore different to those of the Southern states. The fact that they were city-based is also important when considering their potential audience. The African American press and its readership had grown rapidly in the inter-war period in conjunction with the black migration to the north. This period of migration resulted in an increasingly urbanised, consumer-oriented industrial workforce. Long-term improvements in literacy rates had increased interest in and therefore demand for newspapers. By the 1930s, most major cities had at least one dedicated newspaper.

It is almost impossible to know the full reach of the press, and determining precise sales figures is highly problematic, as Doxey Wilkerson noted in 1947, most African American newspapers lasted less than twenty years, and their production was often a relatively informal process. Wilkerson did estimate that, by the late-1940s, African American newspapers across the United States had a net circulation of around 1,800,000.[[341]](#footnote-341) This further demonstrates the existence of a politically literate and engaged African American population that was interested in socio-political developments, and it also highlights the potential audience that newspapers were targeting. As Gunnar Myrdal noted in 1944, ‘the importance of the Negro press for the formation of Negro opinion, for the functioning of all other Negro institutions, for Negro leadership and concerted action generally, is enormous.’[[342]](#footnote-342) How African American leaders used the press to forward their arguments, especially in relation to Africa, varied over time, in response to changing political and social contexts.

Coverage of Africa in the early years of the black press was not generally presented in an emotive or argumentative fashion. Through the 1920s, stories about Africa were broadly dispassionate or educational, in keeping with what Charles A. Simmons saw as a desire by editors to ‘deliver the news as... straight as possible, even if strong emotions were involved in the story... [the] news was generally a serious business. The editors were serious men...’[[343]](#footnote-343) African American editors were community leaders, and as such they modelled their work on that of their white counterparts, seeking professional respect through their strict adherence to ‘objectivity,’ that ‘great law of journalism.’[[344]](#footnote-344) It is interesting to note that Frank Luther Mott’s voluminous history of American journalism, first published in 1941, contains no references to the African American press, suggesting that this sought-after respect was not forthcoming by the 1940s.[[345]](#footnote-345) Those articles which covered African affairs tended to adopt an objective tone, and reported on events from an international affairs view, that is, how these stories related to the USA, not to African Americans.[[346]](#footnote-346) Other articles, often adopting the same dispassionate tones, sought to educate readers on the history of African Americans, including some aspects of African history. Limited access to higher education and the misrepresentation (or underrepresentation) of Africa in elementary education could be redressed through educational pieces about the history of the continent and its peoples. Such coverage served multiple purposes: it sought to spread knowledge of Africa, to redress the absence of black history in the classroom and to promote a positive image of African Americans. The promotion of pride in race did not necessitate drawing a direct connection between African Americans and African history, yet it was a tactic that was used repeatedly to demonstrate a ‘proud past,’ by numerous publications. This further demonstrates the importance of ‘Africa’ in the African American imagination as it was used to provide a source of legitimacy and validation, and even honour, to newspaper readers.[[347]](#footnote-347)

Coverage of the 1935 Italian invasion of Abyssinia marked a major shift in the style of reporting, drawing the distant conflict directly into the realm of African American politics. It provides useful insight into the changing ways in which Africa was constructed and presented by the African American press. In November 1934, skirmishes broke out between Ethiopian militias and Italian-led Somalian troops in the disputed Ogaden region. Using the ongoing disputes as a pretext, Italian forces invaded Ethiopia in October 1935. The response of the international community was broadly condemnatory, with concern raised over the prospect of Italian expansion into British colonial territory and further aggression. The African American press response generally accepted this position, though the degree of condemnation varied greatly. *The New York Age,* a highly influential New-York-based weekly newspaper, adopted a relatively conservative approach to the issue, in keeping with its overall perspective. Reports on the crisis were short, containing only the bare ‘facts’. An article entitled ‘Italian-Abyssinian War Clouds Gather’ suggested that war was likely, as there had been a number of clashes which ‘caused both nations [i.e. Ethiopia and Italy] to protest to [the League of Nations].’[[348]](#footnote-348) The article went on to note that ‘[s]everal soldiers on both sides were reported killed.’[[349]](#footnote-349) The article focused on the concerns of the international community and the diplomatic efforts to defuse the situation, providing details on both sides of the conflict.

In contrast, the Baltimore-based *Afro-American* responded to the crisis with far greater passion, reflecting its established practice of more overtly politicised reporting, which encouraged readers to take pride in their race.[[350]](#footnote-350) In advancing a Garveyite understanding of the centrality of race in notions of self, it demonstrated in its reporting the role that ‘Africa’ played within such an imagining. After the Italian invasion of Abyssinia, *The Afro-American* actively encouraged readers to see a link between themselves and ‘Ethiopia’: it can be noted that the newspaper referred to the country by its ancient name of Ethiopia, as opposed to Abyssinia. Though Abyssinia was the official name of the country, this demonstrated a pride in African history and the refutation of the accepted Western/colonial name. More than this, however, the newspaper encouraged readers to volunteer and serve in defence of Ethiopia. On 23 February 1935, the headline ran ‘VOLUNTEERS FOR ETHIOPIA’, and across two pages, articles discussed support for Abyssinia, the willingness of African American veterans of the First World War to support the government there, and even letters from readers proclaiming their desire to defend a country of historical greatness.[[351]](#footnote-351) One such letter to the editor states:

Unconquered Abyssinia, whose rich oil lands Italy wants – and apparently intends to fight for – was powerful when the Book of Genesis was written, and was Christian when millions of white people worshipped Thor and Odin… If war comes the Abyssinians will fight for their rights against a selfish world power…[[352]](#footnote-352)

The potential war that was developing was, the newspaper suggested, an honourable one, defending the freedom and dignity of Ethiopia and by extension, the global African community. *The Afro-American* was not unique in characterising the conflict in such a manner. The *Pittsburgh Courier* contained a similar message, publishing numerous letters from readers who wanted to volunteer their services.[[353]](#footnote-353) Unlike *The Afro-American*, however, the *Pittsburgh Courier* also published letters dismissing the notion of a shared experience between the diaspora and Ethiopia. In a letter condemning both the educational standards of African Americans and the connectedness of their experiences, one letter-writer asked rhetorically: ‘how many Negroes in America know anything at all about Abyssinia?…. About 80 per cent could associate no meaning with the word Abyssinia. As Negroes we should be ashamed.’[[354]](#footnote-354) The newspaper’s articles indeed strongly encouraged the perception of the war as an issue of concern to the wider ‘Negro’ race, not simply a colonial issue.[[355]](#footnote-355)

After the initial conflict in Ethiopia in 1934-35, reports on the crisis slowed down as the newspapers turned to other stories to keep their readers interested. Nevertheless, the press continued to report on major incidents and events in the territory.[[356]](#footnote-356) Abyssinia provided an opportunity for the African American press not only to expand its reporting on Africa, but also to use ‘Africa’ to promote a particular notion of African American life. It is perhaps telling that around the same time that the invasion of Abyssinia began, a series of articles in *The Pittsburgh Courier* was run, entitled ‘Your History’ and carrying the tagline: ‘your history dates back beyond the cotton fields of the South; back thousands of years before Christ.’[[357]](#footnote-357) This series explored historical African and diaspora leaders and their great deeds, connecting readers with a global black experience identified by its positive qualities. Beginning in 1935, the articles continued to appear weekly until the 1960s, demonstrating the ongoing efforts of some to establish the connections between Africans of the diaspora and the continent in a single narrative, and reinforce the need for combined action to resolve the issues they faced.

*The Crisis Newsletter*

As the African American press adapted its understanding of political participation to include a Pan-Africanist narrative of African affairs, it demonstrated the widening influence of Pan-Africanist ideas. To fully understand both the extent of this influence and the more nuanced development within the press of how representations of Africa changed to become increasingly political, it is beneficial here to consider a different sort of African American publication. *The Crisis,* the newspaper produced by the NAACP, differed from the wider African American press as it sought to promote the policies and ideology of a political organisation. It was not a business independent of the NAACP, and whilst it raised advertising revenue to fund organisational activities, it was not published to make a profit. However, *The Crisis* is noteworthy precisely because, despite the NAACP’s relatively moderate, nationally-defined, political orientation, its newspaper nonetheless reflected the same interest in ‘Africa’ displayed in the wider African American press. A closer analysis of this publication will better demonstrate the ways in which the deployment of ‘Africa’ changed, showing how characterisations of ‘Africa’ progressed from an educational tool to a political issue. It also provides another interesting example of the dual function of the African American publications as both educational and opinion-forming.

Established in 1910, *The Crisis* initially reflected the position of its founder WEB Du Bois, who took personal control over the publication and indeed clashed with other NAACP board members regarding its content and purpose. Whilst the majority of the board wanted the publication to represent and advertise the organisation, Du Bois argued it should have a broader purpose, serving as a newspaper of African American affairs, and on this issue Du Bois won.[[358]](#footnote-358) By this point in his career, Du Bois had demonstrated only a limited interest in African history and affairs, but had yet to engage in any form of ‘radical’ Pan-African activism (see Chapter 1). The newspaper therefore reflected the moderate, liberal position of both Du Bois and the NAACP in its first issue:

Its editorial page will stand for the rights of men, irrespective of color or race, for the highest ideals of American democracy, and for reasonable but earnest and persistent attempts to gain these rights and realize these ideals… In the absence of proof to the contrary it will assume honesty of purpose on the part of all men, North and South, white and black.[[359]](#footnote-359)

As Du Bois’ interest in Africa became increasingly pronounced in the 1920s, this found limited expression in *The Crisis*. It published a growing number of articles both on pre-colonial African history and on contemporary political events in the African colonies. However, these were rarely ‘radical’ political pieces. Instead they maintained an impartial tone, reflecting their perceived educational value. Even after Du Bois’ departure from the NAACP in 1934, *The Crisis* continued its coverage of African affairs, suggesting the popularity of the subject amongst readers went beyond the enjoyment of Pan-African rhetoric, and the idea of a parallel between political change in African America and in Africa itself.

In its first year of publication, *The Crisis* was being sold in every state, as well as a number of foreign countries.[[360]](#footnote-360) A few years later, circulation in the USA was estimated at over ten thousand, a rate higher than any other African American newspaper.[[361]](#footnote-361) By 1955, the NAACP had over 300,000 members, and readership numbers increased in line with this.[[362]](#footnote-362) Whilst circulation cannot be extrapolated to calculate the number actually reading the newspaper, it is clear that *The Crisis* was being read by many African Americans. Its stories and reviews, editorials and essays kept its readers engaged with a number of issues. As such, *The Crisis* was clearly in a position to both educate readers about, and to shape opinions of, Africa. Its reports clearly demonstrate the importance of Africa: its articles detailed the wrong-doings of the colonial powers and, after 1945, lavished praise on the emerging nationalist movements there.[[363]](#footnote-363)

An examination of *The Crisis* in the period between 1930 and 1945 demonstrates the influence of Pan-Africanism through this interest in Africa, and the attention given to non-colonial states such as Abyssinia and Liberia and the historical civilisations of Africa. The level of attention paid to Africa by *The Crisis* was far greater than that paid to other areas of the world, for example Asian and Middle Eastern colonies, which received little attention in comparison, and this had the effect of suggesting the importance of Africa in the African American imagination. In encouraging an interest in pre-colonial African history, the newspaper promoted a form of race pride that connected African Americans with a positive past of a pre-colonial and a pre-slavery Africa. It thereby encouraged NAACP members to disown the ‘false history’ taught by white Americans that their ancestors were barbarians or savages. In May 1924 for example, Du Bois dedicated a section of his ‘Opinions’ column to Liberia, characterising negative portrayals of the country as the work of colonial interests in West Africa. Liberia was of particular interest in African American circles, the territory having been purchased in 1821 as a place of return for freed slaves. After 1847, control of the territory was transferred from the American Colonization Society to the local Americo-Liberian elite (the decedents of returned freedmen). For Du Bois, and many others, the success of the state was proof of the potential of the diaspora.[[364]](#footnote-364) He wrote: ‘If Liberia fails this justifies slavery, serfdom, autocracy and exploitation of a race “incapable” of self-rule.’ Describing a meeting with a friend, a ‘race man,’ Du Bois explained how this negative propaganda was being uncritically accepted by African Americans: ‘He was quite unconscious of any wrong. He was a “friend” of Liberia – a member and lover of the Negro race. But in his sub-conscious mind Liberia connoted something grotesque and comic. What greater proof is wanted of the success of English and French Propaganda?’[[365]](#footnote-365) By connecting African American consciousness and colonial propaganda and domination, *The Crisis* drew readers’ attention to the continental aspect of Pan-Africanism, and thus challenged their acceptance of Western or white interpretations of ‘their history.’ Similarly, Du Bois suggested that Africans of both the continent and of the diaspora had been misled by white power, thereby linking the struggles that both faced. It is important to note, however, that this belief was not explicitly stated outside of Du Bois’ opinion pieces, and the newspaper was not itself overtly propagandistic in tone, especially with regard to Pan-Africanist or ‘radical’ ideas. The publication generally championed political activism but overall remained a moderate force. Thus Du Bois could present his own opinion, but *The Crisis* would not necessarily endorse it.

However, this approach began to change in the 1930s (in line with the broader socio-political changes occurring in the USA), and it was increasingly clear that in the pages of *The Crisis*, ‘Africa' was considered to be a constituent part of the African American identity. In its coverage of the Italian-Abyssinian conflict, *The Crisis* followed a similar path to the *Pittsburgh Courier* and *The Afro-American* in criticising the actions of Italy and the failures of the international community. It was a journalist for the *Courier,* J.A. Rogers,who wrote the most damning article in *The Crisis’* February 1935 issue. Rogers stated that: ‘Every Abyssinian knows that Italy means to seize their country if she can… What now of England and France? It was commonly reported that both had agreed to give Mussolini a free hand against Abyssinia.’ [[366]](#footnote-366)  Two months later, George Padmore, the leading Trinidadian Pan-Africanist and later organiser of the Manchester Pan-African Congress in 1945, argued that this was a race issue as much as a political one. He wrote in *The Crisis*: ‘It is well known that the Ethiopians… are the only… [nation] which have ever defeated white powers at arms. This has not been forgotten by the Italians, and for that matter, by the white race.’ Going on to quote a number of European newspapers’ characterisation of Abyssinia as a ‘gander to the white race,’ Padmore argued: ‘we mention this fact only in order to show that the most liberal whites can adopt a hostile attitude towards colored peoples when it suits their purposes. About this let us have no illusions.’[[367]](#footnote-367) Here, in its clearest statement to that point, *The Crisis* directly highlighted the perceived relationship between Africans of the diaspora and events on the continent. As Frank Füredi has noted, the Abyssinian conflict became a *cause celebre* within the diaspora, and the response of the diaspora press was ‘probably the first instance of a Third World-wide reaction to an instance of Western intervention.’[[368]](#footnote-368) The coverage provided by *The Crisis* was thus not entirely unique, but its significance was in the sea-change of the treatment of African affairs within the black press. After 1935, this new approach became the established one, with events in Africa drawn on in increasingly political terms to influence understandings of African Americans affairs.

The growing importance that black newspapers in general and *The Crisis* in particular placed on Africa was not limited to news stories. Most issues of *The Crisis* contained a book section, in which numerous history texts, many on pre-colonial history or slavery, were reviewed. For example, the July 1945 issue included a review of Eric Williams’ *Capitalism and Slavery*.[[369]](#footnote-369) This seminal book focused on the crucial role of slavery and the slave trade in the development of the British and American economies in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and used empirical data to explain the crucial role that slavery had played in the emergence of the global economy. The reviewer (J.A. Rogers again) wrote: ‘Mr Williams shows better than I can recall ever having seen what the New World owes to the Negro.’[[370]](#footnote-370) Although Williams himself stressed that the book’s aim was to consider the slave trade dispassionately and objectively, Rogers characterised the book as a study of race pride, and used the review to demonstrate the connection between African Americans and America’s economic development, in turn suggesting that the book was demonstrative of a history of which they could be proud.

The gradual politicisation in the characterisation of Africa in the pages of *The Crisis* was increasingly apparent by the late 1930s. In February 1938, Padmore wrote an article about an agrarian strike by cocoa farmers in the Gold Coast*.* Padmore identified its cause as the unfair prices imposed by the colonial authorities, and drew attention to some of the strike leaders, including early nationalist leader Sir Nana Ofori Atta I.[[371]](#footnote-371) Padmore refrained from emotional pleading on behalf of the strikers. The article was as much about the wrongdoings of the colonial authorities as it was about their actions, but no parallels were drawn with the conditions of African American labour. This was a foreign situation in which the diaspora had no direct role. He did however write that meetings were held across the Gold Coast ‘for the purpose of discussing ways and means of defending [the strikers] against imperialist oppression.’[[372]](#footnote-372) The article thereby made it clear that the issue was not simply one of agricultural economics but rather the very nature of the colonial enterprise, broadening its relevance beyond the specific issues at stake. Still couched in the language of moderation and ‘objectivity,’ this article nevertheless drew the geographically distinct struggles for better treatment into the same sphere.

As has been discussed previously, the impact of the Second World War on African American political thought was truly profound. In its aftermath, *The Crisis* became increasingly emotive, making explicit connections between the emergent anti-colonial protest movements across Africa and the African American campaigns for civil and social equality. In 1945, Harold Preece captured the new atmosphere perfectly when he wrote about industrial action in Nigeria: ‘The organized workers of Nigeria recently challenged that pseudo-civilization known as imperialism in a ten-week general strike and won the first battle of a major world struggle which can never be resolved until Africa becomes a continent of free nations instead of a sub-world of oppressed colonies.’[[373]](#footnote-373) The newspaper increasingly suggested that the African movements could provide both support and inspiration for civil rights activities in the United States.[[374]](#footnote-374) After the 1951 Gold Coast elections, *The Crisis* enthusiastically reported on the changes taking place. The reporter was again Padmore, but a striking change in his approach to Gold Coast politics is apparent. Far from simply reporting the story, he wrote:

The recent sweeping victory of the Convention People’s Party under the leadership of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, one of the ablest politicians this country has produced, has only served to dramatize the long struggles of the Gold Coast Africans for national freedom, and economic emancipation of the country from foreign domination under British Imperialism.[[375]](#footnote-375)

Padmore, a self-proclaimed Pan-Africanist, certainly had good reason to promote an image of African liberation, but this article also suggests the changing role of Africa in the collective consciousness of African America. In a similar tone, Derek Ker wrote in January 1957 that ‘In the British Commonwealth itself Mr. Nehru in India, Mr. Nkrumah in the Gold Coast, Dr. Azikiwe in Nigeria tower as symbols of the new spirit of racial equality challenging the old forces of racial inequality…’[[376]](#footnote-376)

With Africa ‘on the march,’ *The Crisis* now indicated the important role that African Americans had to play in the emergent struggles for national independence in Africa. In April 1953, the editorial pages identified the hypocrisy of US support for freedom for those in Eastern Europe whilst colonial powers denied it to Africans:

Color still plays a prominent role in international politics. America and Great Britain, two of the most powerful members of the “Free World,” bring to their dealings with the non-European world a mentality inherited from the masters in a slave society. Washington, the capital of the “Free World,” for instance, is the most thoroughly jim-crow capital in the world. African and Asian victims of Washington hospitality often turn up at the NAACP seeking explanations for such bad manners on the part of a great democratic people.[[377]](#footnote-377)

The editorial characterised the struggles of the anti-colonial African nationalist movements as part of a global race question, directly linking the suffering of peoples in the colonial world to the daily experiences of the diaspora in the ‘free world’.

By the time that Ghana gained independence on 6 March 1957, the idea that Africa could provide inspiration for African American protest movements was firmly established. In the April 1957 issue of *The Crisis,* the NAACP published an official letter addressed to the new state, hinting at how the organisation viewed this achievement: ‘We are,’ wrote President of the organisation Roy Wilkins, ‘confident that Ghana will play a significant role in the family of nations and will give further inspiration and encouragement to *peoples* and to countries yet to achieve their freedom.’[[378]](#footnote-378) In the same issue, Padmore wrote in a similar tone:

I am confident that it [Ghanaian independence] will do for the Negro liberation movements what Tom Paine’s Common Sense did for the Americans in their most difficult period of revolt against British Colonialism – give faith, confidence and inspiration to the Africans in other parts of the continent who are still struggling to achieve democratic rights, racial equality and self-determination.[[379]](#footnote-379)

As the US Civil Rights Movement gained momentum during the first decade of independence, Ghana was constructed in the pages of *The Crisis* as a model for activism and a source of inspiration and encouragement for African Americans.[[380]](#footnote-380)

By analysing *The Crisis*, it is clear that over time, the relationship between the diaspora in the United States and Africans of the continent, as experienced by the newsletter’sreadership, evolved significantly. Africa was a subject of interest for the African American press from its earliest manifestations, but the nature of this interest had changed. In its earliest forms, Africa provided an opportunity to educate readers about the wider world, and to implicitly challenge the dominant ideas of African American history and politics. As the decolonisation process propelled Africa into the international limelight, *The Crisis* reflected the growing importance of ‘Africa’ in African American communities. Parallels between the treatment of colonised Africans and African Americans were drawn more explicitly. Rather than simply reporting on events in colonial Africa, reporters and journalists suggested a common experience, highlighting the fraternity they increasingly believed to exist between African Americans and Africans.

These changes in the public discourses on ‘Africa' were mirrored by the personal experiences of two hundred African Americans who would move to Gold Coast/Ghana in the years from 1951 to 1966. The newspaper narratives that transformed Africa from a foreign entity to a brother-in-arms also played out in the stories of individuals who documented their journeys. The following section will examine the ideas and experiences of a select group of these émigrés, in the period before they left for Ghana.

Individual Trajectories and Pan-Africanist Paradigms

As the previous section has demonstrated, the distance and sense of foreignness that typified characterisations of ‘Africa’ in the African American pressprior to the 1930s gave way to the increased expression of fraternalism with the continent in the 1950s. These press representations did not happen in isolation, and were reflective of broader changes within society. Individual experiences of Africa must therefore also be considered when examining the impact of Pan-Africanism. The increasing coverage of African affairs, and the changing tone of this coverage, was indicative of a broader change in individual perceptions of the struggle for civil rights, race issues, and the relationship between Africa and her diaspora. As such, understanding how individuals responded to ‘Africa’ is of vital importance. Just as Pan-Africanism played a crucial role in explaining the relationship for the press, individuals engaged with the meta-narrative in a similarly fashion.

The impact of Pan-Africanism was, as discussed above, manifold. It influenced understandings of the relationship between the continent and the diaspora, but it also provided a framework in which the relationship between black and white could be understood. As such, the press coverage of ‘Africa' provided a tool with which individuals could reinforce particular understandings of the continent and Pan-Africanism. For most African Americans, such reports were simply a curiosity, which at most reinforced perceptions of the injustice of the African American situation. For others, however, these reports on African affairs, particularly of anti-colonial activity and the promise (and then realisation) of political independence, reinforced their own views on the relationship between African liberation and their own. Some of these African Americans would take this engagement as inspiration, leading them to move to Ghana after the country achieved independence in 1957.[[381]](#footnote-381)

The following section examines this group of émigrés, in particular the motivations that lay behind their decision to leave. To reduce their reasons to a simple meta-narrative – that of Pan-Africanism – overlooks the complexity of the individuals concerned, as well as the nexus of ideas, experiences, beliefs and interactions, upon which each individual based their decision to migrate. Some broad overlapping ‘perspectives’ or paradigms can be identified as influencing and informing the decisions of many of them, but to understand how and why they did migrate careful analysis of the individual explanations is required. This study therefore utilises the views and experiences of a select group of individuals to develop an understanding of how such motivations were articulated and informed by specific constructions of Africa and interpretations of Pan-Africanism. It should however be stressed that the categories used here are inevitably somewhat artificial: individuals often presented multiple reasons and overlapping interests. By examining three such interpretations, this section will show that Pan-Africanism was deployed by these individuals, both to organise beliefs and ideas in an ideological framework, and to explain events and processes. Whether consciously or sub-consciously, those involved drew on specific interpretations of Pan-Africanism to understand the world around them. As such, Pan-Africanism provided both validation and legitimisation for a closer association with Ghana. These exemplars will highlight the overlapping interests shared by Pan-Africanists from a variety of social, political and economic backgrounds, and how they were galvanised by the changing political landscape in African generally, and in Ghana in particular.

*Pan-African Leadership: W.E.B. Du Bois and George Padmore*

The Pan-African leaders hitherto discussed have been those who made strong contributions to Pan-Africanist ideas and organisation. However, this is a relatively narrow interpretation of leadership, as the term can also refer to charismatic figureheads who, despite limited contributions to the content of the meta-narrative, achieved organisational positions in Pan-African institutions. These two sub-divisions of leadership were not mutually exclusive, and some figures combined more traditional political leadership with an element of celebrity status, as demonstrated by Marcus Garvey. The individuals who were cast in this leadership role were integral to the reimagining of ‘Africa', the development of Pan-Africanist thought, and their application in politics and society.

W.E.B. Du Bois is the best example of a towering individual who straddles the two definitions. Still regularly characterised as a, if not *the*, leader of Pan-Africanism, Du Bois made seminal contributions to both Pan-Africanist philosophy and practice, not least the Pan-African Congresses.[[382]](#footnote-382) Aside from the Manchester Pan-African Congress, at which he was elected President, Du Bois was not a leader of Pan-African institutions or organisations, but his leadership was undoubted. George Padmore, whilst not as celebrated as Du Bois, was nevertheless a leading figure in the promotion of Pan-Africanism. [[383]](#footnote-383) His entry into politics was through communism, but, in keeping with the ideological shifts of the mid-twentieth century outlined in Chapter 1, he was drawn to Pan-Africanism beginning in the 1940s. Through his journalism, Padmore consistently highlighted and supported African nationalist movements and the struggle for independence, and it was through this work that his status grew.

It would be reductionist and indeed misleading to suggest that, because of their ideological convictions, Pan-Africanist leaders constructed an argument which required the return of the diaspora to the continent. The act of relocation was not necessarily a constituent part of the meta-narrative, even if the idea of ‘return’ was popular. For example, Garvey himself, after being deported from the United States in 1927, did not move to Liberia, as his ‘Back to Africa’ campaign encouraged followers to do. Rather, he travelled between the West Indies and England, continuing in his effort to organise the diaspora until his death in 1940.[[384]](#footnote-384) Any physical move to Africa was a voluntary choice which depended on individual outlook and circumstance. This then raises two questions. Firstly, why did both Du Bois and Padmore, whose prominence was firmly based on their profile in the West, choose to move to Africa? And why did they choose Ghana as their new home?

In Du Bois’ case, the first question is particularly instructive. Having established a connection with Nkrumah at the Manchester Congress, Du Bois developed an increasingly close relationship with the CPP leadership that came to power after the 1951 elections.[[385]](#footnote-385) Through his work at historically Black colleges in the United States, Du Bois had developed an extensive network of contacts, including Nkrumah, and Ebenezer Ako-Adjei, the future Ghanaian Minister of the Interior (1957-1958) and Foreign Affairs (1961-1962). [[386]](#footnote-386) This network also drew in other African and diaspora Pan-Africanists such as Thurgood Marshall, who spent time working for Jomo Kenyatta in Kenya, and Horace Mann Bond (who will be discussed later in this chapter). Through his work with the Pan-African Congresses, Du Bois could count among his contacts, friends and followers, an increasing number of African Pan-Africanists and political activists.

Through this network Du Bois was at the forefront of attempts to draw closer relations between African Americans and Africans, though as mentioned above, this was not developed for the purpose of encouraging migration. The relationship grew in importance after 1951, when Du Bois was indicted and tried for his associated with the left-wing Peace Information Center. Though the organisation had ceased to function by the time of the trial, Du Bois found that his increasingly radical politics were meeting fierce resistance not only from the federal authorities, but also from the black middle classes, the Talented Tenth which he had previously extolled. The established civil rights organisations and liberal political groups no longer tallied with what Du Bois believed was necessary for the amelioration of African and diaspora suffering.[[387]](#footnote-387) Increasingly, Du Bois looked further afield, to international associates for support and encouragement. This endeavour was further supported by Ghanaian independence. The prestige that Ghana’s ruling elites garnered from its success in becoming the first independent sub-Saharan African state drew international acclaim. Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah presented himself and the Ghanaian state as the voice of Africa, drawing on Pan-Africanist ideas to do so. By presenting independent Ghana as *the* Pan-African heart of Africa, Nkrumah not only provided a platform from which African American Pan-Africanist leaders could express their political views, but also the potential to organise a new ‘wave’ of international Pan-Africanist activity. His commitment to Pan-African ideas also provided a state-based legitimacy that had previously been missing from Pan-Africanism, especially those in the United States. Giving Pan-Africanism a new status as an official doctrine in political debates and discourses encouraged the emergence of a favourable political climate that could be utilised by Du Bois. This was especially true as the climate of Cold War anti-radicalism swept through US politics, further isolating and aggravating the increasingly left-leaning Du Bois. As Levering Lewis has aptly demonstrated, the 1951 trial had left Du Bois bereft of support from the Talented Tenth, but in its aftermath he continued to rail against the federal government, and Presidents Truman and Eisenhower.[[388]](#footnote-388)

However, it was not simply that Nkrumah created an environment that was conducive to these leaders’ worldviews. He actively courted them, inviting them to Independence Day celebrations and other high profile events, such as the 1958 All-African Peoples Conference in Accra (see Chapter 4).[[389]](#footnote-389) By encouraging them to leave the diaspora and come ‘home’ to Africa, Nkrumah sought to bolster his own position within African circles and international political affairs by association with these figureheads and political icons.

By 1957 however, Du Bois was an elderly man who had, by and large, retired from public life in the United States. His ongoing difficulties with the US authorities and the NAACP were followed by the apparent desertion of his long-time friends and supporters.[[390]](#footnote-390) Unlike Garvey, Du Bois had never premised his conceptualisation of Pan-Africanism on physical return, so moving to Africa was not an obvious alternative to the political isolation he experienced. He did not, for example, accept Nkrumah’s invitation to the Ghanaian independence ceremony. The US authorities had seized his passport, ostensibly to prevent him travelling to the Soviet Union. However, in a letter sent in May 1957, Nkrumah encouraged Du Bois to visit Accra: ‘I think of you often and look forward to the day when I can chat with you – person to person.’[[391]](#footnote-391) Nkrumah inferred that Du Bois was himself delaying an envisaged move to Ghana, by refusing to co-operate with the US authorities to attain travel papers.

From their perspective however, by lending their prominence and celebrity to the Pan-African project being pursued in Ghana, Du Bois and Padmore had an opportunity to put their convictions into practice. They were presented with an opportunity to influence government policies, and to study and understand the consequences for Ghana, Africa, and the diaspora.[[392]](#footnote-392) Du Bois did therefore eventually relocate to Ghana with his wife in October 1961, to begin work on an *Encyclopaedia Africana,* which was to be the culmination of his life’s Pan-Africanist ambition.

George Padmore was markedly different from Du Bois in both his interpretation of Pan-Africanism and his activism, but Robert E. Jones has noted some interesting parallels between the two leaders in terms of their intellectual development. Both men were consistently politically active, yet their interest in Africa was a relatively late development.[[393]](#footnote-393) For Padmore, Pan-Africanism was preceded by communism as a means of explaining race relations.[[394]](#footnote-394) Born Malcolm Nurse in Trinidad in 1903, Padmore moved to the USA in 1925 to study dentistry at Fisk University (a historically black college). However, and for reasons unknown, he instead moved to New York and joined the CPUSA, opting to study Law at New York University (though he never completed a degree). His vocal support for ‘the class and interracial ideas’ of communism led to him playing a crucial role in supporting communist organisations across the USA and indeed Europe as well.[[395]](#footnote-395) He came to work for the Red International of Labour Unions (Profintern), the Soviet-sponsored international trade union organisation. In 1931, he wrote, in terms remarkably similar to Du Bois’ later statement on the ‘psychological wage of whiteness,’ that an international socialist response would provide the greatest benefits to Africans and the diaspora, even in comparison with pre-existing labour organisations:

The white worker, in many cases even to-day, still regards the Negro as a pariah, and scornfully refuses to stretch out a helping hand to his black brother… A long and bitter struggle has been waged by the Profintern against this psychology of “white superiority.” Day in and day out, year after year, the Profintern has raised the Negro problem before its affiliated sections… sharply condemning any and all manifestations of white chauvinism.[[396]](#footnote-396)

Whilst Du Bois’ experiences of race relations led him first to Pan-Africanism and then increasingly towards communist theories later, Padmore’s first-hand experiences of the failures of communism to deal with race effectively led him to abandon the ideology in favour of a race-centric paradigm. James Ralph Hooker’s work, although somewhat outdated, remains the strongest analysis of Padmore’s transformation from Communist promoter to Pan-African organiser.[[397]](#footnote-397) He identifies the experience of explicit racism, and the failure of communist supporters and allies to address these instances of racism and imperialism, as the cause of Padmore’s growing interest in Pan-Africanism.[[398]](#footnote-398)

Such instances became indicative, in Padmore’s mind, of a much wider problem that could not be overlooked. He increasingly saw race as a core component of all power relations, and imperialism as the political manifestation of that racism.[[399]](#footnote-399) Thus Padmore believed, and vociferously argued, that communist governments and organisations had to offer material support to anti-colonial movements around the world before any communist economic models could truly work.[[400]](#footnote-400) The Soviet Union’s failure to actively support the anti-colonial movements, and Padmore’s unauthorised activities in this regard, led to his dismissal from the communist movement, and the Soviet Union, in 1934.

After his departure from the Soviet Union, Padmore was unable to return to the USA, and instead relocated to London where he reconnected with childhood friend C.L.R. James, a Pan-Africanist organiser and founder of the International African Friends of Ethiopia, established to raise support and funds for Ethiopia in the wake of the Italian invasion. Padmore and James jointly ran the organisation, subsequently converting it into the International African Service Bureau (IASB). Through the organisation, and James’ allies and supporters, Padmore established a network of colleagues that included labour activists, anti-colonial intellectuals, and the upcoming generation of African nationalists. For the next decade, Padmore published numerous works exposing the racist underpinnings of colonialism and stressing the role of the diaspora in supporting African independence.[[401]](#footnote-401) In attempting to further this cause, Padmore and the IASB set about organising the fifth Pan-African Congress, to be held in Manchester in 1945. A letter of introduction from C.L.R. James brought Padmore and Kwame Nkrumah together, and the two worked closely organising the Congress. Nkrumah later fondly recalled the time they spent working on the Congress together:

We worked day and night in George’s flat. We used to sit in his small kitchen, the wooden table completely covered by papers, a pot of tea which we always forgot until it had been made two or three hours and George typing at his small typewriter so fast that the papers were churned out as though they were being rolled off a printing press.[[402]](#footnote-402)

After the Congress, Padmore remained a vocal supporter of Nkrumah, viewing the man as a revolutionary leader and the embodiment of his hopes for Africa, the diaspora, and even for socialism. After Nkrumah’s return to the Gold Coast in 1947, Padmore maintained a close relationship with the rising star of African politics, offering support and advice. He continued to publish anti-colonial pamphlets and books, which now had the endorsement of Nkrumah and other African nationalist leaders.[[403]](#footnote-403) Padmore’s commitment to African independence, through advocacy of immediate self-rule and in his continuing support for the actors engaged in the anti-colonial struggle, was by the early 1950s absolute.[[404]](#footnote-404) Though he remained convinced of the need for socialist economic policies to ensure progress, independence had to come first, and therefore so too did Pan-Africanism. This transition from communism to Pan-Africanism was signalled most clearly in 1956, with the publication of Padmore’s most famous work, *Pan-Africanism or Communism.*[[405]](#footnote-405) In November 1957, Padmore moved to Ghana to take up a position as advisor to the Prime Minister.

*Pan-African Scholarship: Horace Mann Bond and St. Clair Drake*

The intellectual activity that characterised the early stages of Pan-Africanism not only continued amongst later generations, it arguably involved a larger number of thinkers. Whilst pioneers like Du Bois were seen as the intellectual founders of Pan-Africanist thought, increased access to higher education meant that, by the mid-twentieth century, a growing number of university-level researchers further articulated Pan-Africanism’s positive imagining of ‘Africa’ in relation to the changing social and political landscape of Africa. For scholars and academics, the rapid changes taking place in Africa were not only a subject of great interest and worthy study; for some, they allowed for a happy combination of academic research and political activism. Ghana was in the forefront of this change: under Nkrumah’s leadership, it welcomed scholars, encouraging them to contribute their knowledge and skills to the nation-building project.

These scholars were not always as politically active as Pan-Africanist leaders, but they identified with and were inspired by the African ‘winds of change’ in the late 1940s and 1950s. Focusing on Africa as an area for study and for development, they engaged in what they saw was a positive programme of research and innovation which was intended to enrich both the African and diaspora experiences.

By the late 1940s, one such figure, Horace Mann Bond, was already firmly established as a leading academic in the field of education. He had held prestigious positions at Dillard University in Louisiana (1934-1939), Fort Valley Normal and Industrial School (now Fort Valley College) in Georgia (1939-1945), and Lincoln University, Pennsylvania (1945-1957). Throughout his career, Bond sought to highlight the struggles of African Americans. In 1934, he relocated his young family to rural Mississippi to study Black education and deprivation. Whilst he was conducting his research, the lynching of a local African American forced Bond to reconsider the purpose of the research. He wanted to use the published research to broadcast the suffering and struggles of African Americans to a much wider audience.[[406]](#footnote-406) In public debates on education and politics, Bond sought to demonstrate the systemic inequalities – in education, society, economics, law, employment and politics – which shaped African American experiences. Bond was not, however, active in Pan-Africanist circles, nor did he ever identify himself as a Pan-Africanist. Indeed, he is best known for his work in relation to the CRM. His research into African American life was cited in the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) case in which the Supreme Court ruled in favour of school integration.[[407]](#footnote-407) His work did however bring him into contact with a number of Africans who studied in the USA, including Nkrumah, and throughout his career he maintained good relations with his former students.

Bond first met Kwame Nkrumah when he accepted the position of President at Lincoln University in 1945.[[408]](#footnote-408) This meeting resulted in a close friendship, and Bond came to be a part of the academic circle with which Nkrumah continued to engage after his successful return to the Gold Coast.[[409]](#footnote-409) Bond was clearly a well-connected man. Through his academic career, he worked with a range of well-respected African American scholars. Wayne Urban points to his keen interest in the development of African American political movements, and his opinions on W.E.B. Du Bois, as evidence of his developing pan-Africanism.[[410]](#footnote-410) The relationship between Bond and Du Bois was however far from straightforward; despite his clear respect for Du Bois, Bond regularly disagreed with the latter’s interpretation of the problems facing African Americans, and they often found themselves on opposing sides of debates. Bond reported to a colleague that Du Bois had apparently described Bond as ‘that well-known reactionary and tool of American imperialism.’[[411]](#footnote-411) Nevertheless, Bond’s continued respect for Du Bois, and, more importantly, his emphasis on considering the relevance of Africa in any examination of the African American situation highlights the often indirect way in which Pan-Africanist ideas influenced a wide range of African Americans.[[412]](#footnote-412) In 1950 he wrote an essay reflecting on a recent trip to Gold Coast and Nigeria about the state of affairs in the USA for African Americans:

What could I say for America in a public meeting when asked about the lynching of my fellows of African descent? Or about the well-known differentials in school expenditures throughout the Southern United States? … It is a poor American, I think, who in a foreign land, runs down his country’s reputation; and yet there are certain obligations to the truth.[[413]](#footnote-413)

Bond clearly saw the need to represent the USA in Africa as a benevolent force, and African Americans as the best representatives of the country to Africa. Though he embraced the American aspect of his identity, Bond was clear in his conviction that African and African American struggles were the same, and the two populations would be made stronger through cooperation.

Bond’s regard for African experience was reinforced by his lengthy and numerous research trips to the continent; Norton counts more than sixteen separate visits to Africa from 1957 onwards.[[414]](#footnote-414) Many of these visits were to Ghana, where he was offered a position as an advisor to Nkrumah, with an invitation to join a committee investigating possible changes to the curriculum at the University of Ghana in 1960.[[415]](#footnote-415) He took on this position, alongside a number of other African American academics, excited to implement his ideas and methods.[[416]](#footnote-416) He went so far as to request the assistance of the US State Department in convincing the President of Atlanta University to allow him a sabbatical for this position, arguing that it may be ‘a matter of importance, both to Atlanta University, and to the American Nation, that I do so serve.’[[417]](#footnote-417) Bond’s interests in Ghana can thus be understood as both academic in nature and supportive of his interpretation of US national interests. It was undoubtedly underpinned by Pan-Africanism and a belief in the shared past and future of Africans and the diaspora, but it was justified in scholarly and patriotic terms. He intended, at least ostensibly, to promote positive relations between Ghana and the USA, and certainly not to abandon the USA altogether.

Bond’s increasing interest in Africa was, as stated, far from unique amongst African American intellectuals. His close friend, St. Clair Drake, established a similar connection with Ghana, and in so doing, drew more explicit connections between his academic work and the political aspects of Pan-Africanism.[[418]](#footnote-418) Drake, a noted sociologist and anthropologist, was one of a number of academics who, from the 1940s onwards, developed an ideological position that would later be identified with the Black Power Movement, but which in this periodt was certainly located in Pan-Africanist ideas of race unity and pride. It was his scholarly interests that led to his being employed as Head of the Department of Sociology at the University of Ghana, from 1960 to 1962.

Compared to Bond, Drake was much more actively engaged in US politics. Where Bond’s focus on research had the effect of aiding the general fight for racial equality, Drake drew on his own personal experience of racial abuse in the South and institutionalised racism in the North as a basis for political action. The role of Pan-Africanism in this regard is apparent in how he conceived of political action. Unlike many other African American ‘radicals’ in the inter-war period, Drake did not join the Communist Party, though he certainly recognised the importance of communism in that period, and he was publically criticised for this decision. Noted communist supporter Harold Preece wrote, in a published letter to the editor of *The Crisis,* that ‘…I do think that Negro workers might do worse things than joining a political organization of their class. They might subscribe, for instance, to the evasive pacifism of Mr. Drake; and be drafted into the ranks without a lot of preliminary annoyance for the War Department… I would rather entrust my hope of life to Mr. Browder [General Secretary of the US Communist Party] and his followers than to Mr. Drake and his allies.’[[419]](#footnote-419) He understood the benefits of labour organisation and recognised the potential relevance of race-blindness for African American political progress. He, however, saw the improvement and growth of African Americans as necessarily premised on recognition of racial equality and the promotion of the black ‘race’, an argument advanced by Garvey and the UNIA. His academic research in the 1940s reflected these ideological convictions, as he incorporated both leftist and Pan-African notions in explaining the social and economic inequalities he observed.[[420]](#footnote-420) In *Black Metropolis* (1946)*,* a study co-authored with Horace R. Cayton, these ideas can be seen in his explanations for African American deprivation in 1930s Chicago. Though the research presented a contemporaneous study of African American deprivation, it linked historical race relations, and the treatment of African Americans since emancipation, with the current struggles they faced.[[421]](#footnote-421)

His scholarly work led Drake into contact with the emerging group of post-1945 African political leaders. Whilst undertaking research in Britain in 1947, Drake became part of Nkrumah’s network of diaspora supporters. During his stay, he was introduced to Padmore, whose work had inspired Drake, and whose conversion to Pan-Africanism undoubtedly encouraged Drake’s own interest in the subject.[[422]](#footnote-422) The two men quickly became friends, and Drake credited Padmore as being responsible for his interest in the meta-narrative.[[423]](#footnote-423) Padmore in turn introduced Drake to Nkrumah’s work and ideas, and Drake began questioning, as Padmore had, the merits of Communism in light of these new ideas.[[424]](#footnote-424)

It was however almost a decade later that Drake finally met Nkrumah himself. His entry into Ghanaian life and politics came through academia, and a substantial grant he received in 1954 to study media and decolonisation in Africa.[[425]](#footnote-425) Bond wrote a letter of introduction to Nkrumah for Drake, highlighting his commitment to Pan-Africanism and describing him as ‘a staunch friend of Africa, devoted to its interest…’[[426]](#footnote-426) Clearly trusting Bond’s opinion, Drake was then asked by Nkrumah to recommend other high-profile African American scholars who should attend the Independence Day celebrations in Accra.[[427]](#footnote-427)

Horace Mann Bond and St. Clair Drake represented Pan-Africanism through their research interests, but in very different ways. Both specialised in subjects and fields that focused on the US, yet both were increasingly attracted to Africa, drawing comparisons between the drive for independence and African American civil rights activity. Together they turned their research towards Africa, seeking to construct a singular discourse in which the daily experiences of racism faced by African Americans, and the increasingly active anti-colonial nationalist movements across Africa, could be compared and analysed. Bond focused principally on the improvement of educational standards for the global black population, which did not necessarily require unity of purpose or action between the continent and the diaspora. Despite his clear support for Ghana, and respect for Pan-Africanism, he did not identify himself as a Pan-Africanist. Drake referred to him as ‘Brother Bond, Comrade in non-violent arms,’ and himself as ‘Comrade Drake (consciencism style),’ in reference and respect to Nkrumah’s ideas.[[428]](#footnote-428) But these were Drake’s phrases and ideas, not those of Bond. Conversely, Drake’s Pan-Africanism grew out of a Garveyite interest in race pride, evolving to support an expression of interest in the potential for transnational black activism that provided the roots of the Black Power Movement.[[429]](#footnote-429) Drake’s sustained commitment to Pan-Africanism and Nkrumah is perhaps best demonstrated by his continuing support for Nkrumah after the popular coup that removed him from power in February 1966.[[430]](#footnote-430)

*Pan-African Activism: Julian Mayfield and Maya Angelou*

The passion that Drake displayed for the articulation and practical demonstrations of race pride on a global scale was not restricted to only those who worked in academia. As demonstrated above, Drake was emblematic of a growing element within the African American population which strongly identified with the anti-colonial movement in the Gold Coast as a source of inspiration in facing their own struggles, both personal and political. Drawing on Garvey’s race pride strand of Pan-Africanism as a way of understanding the changing world around them, Pan-African activists attempted to galvanise a politico-cultural activism to promote race equality and unity based on a global understanding of blackness.

A good example of this approach to Pan-Africanism can be found in the story of Julian Mayfield. A relatively obscure figure, Mayfield spent almost five years in Ghana from 1961 to early 1966.[[431]](#footnote-431) His life before moving to Ghana is representative of the struggles faced by many African Americans who supported radical change. During the late-1940s and 1950s, Mayfield demonstrated a remarkable flexibility in his ideological perspective: various strands of Marxism, black separatism, and for a time even integrationism, provided him with ways of explaining the suffering of African Americans and for potentially changing their situation. This flexibility and broadly considered approach is best demonstrated in his novel *The Grand Parade,* in which various characters put forward very different political suggestions for improvement.[[432]](#footnote-432) Achievements such as Indian independence (1947) and the Cuban Revolution (1953-59) provided new perspectives and models with which Mayfield sought to understand the changing situation in the United States, and new methods of social and political organisation. His involvement with the Harlem Writers’ Guild in the 1950s and the activities he undertook in supporting Robert Williams (discussed below) demonstrate engagement with elements of Garvey’s race pride perspective. Mayfield’s opposition to integrationist politics and non-violent protest did not remove his interest in the general campaign for civil rights. In his published works prior to 1961 he spoke highly of those engaged in the fight for equality, even if he disagreed with the methods they used.[[433]](#footnote-433) In *The Grand Parade,* Mayfield’s fictionalised account of the struggle for integration in a Southern city, moderate politicians and civil rights organisations are the central force behind the push for integration, and the communist characters are portrayed as too extreme and indeed detrimental to the future of civil rights.[[434]](#footnote-434) He was genuinely impressed by the efforts made by the NAACP and other civil rights groups, and celebrated each major achievement. These successes, he argued, were not a result of government action, or even organisational pressure. Rather, they were the result of mass African American agitation from the bottom up. In characterising the movement in such a manner, Mayfield linked this mass participation to the experiences of the anti-colonial movements and ideas of liberation.[[435]](#footnote-435)

Given his support for radical politics, it is unclear what motivated Mayfield to engage with the NAACP, and join its local branch in Monroe, North Carolina, in the late 1950s.[[436]](#footnote-436) It may be explained by Mayfield’s relationship with the branch President, Robert Williams, an early pioneer of the Black Power Movement. Whilst the national platform of the NAACP encouraged non-violent engagement and peaceful protest, Williams told his members to arm themselves for self-defence in the racially divided town.[[437]](#footnote-437) Mayfield clearly supported this position, as he participated in bringing arms into Monroe for members to use, and later said of the branch: ‘Its members and supporters, who are mostly workers and displaced farmers, constitute a well-armed and disciplined fighting unit.’[[438]](#footnote-438) Such a radical departure from the NAACP’s normal moderation placed both Williams and Mayfield in the FBI’s searchlight.[[439]](#footnote-439) Racial unrest and tension sparked periodic violent clashes in Monroe and in 1961, with a warrant issued for his arrest, Mayfield and his wife Ana Livia Cordero were forced to flee the United States. They went first to the UK, and then to Ghana, where Mayfield was given a position in the office of the Prime Minister. It was not however until he left the United States that he began to demonstrate with greater clarity his understandings of Garveyism, race, and racial pride (see Chapter 5). Williams’ declaration that, after having fled to Cuba in 1961, he experienced ‘the only freedom I have ever known,’ could equally well describe the feelings of Mayfield when he arrived in Ghana that same year.[[440]](#footnote-440)

Like Mayfield, Maya Angelou’s relationship with Pan-Africanism was defined primarily by her interest in race identity and pride, which developed over a long period. Although she never declared herself a Pan-Africanist, the arguments and ideas she engaged with certainly demonstrate the influence of Pan-Africanism. Through her series of autobiographies, the details of Angelou’s early life are well known, and do not need recounting in detail here.[[441]](#footnote-441) Born Marguerite Annie Johnson in Missouri in 1928, she travelled across the USA working as a singer, dancer and writer. It was in her writing that she began to consider notions of race and the socio-political future of African Americans. Hoping to further her writing career, she moved to New York in 1958 and joined the Harlem Writers Guild. It was here that she first met Julian Mayfield, and began establishing a network of writers and activists around her that helped to develop her sense of political identity and introduced her to the activities of civil rights organisations. In 1960, after meeting Martin Luther King Jr. and hearing him speak, Angelou became involved with the Southern Christian leadership Conference (SCLC), becoming the northern coordinator for the organisation. Her engagement with the SCLC and the Harlem Writers Guild also brought her into contact with international campaigners and issues, and it was in this period that Angelou began her anti-Apartheid campaigning activities.

In 1960, whilst still in New York, Angelou met South African Pan-Africanist freedom fighter Vusumzi (Vus) Make, and having begun a romantic relationship with him, she and her son Guy moved to Cairo, to support Make’s ongoing work in the anti-Apartheid movement. Though her passion for political activism is rarely apparent in her published work, it is clear from the decision to relocate her family that there was a strong desire to support political campaigns and to participate in the ‘African revolution.’ Mary Jane Lupton has suggested that the very act of travelling to Africa provided Angelou with a sense of purpose and certainty about herself and her beliefs, as reflected in the pages of *The Heart of a Woman.*[[442]](#footnote-442) As such, the first stage of Angelou’s period in Africa is vital in understanding her particular understanding of Pan-Africanism whilst in Ghana. Moving to Cairo was for Angelou a demonstration and reinforcement of the unity of African and diaspora experience. Her actions in Cairo furthered her belief in Pan-Africanism. Though she discusses it in less than one page, she recounts attending an Afro-Asian Peoples’ Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO) meeting, an indicator of the politicised nature of her life in Cairo.[[443]](#footnote-443)

Angelou’s relationship with Make was a troubled one; though she was deeply unhappy at times, she made the most of her time in Cairo, and two developments indicate her engagement with Pan-Africanism and how it framed her experiences. Throughout her stay, she was active in working with the community of African freedom fighters and revolutionaries that Make worked with. Within weeks of arriving, Angelou was ‘occupied with introductions to freedom fighters from Uganda, Kenya, Tanganyika, North and South Rhodesia, Basutoland and Swaziland. Diplomats from already-independent African countries dropped by our apartment to meet Vus Make’s American wife…’[[444]](#footnote-444) Angelou sought to immerse herself in the political scene of which she had become a part, though she did not see herself as a revolutionary activist. Rather, Angelou recalls wanting to participate in a supporting role, ‘trying to be all things to everybody.’[[445]](#footnote-445) This role was enhanced by her decision to continue working, despite Make’s opposition, as a journalist for a Cairo newspaper.

Ultimately it was the collapse of Angelou’s relationship that caused her to leave Egypt in June 1962. However, she did not return to the USA, instead choosing Liberia as her new home. This again suggests that because of Pan-Africanist ideas of home and unity, Angelou perceived a benefit to staying in Africa. Describing the journey from Cairo, she wrote:

I was mourning all my ancestors. I had never felt that Egypt was really Africa. Now that our route had taken us across the Sahara, I could look down from my window seat and see trees, and bushes, rivers and dense forest. It all began here… Here, there, along the banks of that river, someone was taken… America’s period of orgiastic lynchings had begun on yonder broad savannah.[[446]](#footnote-446)

Whilst stopping over in Ghana to help her son Guy settle before starting university, he was involved in a serious car crash, and Angelou was forced to postpone her move to Liberia. Ultimately, she would reside in Accra for four years.

Conclusion

This chapter has investigated African American attitudes towards Gold Coast/Ghana and Africa in the Post-Second World War period, demonstrating the steady reduction of distance, space and experience between the African American diaspora and the Africans of the continent during this period, and the increasing prominence of the Gold Coast/Ghana in this process. The role played by the African American press in disseminating information about Africa placed its journalists and reporters in a position to shape attitudes. *The Crisis’* own position in relation to Africa itself changed substantially. Articles written in the 1930s generally characterised Africa as distant and foreign to the African American experience. This reflects the popular perceptions among leading African Americans, discussed in Chapter 1. As political changes in Africa and social changes in the United States took hold in parallel, the new self-awareness amongst African Americans after the Second World War was reflected in the increased number of stories about Africa in *The Crisis*. This reflected the relatively sudden prominence of Africa in international affairs, and the increased interest in the continent that developed among a broad spectrum of African Americans. Along with an increased quantity of stories, their tone also changed. Padmore, already developing a reputation as a leading Pan-Africanist, articulated most clearly the changing relationship that African Americans had with Africa. On the attainment of Ghanaian independence, he wrote about the country, its peoples and its leaders with a familial tone, emphasising their achievements with the air of a proud family member. The space that had divided Ghana from the diaspora was shrinking, and the media reporting on it both reflected and reinforced this change.

The changes that occurred in the African American press were paralleled in the changing lives and experiences of individual African Americans. These changes encouraged a small number of individuals to move to Ghana; some were self-declared Pan-Africanists, whilst others were excited to see and support African states achieving independence and development. Pan-Africanist leaders saw the new Ghanaian nation-state as an opportunity, where they could promote their ideas without fear of state reprisal. With this freedom, and with the support of the Ghanaian state, they could influence policies and direct what appeared to be a leading part of a wider Pan-African project.

Academic curiosity led men like Horace Mann Bond and St Clair Drake to travel to Africa, but it was an additional political commitment that led them to settle there, albeit temporarily. Ghana provided them with new opportunities: they could engage with the state and its nation-building project in a manner denied to them in the United States because of their race. Likewise, activists such as Julian Mayfield and Maya Angelou saw Ghana as a place where their race would not count against them. Like Drake and Bond, they wanted to contribute to Ghana’s nation-building project; unlike them however, Angelou and Mayfield would struggle with the dichotomy he identified between the United States and Ghana.

The individuals discussed above were of course part of a larger group of African-American émigrés who sensed the atmosphere of hope and opportunity in Ghana even before they arrived. Yet from the start, the disjuncture between two meta-narratives, Pan-Africanism and nationalism, would generate problems for this émigré group. All felt the powerful potential of Pan-Africanism, and saw participation in Ghana’s state-building projects as central to turning Pan-Africanist ideals into reality. At the same time however, they generally found themselves participating, not in Pan-Africanist projects as such, but rather national Ghanaian ones. The next chapter will consider how the independent government of Kwame Nkrumah used Pan-Africanism in the formulation of domestic and foreign policy, and how the experience of independence informed a continually evolving understanding of the meta-narrative. How these émigrés responded to life in Ghana and Nkrumah’s changes will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

**Chapter 4. The Politics of Independence and Pan-Africanism, 1957-1966**

*At long last, the battle has ended!  And thus, Ghana, your beloved country is free forever! … We are going to demonstrate to the world, to the other nations, that we are prepared to lay our foundation - our own African personality… We have won the battle and again rededicate ourselves ... OUR INDEPENDENCE IS MEANINGLESS UNLESS IT IS LINKED UP WITH THE TOTAL LIBERATION OF AFRICA.*

* Kwame Nkrumah, Independence Day Speech (1957)

On 6 March 1957, Nkrumah took to the stage at the Old Polo Grounds, Accra, to announce the attainment of Ghanaian independence to the nation and the world. Ghana’s Independence, he argued, would be meaningless unless it was combined with the complete independence of Africa. This reference is often cited as evidence of Nkrumah’s consistent commitment to Pan-Africanism. However, such a statement overlooks both the complexity of Pan-Africanism, and the fact that Nkrumah’s own interpretation of the meta-narrative, as well as of nationalism, was in an almost constant state of evolution. Throughout the period running up to Independence, Nkrumah had downplayed the central role that Pan-Africanism would play in his rule, though it remained a pillar of his political worldview. Indeed, his autobiography, published just one year before Independence, made no use of the phrase ‘Pan-Africanism.’[[447]](#footnote-447) After Independence, his interpretation of Pan-Africanism continued to evolve, in response to the rapidly changing world around him. The ‘winds of change’ that swept across the continent in the years after Ghana’s independence brought into existence a number of rival states and ideologies that threatened Nkrumah’s position as *the* leader of African liberation. The Cold War’s increasing influence in Africa likewise challenged his ambitions. Domestically, the opposition presented a serious threat to the legitimacy of his rule, forcing him to respond.

At three interlinked levels - international, continental and national - Nkrumah was forced to contend with challenges, threats and rivalries, that all influenced his continual reconstruction of Pan-Africanism. These changes were often subtle, and were partly disguised by Nkrumah’s insistence on the constancy of his Pan-African vision and ambitions. However, when the period of Nkrumah’s rule is examined as a whole, it can be seen that there was a process of reconfiguration of Nkrumah’s Pan-Africanism, and as a result, a reinterpretation of his linked notion of nationalism, that only ended with his removal from power in February 1966. This chapter will examine the various events and actors that caused Nkrumah to redefine Pan-Africanism, identifying three phases of distinct change. The first phase, from Independence to the end of 1959, was defined by the limited use of Pan-Africanism and the promotion of nationalism as the guiding meta-narrative in Ghana. The second phase, from approximately 1960 to 1964, was characterised by a discernible shift from moderate nationalism to an emphatic Pan-Africanism taking centre-stage as the meta-narrative that was driving Ghana’s government policies. The third and final phase, from late 1964 to the coup in 1966, was characterised by an increasingly embattled Nkrumah developing Pan-Africanism and nationalism into an intertwined narrative, placing himself at its centre. Taking a broadly chronological approach, this chapter shows that during his time in power, Nkrumah was often forced into processes of reconceptualisation, to which he responded with remarkable ideological flexibility. Ultimately however, his ousting from power in the 1966 Coup demonstrated the limited political effectiveness of this changing deployment of Pan-Africanist ideas.

## Establishing the National Agenda: Independence and the Wider World, 1957- 1960

As has been discussed, the period from the 1951 elections to Independence in March 1957 was a relatively successful period of transition. It is worth briefly reflecting in this period’s impact on Nkrumah’s view of the world into which he entered as the first post-colonial African leader. To the public at least, the transition to independence had indeed been a remarkably smooth one. As Frederick Cooper has argued, the Gold Coast had appeared to be the model late colony: it undertook gradual development intended to encourage Africanisation of the local levels of governance with a gradual increase in indigenous responsibility, leading ultimately to full independence, initially envisaged as taking place over a period of decades.[[448]](#footnote-448) This model had briefly appeared to be in jeopardy with Nkrumah’s return and the establishment of the CPP. However, despite the move away from traditional, elite-based modes of politics, Nkrumah, his government and the CPP demonstrated a willingness to work with the colonial authorities within the framework of colonial law to advance the cause of what became a rapid process of decolonisation after the 1951 election.[[449]](#footnote-449)

Whilst Nkrumah maintained some degree of radicalism in his arguments over the timing of decolonisation, he proved to be far more flexible on other key issues than the British had expected, such as economic development and international politics.[[450]](#footnote-450) Britain’s post-war redevelopment plans required good relations with former colonies. Despite Nkrumah’s earlier radicalism, it seemed by March 1957 that Britain had secured an ally in the newly independent Ghanaian Prime Minister. Nkrumah’s apparent pragmatism in negotiating self-government had appeased anxieties in British political circles, and strengthened Nkrumah’s own self-perception. Having won over the British press and public at independence, he entered the business of government with conviction in his manifesto, his governing abilities, and his ideological ambitions.[[451]](#footnote-451)

In the first months after Independence, Nkrumah presented himself and Ghana as seeking friendly relations with the world. He claimed in 1958 that, ‘…in Ghana there is ease and naturalness of contact and genuine mutual respect between people of different races. It is not a forced thing. Visitors coming from other parts of Africa have been impressed by the atmosphere they find of good will and confidence.’[[452]](#footnote-452) Ghana was presented as a moderate, cordial state that sought only to uphold its own independence and sovereignty and defend its non-alignment in the context of the Cold War, whilst promoting openness and friendliness in international diplomacy. Nkrumah expressed this balance in both anti-colonial and racial terms when he stated that ‘[we] certainly do not intend to project into our foreign policy a racialism we do not practise at home. But we cannot accept racialism in reverse and reconcile ourselves to the prolonged rule in Africa of minute minorities of alien stock.’[[453]](#footnote-453)

This image of openness and a cautious diplomatic approach in the immediate post-independence period was reflected in the limited emphasis on Pan-Africanism. Few of Nkrumah’s pre-election Pan-African proposals were elaborated. Few references were made to Pan-Africanism, and where it was brought up, it was couched in the language of orderly decolonisation and moderate political ambitions. The Volta River and Tema Port projects, discussed below, reflected instead a discursively deployed nationalism with underlying potential Pan-Africanist benefits. The dominant paradigm at this time was nationalism: the effective creation, maintenance and running of a newly independent nation-state in a framework that was, if not overtly western in perspective, then certainly flexible enough to avoid antagonising either side in the Cold War division of the world. In his autobiography, published in 1957, Nkrumah made virtually no reference to Pan-Africanism, instead focusing on national issues and stressing the need for internal unity as a first step towards further continental integration. In the preface to his autobiography, Nkrumah wrote ‘Independence for the Gold Coast was my aim,’ summarising his reasons for establishing the CPP and joining the fight for independence. Significantly, though, Nkrumah ends the preface intimating the importance of Pan-Africanism whilst avoiding the phrase altogether: ‘[the Gold Coast’s] independence will be incomplete… unless it is linked up with the liberation of other territories in Africa… Our example must inspire and strengthen those who are still under foreign domination.’ [[454]](#footnote-454)

This limited Pan-Africanism has been accurately characterised by Scott Thompson as a pragmatic reflection of Ghana’s need for economic investment for industrial development projects, and the increased emphasis on the nation in this early period after independence.[[455]](#footnote-455) Nkrumah’s flagship projects, the Volta River hydroelectric dam and the Tema port expansion, required major external funding and technical support.[[456]](#footnote-456) Nkrumah therefore focused his efforts on the Western powers, which were willing to give greater financial support than the Eastern Bloc. This resulted in a reduced emphasis on Pan-African unity andanti-colonial agitation. Nkrumah could not risk isolating himself at a time when his success as the leader of a newly independent state was tied to his ability to deliver on the promises he had made at Independence. The modernisation of Ghana was a key part of Nkrumah’s plans to reduce dependency on foreign imports and increase and diversify Ghana’s economy.[[457]](#footnote-457)

This reliance on foreign support did not, however, exclude Nkrumah’s long-term Pan-Africanist ambitions. Secondary to these immediate national aims was the hope that Ghana would become the model of African modernisation, a model which would free the continent from dependency on foreign aid and imports. Nkrumah was conscious of Ghana’s relatively weak position – a small country lacking the natural resources of states like South Africa or Nigeria.[[458]](#footnote-458) Rapid industrialisation would help offset this weakness and provide Nkrumah with a model of modernisation which he could conceivably encourage other post-colonial states to adopt. This aim, couched as it was in the language of nationalism, actually constituted a continuation of Pan-Africanism in Nkrumah’s political world-view rather than its absence. His moderation in international affairs did not then signal a remarkable shift in his ideological position, but rather a recognition of national weakness that required the temporary downplaying of Pan-African ideas to secure economic support.

This position was clearly reflected at the June 1957 Commonwealth Prime Ministers Conference, held in London. Nkrumah’s presence at the Conference as the first independent leader of a former African colony, and his interactions with other participants, was truly significant. *The Manchester Guardian* reported:

… members on both sides of the House [of Commons] – even those who wonder how stable the independent state of Ghana will prove to be – have fixed their interest for the moment in the fact that the first British dependency in tropical Africa is to become a full member of the Commonwealth. And everybody with a sense of history and a feel for politics finds this development exhilarating.[[459]](#footnote-459)

The Conference confirmed these expectations, and the participation of the Ghanaian delegation was deemed a success by the British government and by the press. In discussions over economic development in the Commonwealth, Nkrumah supported the British position on free trade relations, and although there was concern in Britain over Ghanaian nationalisation plans, this did not upset the overall course of the meeting.[[460]](#footnote-460) Indeed, it was the pursuance of a free trade relationship with Commonwealth member states by Britain that was considered the most remarkable outcome of the meeting, and removed the certainty of British investment in Ghanaian development was no longer certain. The shift in economic relations that Colin Legum noted was important for Ghana, as it meant that major funding would potentially have to come from elsewhere, with no guarantees that the former colonial power would provide financial support for the development projects. As a result of these potential changes, the paradigm through which Nkrumah framed his requests gained greater importance. [[461]](#footnote-461)

The Commonwealth conference seemed to confirm to Western observers that Nkrumah would prove a reliable leader who might guide other British colonies into a Western-oriented independence.[[462]](#footnote-462) M.S. Rajan noted that the links between Commonwealth members were based around British leadership, something which, at the time of the meeting, Nkrumah was apparently willing to follow.[[463]](#footnote-463) However, this perception was challenged relatively quickly, in Nkrumah’s vision of the United Nations and interpretation of Ghanaian non-alignment.

As noted above, Nkrumah had sought to establish Ghana as a moderate force in the divided global politics of the late 1950s, one which was assertive of both its independence and its non-aligned position. In contrast to newly independent states such as India however, Ghana’s approach to non-alignment did not preclude mutually beneficial relations with capitalist countries, and particularly for Britain, it reinforced the former colonial power’s identity as a benevolent and still-powerful leading nation.[[464]](#footnote-464)

Non-alignment was certainly not a new principle in international politics.[[465]](#footnote-465) Much like Pan-Africanism, it functioned as a political meta-narrative rather than a programme, allowing a variety of interpretations. Nkrumah’s participation in the Bandung Conference in April 1955 was a precursor to his later commitment to non-alignment and the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) after Ghanaian independence. The Final Communiqué of the Bandung Conference demonstrated the commitment of ‘Third World’ leaders towards the UN Charter as the foundational document for independence and anti-colonial action. It included the following resolutions:

1. Respect for fundamental human rights and for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations…

4. Abstention from intervention or interference in the internal affairs of another country…

5. Respect for the right of each nation to defend itself singly or collectively, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations…[[466]](#footnote-466)

However, Bandung also presented a challenge to Nkrumah’s interpretation of non-alignment, which differed from that of its leading proponents, Nehru and Nasser, as well as many other Third World leaders and ‘radicals.’[[467]](#footnote-467) The Bandung resolutions captured the regional imbalance that existed between African and Asian states and struggles. There had yet to be a successfully decolonised African state, but there were a growing number of Asian and Arab states in the process of gaining their independence. As such, these states and their organisations were given primacy within the resolutions, thus creating an apparent imbalance that would have serious long-term consequences for the movement and its members.[[468]](#footnote-468) The focus on Asian and Arab struggles did not directly reflect the dynamics of the growing independence movements in sub-Saharan Africa, symbolised by the Gold Coast, represented at the Conference and well on its way to independence. As a result of this, Nkrumah increasingly saw leaders such as Nasser as a challenge to his regional leadership, rather than a colleague in a global struggle.

Following independence, Nkrumah’s version of non-alignment, as presented by Ghana’s UN delegation, was certainly characterised by a remarkable degree of flexibility on voting matters and a refusal to blindly follow the voting patterns of either Britain or the leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement.[[469]](#footnote-469) Nkrumah distinguished between ‘non-alignment’ and ‘un-alignment’. The difference, he argued, was that non-alignment did not preclude a state from engaging with either capitalist or communist governments, whereas un-alignment required total disengagement from both.[[470]](#footnote-470) This distinction caused concern to leaders of the NAM. Both Gamel Nasser and Jawaharlal Nehru made non-alignment a core tenet of Egyptian and Indian foreign policies, interpreting this as a clearly anti-capitalist and anti-Western position; at the UN both countries regularly voted in opposition to Britain and the USA. Nkrumah’s acceptance of British and American leadership on certain issues ensured that, whilst he clearly asserted Ghana’s independent foreign policy, he did not challenge Western interests at this critical stage in Ghana’s national development.

The role of the United Nations as a vehicle for the advancement of Africa in global affairs has consistently been highlighted by scholars as a fundamental aspect of the decolonisation process. [[471]](#footnote-471) Ghana’s entry into the UN signalled a shift in the organisation’s direction and function.[[472]](#footnote-472) Aside from apartheid South Africa, the only other African members of the UN were North African states, whose main interests lay with the Arab world, or western-aligned states such as Ethiopia and Liberia.[[473]](#footnote-473) Ghana’s admission in 1957 placed post-colonial sub-Saharan Africa on the world stage in a dramatic fashion. This reflected Nkrumah’s conviction that the UN could and should be used as a forum for promoting African interests at the international level, asserting what he referred to as the ‘African personality.’[[474]](#footnote-474) Nkrumah had great hopes for UN leadership in global diplomacy, and sought to utilise it to advance a united African policy under Ghanaian leadership.[[475]](#footnote-475) In this regard, as in other aspects of his early foreign policy, Ghana maintained a non-aligned position at the UN.

This initially appeared to be an effective approach: Nkrumah’s leadership and moderate Pan-Africanist discourse was reflected in the formation of the Africa Group of UN member states. This allowed for greater concert in foreign policies and the presentation of a united front in the fight against colonialism and foreign domination. David Kay noted that between 1955 and 1969, ‘the African states [had] concentrated their attention in the United Nations almost exclusively upon questions of decolonization and economic development’, a ‘pattern of concern [which] was placed with great forcefulness before the Organization.’[[476]](#footnote-476)

The Africa Group was particularly influential in the refocusing of the UN towards a more balanced global perspective which incorporated Africa. The increased number of African representatives (together with other post-colonial nation-states) resulted in greater UN acknowledgement of the right to independence. Above all, the Africa Group demanded greater recognition of the inviolability of newly independent states.[[477]](#footnote-477) The very active Ghanaian delegation reinforced Nkrumah’s reputation as a non-aligned moderate, unwilling to ‘take a side’ prior to debates, and voting with a remarkable degree of flexibility.[[478]](#footnote-478)

In December 1957 and January 1958, a conference intended to maintain and advance the momentum and spirit of the Bandung moment was held in Cairo.[[479]](#footnote-479) The Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference was promoted as ‘the peoples’ Bandung.’ Nasser asserted during this conference that he saw the Arab and African struggles as united, but it was made clear that the Arab and North African states took primacy in the arrangement.[[480]](#footnote-480) The conference led to the establishment of the Afro-Asian Peoples’ Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO), based on the resolutions defined at Bandung and reiterated in the Cairo Declaration.[[481]](#footnote-481) The AAPSO was an Arab-dominated organisation, though it claimed to be the legitimate authority to speak on behalf of the colonised peoples of sub-Saharan Africa as well. Because Egypt bridged the geographical and political space between the Middle East and Africa, this led Nasser to claim the authority to speak on behalf of both. Although the Ghana delegation to the Cairo conference supported the formation of AAPSO, it quickly became apparent that Nkrumah would not accept Nasser’s unchallenged leadership of an Afro-Arab bloc. Nkrumah, in challenging Nasser, trod a diplomatic tightrope. On the one hand, Ghana’s reliance on Western aid meant it dissented from Nasser’s radical positions on international affairs. On the other hand, Nkrumah, seeking to position himself as the leader of Africa on the world stage, had to rival Nasser’s anti-colonial rhetoric, as he could not risk distancing himself from the clear anti-colonial position of other African leaders, most of whom had of course not yet achieved independence.

Nkrumah however skilfully maintained this difficult position through clever diplomacy and the judicious application of limited Pan-Africanism. During 1958, he sought to credibly position himself as Africa’s leader on the world stage without emphasising radical policies that would alienate the Western powers. This process began with Ghana’s hosting of the Conference of Independent African States (CIAS) in April 1958. The event was hailed in the press as a landmark occasion, not just for Ghana but for all of Africa.[[482]](#footnote-482) Bringing together the leaders of all eight independent African states to focus specifically on African affairs, the CIAS was an official state event intended to show the world that Ghana and its leader would take the leading role in defining Africa’s position on the world stage.[[483]](#footnote-483) The CIAS was however affected by the growing division between Nasser and Nkrumah, which (together with other issues) hampered cooperation between its participant states.[[484]](#footnote-484) The CIAS nevertheless presented a new image of Nkrumah, advancing his positioning of Ghana as a guide for anti-colonial movements across Africa. As Nkrumah had written in his autobiography:

It is our duty as the vanguard force to offer what assistance we can to those now engaged in the battles that we ourselves have fought and won. Our task is not done and our own safety is not assured until the last vestiges of colonialism have been swept away from Africa.[[485]](#footnote-485)

Nkrumah’s more assertive anti-colonial image was further advanced and legitimised by the second major conference held in Accra in December 1958.[[486]](#footnote-486) The All-African People’s Conference (AAPC) was a far more radical venture than the CIAS, inasmuch as it aimed to foster collaboration between independence movements in colonies, rather than developing links between independent African states. The AAPC was to be a space in which Ghana would guide the remaining colonies to independence in the shortest possible time. The conference allowed Nkrumah to spread his influence amongst nationalist movements across Africa, successfully challenging Egyptian leadership in this regard. Unlike the CIAS, the AAPC was organised not by the Ghanaian state or government, but by the Convention People’s Party. By distancing the conference from Nkrumah’s position as Prime Minister, it allowed more radical declarations and resolutions to be passed without compromising Nkrumah’s international position.[[487]](#footnote-487)

The conference was widely publicised in the national press as a historic event, and in Pan-African terms, it deserved this accolade. Three hundred delegates were present, representing twenty-eight states and colonies, alongside numerous observers. The representatives were a combination of government officials, from independent states, and delegates from nationalist organisations in dependent territories. The overwhelming majority of the latter group were representatives from the leading nationalist groups, not from all such organisations.

George M. Houser, a white American civil rights activist, reporting back to the American Committee on Africa on the event, noted the presence of many African American observers, including Horace Mann Bond (representing the American Society on African Culture), and Du Bois’ wife, Shirley Graham Du Bois.[[488]](#footnote-488) Other high-profile African American observers included Alpheus Hunton, who would go on to work with Du Bois on the *Encyclopaedia Africana* project, and Maida Springer, active in both the CRM and the labour movement. Clearly this event was important to African American figures, many of whom saw it as an opportunity to extend help and support to the freedom fighters present.

Nkrumah’s greatest success was in bringing to Accra many of those who would become Africa’s first generation of independent leaders. Among these were Patrice Lumumba (Belgian Congo), Kenneth Kaunda (Northern Rhodesia), and Hastings Banda (Nyasaland).[[489]](#footnote-489) Most shared Nkrumah’s Pan-Africanist values, at least to the extent that they regularly engaged with the phrase ‘Pan-Africanism’ and supported the principle of continental unity.[[490]](#footnote-490) Despite Nkrumah’s misgivings about the inclusion of an Egyptian delegation, the AAPC organisers invited not only Egypt, but also a host of North African representatives. Nkrumah could, as a result, claim to be providing truly continental leadership. Kwame Botwe-Asamoah highlighted the AAPC’s importance when he wrote that ‘this meeting enabled Nkrumah to reinforce his personal relations with the nationalists. Ghana had become the “Mecca” of freedom fighters…’[[491]](#footnote-491)

In the years following the conference, Nkrumah built on these personal connections to establish a new machinery for supporting nationalist movements, based on resolutions passed by the AAPC. Discussions at the event focused on two key issues: armed resistance and means of support for freedom fighters. The issue of the use of violence to overthrow colonial regimes was raised in particular by representatives from settler colonies: South Africa, Southern Rhodesia , Kenya and Algeria.[[492]](#footnote-492) They argued that nationalist violence should not be forbidden or condemned in territories where Africans were the victims of habitual colonial oppression and violence, and where settler regimes had demonstrated an absolute unwillingness to negotiate with nationalist movements.

This presented a challenge to Nkrumah, whose engagement with non-violence and Gandhian philosophy had been a successful element in the decolonisation of the Gold Coast and which was celebrated in international circles. The careful wording of the AAPC Resolution regarding the use of violence reflected both his difficult position and a degree of skilful negotiation amongst numerous parties:

… The All-African People's Conference in Accra declares its full support to all fighters for freedom in Africa, to all those who resort to peaceful means of non-violence and civil disobedience, as well as to all those who are compelled to retaliate against violence to attain national independence and freedom for the people. Where such retaliation becomes necessary, the Conference condemns all legislations which consider those who fight for their independence and freedom as ordinary criminals.[[493]](#footnote-493)

The conference thereby clearly stated a preference for non-violent struggle, whilst declaring its ultimate support for those who resorted to violent means. Couched in the language of nationalism and liberation, it was at once a statement of intent and a declaration to the world that colonialism would be defeated at any cost.

In contrast, the means of supporting the ‘freedom fighters’ received great attention during the AAPC but was not resolved in its declarations.[[494]](#footnote-494) The participation of Western-aligned states such as Liberia encouraged caution in this regard.[[495]](#footnote-495) It was accordingly accepted that direct support (be it financial, political, or potentially military) for nationalist movements was a highly complex issue, with questions raised over the legitimacy of certain groups that made claims to represent ‘the people.’[[496]](#footnote-496) The consequent AAPC resolution did not specify any method or organisation that would be developed for this purpose.

However, Nkrumah, inspired by the AAPC discussions, now considered establishing a Ghanaian-based African-wide organisation dedicated to supporting freedom fighters across the continent.[[497]](#footnote-497) Nkrumah turned to his personal advisor, George Padmore, who was by this time living in Ghana and who had been closely involved in the organisation of the AAPC, to establish the Office of Advisor to the Prime Minister on African Affairs on a permanent basis, fully staffed and capable of organising support for freedom fighters. Padmore’s previous experience in regard to the Manchester Pan-African Congress gave him both organisational skills and useful connections, which would be put to good use in advising the Prime Minister in African affairs. More than this, his commitment to Pan-African unity and the overthrow of colonialism were reflected in both Nkrumah’s increasingly radical views and his orientation towards continental affairs.

Under the aging Padmore’s leadership, the remit of the Office of Advisor on African Affairs was expanded, growing in both the extent of its activities and in its influence over Nkrumah. However, Padmore’s death in September 1959 temporarily halted progress in this area.[[498]](#footnote-498) The following year, the organisation was given new life when it was rebranded as the Bureau of African Affairs (BAA), absorbing what remained of the AAPC as well as the staff from Padmore’s Office. Although it was an ostensibly independent organisation, the BAA received a regular budget from the government, and all its expenses were covered by either Black Star Shipping or the Ministry for Transport.[[499]](#footnote-499) Scott Thompson and Jeffrey Ahlman have both identified a government ‘slush fund’ which the Bureau regularly accessed.[[500]](#footnote-500) Whilst it would subsequently expand its operations well beyond its original remit, in this period the BAA was primarily focused on providing refuge at the African Affairs Centre in Accra for freedom fighters exiled from their home territories, and providing some degree of training in liberation tactics (the nature of this training will be addressed below).

The process by which groups were selected to attend the conference, or which were subsequently supported by the BAA, remains unclear. In the case of South Africa, the African National Congress (ANC) was refused travel documents (though some of its leaders, including Nelson Mandela, were able to slip out of the country to attend). As a result, as Ahlman has noted, Accra became a base for the South African Pan-African Congress (PAC).[[501]](#footnote-501) The PAC was at this point more openly committed to armed revolution in South Africa than the ANC, and publicly supported Nkrumah’s Pan-African ambitions; the ANC’s more moderate, non-racial strategy was influenced by its alliance with the South African Communist Party.[[502]](#footnote-502)

PAC activists influenced Nkrumah’s perception of events in South Africa, and groups from other countries similarly shaped the Prime Minister’s views of the wider African liberation struggle.[[503]](#footnote-503) They brought with them to Accra and the BAA accounts of violence against peaceful protestors and the suppression and arrest of protestors and radical groups, which shaped the views of Ghanaian leaders regarding the appropriate anti-colonial strategy to be adopted across the continent. Barden himself undertook a clandestine journey through South Africa on behalf of the BAA, returning to Ghana to report to the government and the press the grim realities of life under apartheid rule.[[504]](#footnote-504) They also helped persuade Nkrumah that non-violence was often ineffective in the face of colonial state violence. The narratives of African refugees in Accra also shaped Ghanaian knowledge of African affairs. Ahlman finds that Ghana’s lack of an intelligence network to complement the ambassadorial missions it was establishing across Africa forced it to rely on sources such as representatives of liberation movements.[[505]](#footnote-505) This arguably created a radically different image of southern Africa, establishing violence not as an option but as a prerequisite for achieving independence. In an address to the United Nations Association of Ireland in May 1960, Nkrumah noted, with specific reference to the settler colonies, ‘Ultimately, if the majority are oppressed, and degraded, in the way in which the majority of Africans are being treated to-day in Algeria and in the Union of South Africa and, indeed, in many other parts of the African continent, all government becomes impossible and the State which are [sic] practising oppression, disintegrate completely.’[[506]](#footnote-506)

By early 1959, Nkrumah’s understanding of Pan-Africanism, and his own self-perception, was going through a significant change. The success of Ghanaian decolonisation had encouraged his belief that he was a true statesman and representative of Africa. The relatively moderate position he had adopted in 1952 continued into post-independence international affairs, a pragmatic position given the need to attract national development funding, but one which potentially undermined Nkrumah’s leadership of Africa. This position was however increasingly complicated by shifting events in the worldwide non-aligned movement and what Nkrumah perceived as the leadership vacuum in African affairs. His attempt to fill this vacuum pushed Nkrumah towards a more continentally defined form of Pan-Africanism, though in this early stage he still refrained from directly engaging with radical Pan-Africanist and liberation groups, politics and countries.[[507]](#footnote-507)

The BAA did not achieve significant momentum until after the second All-African People’s Conference, held in Tunis in 1960. This reflected the growing importance that Nkrumah placed on continental affairs and the liberation struggle. [[508]](#footnote-508) The increased focus on continental affairs was caused by a number of factors, including a growing hostility towards the foreign press and frustration with the lack of developmental progress. Articles in the British press increasingly questioned Nkrumah and his policies, creating an image of a hostile, at times unstable, ruler, very different from the calm, moderate character they portrayed at Independence.[[509]](#footnote-509) Nkrumah’s hostility to this coverage was indicative of a deeper reaction, a growing resentment, against the West. At precisely this point, Western development funding was drying up.[[510]](#footnote-510)

In addition, Nkrumah appeared to be lacking a Pan-Africanist drive and ambition. He had, within the twelve months since independence, failed to translate his Pan-African rhetoric into measurable government policies. His failure to implement any Pan-African policy was the result of his two competing ambitions, to secure the financial future of his development plans and to secure his continental leadership against the increasing possibility that with a growing number independent African states, there would be a corresponding number of differing views about the future of Africa. Of greatest concern to Nkrumah’s advisors was the seeming impracticality of delaying any Pan-Africanist governmental arrangement until a full-scale continental government could be established.[[511]](#footnote-511) Even Padmore, prior to his death, became increasingly convinced that there should be some temporary measures, or stepping stones to pave the way for full continental unity.[[512]](#footnote-512) In the run-up to the CIAS, Padmore and several others began to consider alternative, arguably more practical Pan-African arrangements.

One such alternative was federations or regional grouping of states. This idea had already been implemented in the Middle East, with the establishment of the United Arab Republic (UAR) incorporating Egypt and Syria in January 1958.[[513]](#footnote-513) Some in Nkrumah’s close circle of advisors suggested a similar arrangement with like-minded states, such as Guinea. The former French colony achieved independence in October 1958 under the radical leadership of Ahmed Sékou Touré, but its opposition to France’s proposals for continued association with its former colonies led to diplomatic isolation and economic crisis.[[514]](#footnote-514) Nkrumah offered Touré, his friend and ideological ally, a sizeable grant to support Guinea through its immediate difficulties. In the search for a partner in Pan-Africanism, Guinea was precisely what Ghana needed – not only an ideological bedfellow, but also one financially bound to Ghana. Meetings to discuss and implement union began in late 1957, and on 23 November 1958, the two countries officially declared the formation of the Ghana-Guinea Union. The Union was however a weak attempt at Pan-Africanism, based on a constitution that required very little of the two countries. Ghana and Guinea were now linked in external affairs, but there was little to suggest that national sovereignty would wither away to eventually create a single constitutional entity.

It was nevertheless a symbolic commitment on Nkrumah’s part to the Pan-African dream of continental unity. That it was announced less than a month before the AAPC was no accident. Nkrumah was able to present himself at the conference as the leader of both African liberation and Pan-Africanism. By January 1959, Nkrumah had seemingly successfully re-crafted his image to that of an unquestionable powerful regional leader, prepared to sacrifice Ghana’s national development for the sake of Pan-African unity.[[515]](#footnote-515) His public interpretation of Pan-Africanism had undergone a similar transformation. Establishing a blueprint for continental government was a far more difficult process than Nkrumah and his advisors had envisaged prior to independence, yet they demonstrated significant alacrity in responding to a rapidly changing situation. The limited reality of the Ghana-Guinea Union was not what Nkrumah had envisioned, but by creating a practical (albeit temporary) building block of Pan-Africanism, Nkrumah sought to demonstrate the applicability of Pan-Africanism for the world to see.

## The Rise of the Pan-African state and the Challenge of Neo-Colonialism, 1960-1964

If the initial post-independence period was characterised by the limited deployment of Pan-Africanism in the construction and application of Nkrumah’s overall political narrative, the next four years saw a significant radicalisation in his anti-colonialism, nationalism, and in particular, his Pan-Africanism. Although the transition to a more radical political position occurred over a period of time, the shift can be traced in large part to a single event, the Congo Crisis, an event of profound political importance for newly independent Africa. The outbreak of conflict in the days after Congolese independence in June 1960, the United Nations’ intervention and the subsequent assassination of Congolese Premier Patrice Lumumba in January 1961 changed the nature of African leaders’ understanding of their relationship with each other, with their former colonial rulers and with the international community.[[516]](#footnote-516)

The Congo Crisis had its origins in the late colonial period, as Belgian authorities struggled to maintain control over their vast colony in an era of European decolonisation and rising African anti-colonialism. Belgium did not promote meaningful African involvement in governance until shortly before independence, and attempted to isolate the Congolese from the wave of radicalism sweeping across the continent. At Independence on 30 June 1960, the country had fewer than fifty university graduates, and it has generally been accepted that Congo was particularly ill-prepared for independence.[[517]](#footnote-517) A military mutiny began on 5 July 1960, creating widespread insecurity. Several days later, the situation worsened when Moïse Tshombe and his Conakat party declared, with the tacit support of the Belgian government and mining corporations, the secession of the Katanga province.[[518]](#footnote-518) The intervention of the Belgian military, justified by claims they were protecting European civilians and businesses, led the Congolese government to break off diplomatic relations with Belgium. President Kasavubu and Prime Minister Lumumba now had two immediate problems – the ending of the Katanga secession and the expulsion of Belgian troops. Lumumba requested first a US and then subsequently a UN military force to force the Belgian troops to leave. The UN passed a resolution endorsing their demand that Belgian troops withdraw, and it was under UN auspices that Ghana (alongside other African and Asian countries) sent troops to support the Congo government, the first arriving on 15 July.

Into this chaotic situation, Nkrumah inserted himself as a continental representative, prepared at all costs to defend African liberation. In keeping with his faith in the UN, Nkrumah offered Ghanaian troops as part of the UN’s deployment in Congo. This move was presented in the Ghanaian press as evidence of Nkrumah’s commitment to total African liberation.[[519]](#footnote-519) The Ghanaian deployment arrived in the Congo in July 1960, but they (and Nkrumah) quickly ran into problems. The UN refused to send these troops to Katanga to forcibly end the secession, and they were instead used for law and order purposes.[[520]](#footnote-520) In a strange turn of events, it was the Ghanaian contingent of UN troops that stopped Lumumba’s supporters from taking control of the radio station in Leopoldville, thus preventing them from organising support across the country. Nkrumah, upon discovering this, apologised to Lumumba for the action and promised continued support for his government.[[521]](#footnote-521)

Ghana’s willingness to intervene in the situation was also based in part on the relationship between Nkrumah and Lumumba, but also the potential of intervention to demonstrate Ghanaian leadership across the continent. Nkrumah and Lumumba had first met at the All-African Peoples’ Conference in Accra in 1958. There, Lumumba endorsed Nkrumah’s leadership of the Pan-African movement by using his ideas and philosophies as a model for the development of independent Congo. Michael Franc Wright has noted that, although Lumumba never adopted the slogan of Pan-Africanism, his ‘theories [and] his goals, were supportive of Kwame Nkrumah’s doctrines of all-African unity at the time.’[[522]](#footnote-522) Commensurate with his desire to support his Pan-African ally was Nkrumah’s interest in ensuring Ghana’s leading role in African affairs. In the period since Ghanaian independence, active leadership of Africa had involved primarily support for anti-colonial movements.[[523]](#footnote-523) In taking the leading African role in the ongoing crisis, Nkrumah sought to establish his country (and himself) as the continent’s premier diplomatic authority.[[524]](#footnote-524) In a report dated 16 December 1960, A.K. Barden, the Director of the BAA, proudly stated that ‘Our bold and firm stand behind the legitimate Lumumba government have further strengthened the popularity and prestige of Ghana as the true champion of African [sic] cause.’[[525]](#footnote-525)

Though there had been undercurrents of radical Pan-Africanism in Nkrumah’s actions prior to 1960, these events led to a radical shift in Nkrumah’s opinion of the Western powers. Until this point, he had attempted to maintain a careful balance between radical Pan-Africanism and moderation. This position proved increasingly difficult to maintain, and the overt preference that the UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld (supported by the Western powers) displayed for the pro-Western Congolese president Kasavubu over the radical Prime Minister Lumumba starkly demonstrated the problems with this balancing act. Similarly, the support of the Western powers for Apartheid South Africa, and their unwillingness to take serious action against the state in the aftermath of the Sharpeville Massacre (21 March, 1960), combined with South Africa’s support for Kasavubu all contributed to Nkrumah’s growing distrust of Western ‘intervention’ and the UN’s abilities as a peace-making institution.[[526]](#footnote-526) Nkrumah’s increasingly vitriolic attacks on Belgium and its supporters reflected a new phase in Nkrumah’s Pan-Africanism, characterised by his absolute commitment to a more fully realised African independence and increasingly powerful condemnations of the danger of ‘neo-colonialism’, and the danger that, although formally independent, African countries may remain under the effective domination – economic, political and military – of the West. Nkrumah criticised the unwillingness of Belgium and the Western powers to accept the sovereignty of the Congolese state and its people, which was he argued symptomatic of what he increasingly referred to as neo-colonialism.[[527]](#footnote-527) Nkrumah later wrote that ‘the Congo’s vast economic resources and the insatiable avidity of the imperialists makes … the Congo ... fertile ground for the operation of the cold war [*sic*] and of limited wars.’[[528]](#footnote-528)

Nkrumah’s suspicion turned to anger following the assassination of Lumumba on 17 January 1961.[[529]](#footnote-529) There was outrage across Africa as Lumumba became the first democratically elected leader of an African state to be murdered, and (despite the official story put out by Belgium, and supported by the UN), rumours circulated that the US intelligence services were involved. De Witte’s research has since proven that the CIA was indeed involved in the assassination, though how exactly remains unclear, and at the time, the US authorities flatly denied this.[[530]](#footnote-530) Nkrumah accused the Western powers of reneging on their promise to respect the independence of African countries: their intervention on behalf of a former colonial power was evidence, he claimed, of the constant challenge confronting African people, of defending their hard-won independence. The shifting tone and language Nkrumah used in these statements and announcements This was indicative of Nkrumah’s changing position on the use of violence, which was now more fully justified by the rhetoric of armed self-defence against neo-colonial enemies. For example, in a letter he wrote to US President John F. Kennedy shortly after Lumumba’s arrest, Nkrumah challenged the gap he identified between America’s declared support for political freedom and the unedifying reality:

Every administration in the United States since its very birth has expressed itself as opposed to Colonialism and in favour of governments which represent the will of the people. What then are we to think when we find in the Congo the United States supporting a regime which is based on the denial of democracy and … maintain a military dictatorship of a brutal and ineffectual type under which the Congolese Parliament is not permitted to meet.[[531]](#footnote-531)

This radicalisation of the leadership’s hostility to the West did not solely affect Nkrumah. The impact of the Congo Crisis rippled outward through Africa, affecting the nature of inter-state relations. This was in part a recognition that Africa could not position itself outside or beyond the reach of the global Cold War. The various problems faced by Nkrumah were in many ways linked, focused as they were on a perceived battle between the left and the right, radical and moderate. The Cold War narrative had permeated continental affairs, and the Congo situation became indicative of the translation of global politics into local and national struggles.

The radicalisation of Nkrumah’s Pan-Africanist perspective was itself mirrored in a radical turn in Ghanaian domestic politics. The Preventative Detention Act (PDA), first introduced in 1958, was used with increasing regularity to crack down on the opposition. In 1960, during the early days of the Congo crisis, a referendum approved the decision to turn Ghana into a Republic, following in India and Egypt’s footsteps. The Republic of Ghana was announced on 1July 1960, and with it Nkrumah became President. The constitution made clear that the President was the executive decision maker alone, and that he reserved the right to dismiss Ministers and Cabinet members at will. These articles alone would not have raised concern but for the preceding statement, that established ‘The People’ as the arbiters of the state, as represented through the national party, the Convention People’s Party. [[532]](#footnote-532) President Kwame Nkrumah now turned his increased powers on the opposition, as the neo-colonial language of a continuing threat was deployed against those he identified as Ghana’s internal enemies.

Nkrumah’s style of leadership did not change significantly, but those he surrounded himself with did, suggesting a deeper change in his view of politics but not in his view of leadership. He had always relied heavily on a circle of close friends to advise him on all aspects of governance. At Independence this group had been relatively conservative, including among others Komla Gbedemah, co-founder of the CPP. ‘Radicals’ in this informal circle of advisors, such as Kojo Botsio and Tawia Adamafio, were less influential in the early years. The initial group of close advisors represented a greater portion of the political or educated classes in the Gold Coast prior to Independence. These included Komla Gbedemah, and Ebenezer Ako-Adjei, both lawyers and moderate forces within the CPP. However, successive cabinet reshuffles resulted in the promotion of radical figures to more senior positions, and the isolation and dismissal of moderates. In 1960, Adamafio became both the Minister for Information and Broadcasting and Minister for Presidential Affairs, a highly influential position in the formulation of government language and presentation.[[533]](#footnote-533) In contrast, Gbedemah found himself increasingly sidelined.[[534]](#footnote-534) With the 1960 reshuffle, Nkrumah surrounded himself with advisors prepared to support and defend his increasingly Pan-Africanist approach to Africa and to domestic policy.

These advisors, together with the BAA, asserted a world view that reinforced and legitimised Nkrumah’s changing perception of the nature of African affairs. Just as Pan-Africanism provided an explanation for what Nkrumah witnessed around him, so it also shaped how he responded to it. It was a self-reinforcing paradigm, and Nkrumah was not alone in his desire to use it to its fullest. His closest allies shared Nkrumah’s belief that the former colonial powers and the USA were trying to undermine African independence and establish neo-colonial governments favourable to the West. They supported Nkrumah’s crackdown on opposition groups, in part because of their fear of neo-colonial infiltration and in part because it helped to cement their own position within the political hierarchy. Personal vendettas could be justified by defending Ghana’s independence against its enemies. Such justifications would continue until the coup in February 1966 removed Nkrumah and his associates from power, a move they would always label as neo-colonialist.

At the continental level, the ever-growing number of independent states presented Nkrumah with an opportunity to further advance his new, more radical interpretation of Pan-Africanism. The ambivalence that had characterised his position towards Pan-Africanism in the months after Ghanaian Independence was now gone, and his commitment to the total liberation of Africa from both colonialism and neo-colonialism was absolute and unquestionable. Lumumba’s assassination had influenced not only Nkrumah; it had also revitalised Pan-Africanist thinking and activity across Africa, in both colonial and post-colonial states. The UN, previously seen as providing the legal basis for independence and a forum for African advancement, had systematically failed to support the democratically elected government, instead favouring the neo-colonialist powers.[[535]](#footnote-535) Africa, in Nkrumah’s mind, was increasingly embattled, forced to rely on its own resources to further the aim of full independence, and therefore Pan-African unity took on a new urgency and necessity.

A new front in this battle opened in November 1960, when discussions began concerning the admission of Mali into what would become the Ghana-Guinea-Mali Union. Officially known as the Union of African States (UAS), the new organisation came into being in July 1961. This threatened to destabilise the efforts of France and members of its French Union to assert a moderate line in international and African affairs and to maintain the former power’s influence in Francophone Africa. In response, twelve moderate Francophone states met in Congo-Brazzaville in December 1960. The Brazzaville Conference discussed the establishment of a permanent organisation to represent former French colonies, in reaction to the radicalisation of African politics that they perceived.[[536]](#footnote-536) The Brazzaville attendees hoped that, by presenting a united front, they could neutralise the growing influence of Nkrumah and his allies. As a result, the Brazzaville Group was established in January 1961. The establishment of this Western-oriented continent-wide body caused Nkrumah to seek a stronger relationship with other more radically-oriented states, which became known as the Casablanca Group.[[537]](#footnote-537) As Legum aptly noted in 1966, ‘Brazzaville led to Casablanca.’[[538]](#footnote-538)

As the dates suggest, the Congo crisis, and African political reactions to it, formed the backdrop to the formation of these opposed groups. The Casablanca group, at its initial meeting in January 1961, debated how best to support the Lumumbist government of Antoine Gizenga based in the city of Stanleyville, which they saw as the legitimate Congolese government.[[539]](#footnote-539) Scott Thompson has noted that Nasser and Nkrumah were divided about the continued presence of African troops in the UN mission. Egyptian, Moroccan and Guinean military leaders had already drawn up plans to withdraw their troops from the UN force, but Nkrumah maintained the necessity of a continued African presence.[[540]](#footnote-540) He later recalled:

I spoke strongly in favour of allowing African troops to remain in the Congo, pointing out that withdrawal would be tantamount to betrayal… I felt that if Ghana withdrew her troops from the Congo, that would constitute a betrayal not only of the Congo but also of the African revolutionary cause.[[541]](#footnote-541)

Nkrumah used the Casablanca conference as an opportunity to advance his position and managed to convince participating states to support his ideas. However, this support came at a price, and Nkrumah was forced to compromise on important aspects of his existing foreign policy, including Ghana’s relations with Israel.[[542]](#footnote-542)

The Casablanca meeting nevertheless reaffirmed Nkrumah’s leadership of continental Pan-Africanism. The Casablanca declaration reflected Nkrumah’s perspective on the Congo crisis.[[543]](#footnote-543) The African Charter of Casablanca provided the basis for a unified Africa-wide government, through the establishment of four separate committees (African Political Committee, Economic Committee, Cultural Committee, and a Joint African High Command). The resolutions bore the imprint, not only of Nkrumah, but also of Nasser. The inclusion of references to both the United Nations Charter *and* to the Bandung Resolutions highlight the influence of Egypt in the framing of the organisation’s purpose.[[544]](#footnote-544)

The Charter reiterated the commitment of member states to uphold the sovereignty and territorial integrity of African states, but also incorporated a particular element of Nkrumah’s Pan-Africanism, support for nationalist movements to end colonialism everywhere on the continent:

[We] proclaim our determination to liberate the African territories still under foreign domination, by giving them aid and assistance, to liquidate colonialism and neo-colonialism and in all their forms, to discourage the maintenance of foreign troops and the establishment of bases which endanger the liberation of Africa and to strive equally to rid the African Continent of political and economic interventions and pressures…[[545]](#footnote-545)

The establishment of the Casablanca Group was perhaps the zenith of Nkrumah’s Pan-Africanist influence. Taken in combination with his support for liberation groups, and his increasingly vocal endorsement of armed resistance to colonialism, Nkrumah had consistently sought to lead in the implementation of Pan-Africanism across the continent. His commitment to continental unity was further advanced by the support of a number of allied states, including Egypt. Nasser’s support for the Casablanca Group did not end the rivalry between himself and Nkrumah over leadership of the ‘African Revolution’, but it enabled the presentation of a united front. The African Charter validated Nkrumah’s ideology, whilst suggesting that Pan-Africanism was more than simply the ideology of one man. Instead, it was presented as a wildly popular, widely supported blueprint for Africa’s future.

The establishment of the rival Brazzaville and Casablanca Groups left Africa politically divided. Because the credibility of the Brazzaville Group was undermined by its dependence on French political patronage, a further conference was arranged in Monrovia, Liberia in April 1961, to expand its membership and establish a new bloc. Although this was presented as an attempt to unify all African states, Nkrumah perceived it as a pro-Western initiative.[[546]](#footnote-546) Despite having initially agreed to sponsor the event, Ghana’s Union partners, Guinea and Mali, joined the other Casablanca powers in boycotting the event at the last minute.[[547]](#footnote-547)

Ultimately, the Monrovia meeting brought together the Brazzaville group with a number of Anglophone states, united in their opposition to Nkrumah and his Pan-Africanist liberation theories – this resulted in what became known as the Monrovia group.[[548]](#footnote-548) It affirmed the absolute sovereignty of each state and was committed to non-interference in the domestic affairs of their neighbours. This initiative undermined Nkrumah’s positioning of himself as the uncontested leader of independent Africa, offering as it did an alternative political discourse on African advancement, which now branched across Francophone boundaries and appeared truly representative of the continent. The conference brought into the public view a series of bitter arguments and accusations about Nkrumah’s activities in Africa, played out in parliaments and newspapers across the continent. In response to his announcement that Ghana would not participate in the conference, the Nigerian newspaper the *West African Pilot* wrote:

The lash of the Preventative Detention Act has created an artificial unity… Yet this is the man who goes before the world, preaching unity. Dr Nkrumah chooses to believe that the Monrovia powers do not represent the majority of African States. Twenty-one States were represented at Monrovia. There are only five countries in the Casablanca bloc. THE TRUTH IS THAT DR NKRUMAH MUST BE AT THE HEAD OF ANYTHING OR OUTSIDE IT. [[549]](#footnote-549)

The increasing references Nkrumah made to ‘neo-colonialism’ was indicative of his characterisation of both African and Ghanaian affairs. ‘Neo-colonialism’ as a phrase functioned on two levels: it was in one way a very real phenomenon, visible in the Congo, the French Union’s testing of atomic bombs in the Sahara, and so forth. At the same time, it was also an intangible and multifaceted phenomenon. Neo-colonialism was not just pursued by a single state; it could be located in personal relations, public policy, outlook and ideology. By this understanding, it could be (and was) discursively applied to foreign governments, individuals, or any form of opposition or challenge, whether foreign or domestic. In both forms, ‘neo-colonialism’ formed an increasingly central component of Nkrumah’s Pan-African paradigm, the negative part of a binary in which ‘African unity’ was the positive element. Between 1962and 1966, neo-colonialism was increasingly mobilised as a paradigm through which all acts of opposition were interpreted and understood.

This discursive deployment of ‘neo-colonialism’ further blurred the line between internal and external affairs, and brought Pan-Africanism and nationalism into a very close, at times complimentary and at times contradictory, relationship. This had a profound impact on domestic Ghanaian politics. Whereas the first twelve months of independence had seen the prioritisation of nationalism as the dominant meta-narrative guiding government policy, the subsequent three years saw the predominance of the Pan-African paradigm, increasing its influence over and ultimately redefining national politics.

Just as opposition to Nkrumah’s analysis of African affairs was becoming increasingly organised at the continental level, challenges from the opposition within Ghana were increasing. Concerns were raised over the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in particular, which the opposition United Party characterised as highly corrupt and inefficient.[[550]](#footnote-550) Nkrumah’s emphasis on foreign affairs had endowed this particular ministry with great power and influence, and a lack of effective oversight allowed it to grow in scale and reach. Nkrumah’s increasing hostility towards criticism meant that opposition concerns fell on deaf ears. Instead, Nkrumah and the CPP apparatus increasingly cracked down on critics.

As discussed previously, Nkrumah had already demonstrated his intolerance towards opposition through the 1958 Preventative Detention Act. His government had thereafter sought to extend control, through political and legal means, over all parliamentary and political opposition. The next step was the extension of Nkrumah’s personal control over the ministries. Ministerial authority had always been undermined by Nkrumah’s practice of making decisions with a small group of advisors, who held specific portfolios but often advised in other areas.

As noted above, the ideological disposition of this group had shifted to the left between 1957 and 1962, and this was to have a tremendous impact on the subsequent domestic and foreign policies of the Nkrumah government. Scott Thompson writes:

The ideology of Ghana’s governing party was a reflection of the interests of its dominant group; it was in the interests of moderates like Botsio and Gbedemah to remain close to the West, and since the young challengers were trying to replace them, it was natural for them to seek closer ties with the East. Step by step the radical wing was to gain strength, partly encouraged by Nkrumah, partly on its own, and partly as a turn of events.[[551]](#footnote-551)

These ‘young challengers’ were, among others, Tawia Adamafio and Ebenezer Ako-Adjei. These men, though already close to Nkrumah at Independence (Ako-Adjei had been instrumental in inviting Nkrumah to return in 1947) gradually increased their access to the President and their power within the state apparatus.

One such opportunity to increase their influence was through supporting the establishment of the Republic of Ghana. As already noted, Nkrumah’s new position as President allowed him and his supporters to gain greater control over policy-making; Nkrumah significantly extended his personal power over ministries, as well as the military and the police. The latter powers raised concern among opposition politicians about possible reprisals and politically-motivated arrests. Nkrumah did not initially launch an all-out attack on the opposition, but characterised criticism of his policies as unpatriotic attacks on his authority as the leader of the nation and on the legitimacy of the state. This inclusion of the ‘nation’ in discourses on opposition led to a reconfiguration of nationalism on an increasingly exclusionary basis. The nation of Ghana was increasingly equated with the CPP, and with Nkrumah, ‘Osagyefo’ (the Redeemer), the nation’s leader. It is important to note here the subtle but crucial distinction between national leader and the nation’s leader. As a national leader, Nkrumah was one of many. As the nation’s leader, however, he was the only person who could fulfil this role. Combined in this discourse were notions of legitimacy and even divinity, connotations directly tied to Nkrumah as an individual rather than in his role as elected president.

The presidency allowed Nkrumah to substantiate his image as a supreme leader, but it did not fundamentally alter the position of the opposition in Ghanaian politics. The position was already an unstable one, in part as a result of the PDA, and in part because of divisions within the opposition. These problems were compounded by a series of assassination attempts against Nkrumah, the most dramatic of which occurred in August 1962 in Kulungugu, on the Ghana-Togo border. Whilst greeting supporters, a grenade was thrown towards Nkrumah, killing one person and injuring eleven others. Nkrumah was unharmed, but the event provided a catalyst for a nationwide police crackdown on all forms of opposition to Nkrumah’s rule.

The police investigation into the assassination attempt ultimately led to the arrest of several high-ranking CPP members: Ebenezer Ako-Adjei, Tawia Adamafio, Coffie Crabbe, and Komla Gbedemah. The issuing of a warrant for Gbedemah’s arrest was somewhat expected, as Gbedemah had been made a scapegoat for Nkrumah’s early neo-colonialist accusations, and indeed he had already left the country when the warrant was released. He remained an important tool for the definition of neo-colonialism within Ghana long after he had fled the country. Newspapers vilified him as the enemy of national independence and claimed he wanted to ruin the country, despite his absence. [[552]](#footnote-552) The detention of Adamafio, a powerful and influential Cabinet Minister, was on the other hand a much greater shock. Nevertheless, as Omari recalls, ‘popular indignation was easily whipped up against Adamafio, who had on so many occasions incurred almost everybody’s displeasure.’[[553]](#footnote-553) Ako-Adjei and Coffie-Crabbe had likewise been longstanding and apparently untouchable players in Nkrumah’s inner circle.[[554]](#footnote-554)

The CPP and the press turned on these politicians, attempting to destroy their reputations and put distance between these men and the party, the leader and the state. F.E. Tachie-Mason described their behaviour in derogatory terms to parliament, claiming that, ‘On the journey… to the place of the incident [Kulungugu], they isolated themselves from the Leader, to whom they had clung previously all along as if they were his lovers…’[[555]](#footnote-555) The newspapers accused them of plotting a coup against Nkrumah, and later trying to destroy the CPP altogether. During their trial, the *Evening News* claimed that they had realised that the only way to destroy the ‘people’s party’ was to remove Nkrumah. Despite their ideological differences, the three men and Gbedemah had supposedly decided to work together, in pursuit of ‘money and property.’[[556]](#footnote-556)

Before the trial began, a bombing was carried out in September 1962, this time at Flagstaff House in Accra, the very heart of Ghana’s ‘political kingdom.’[[557]](#footnote-557) In response, martial law was imposed, and the military were brought in to help the police identify and arrest the culprits.[[558]](#footnote-558) The three co-conspirators charged with attempting Nkrumah’s assassination at Kulungugu were now arrested for this attack as well. Sensationalist newspaper headlines reinforced the government narrative that these men were part of a much wider conspiracy against Ghana, in which the nation and the country was now undistinguished from the person of the President. The *Ghanaian Times* suggested that the assassins believed that without Nkrumah, the CPP would fall apart.[[559]](#footnote-559) The *Evening News*, as well as providing moving details of the children that Nkrumah had met at Kulungugu, offered a telling quote from the President: ‘Countrymen, this bomb was not aimed simply at me as Kwame Nkrumah, but through me, at Ghana and Africa. As far as I am concerned, I am happy in the knowledge that death can never extinguish the flame which I have lit in Ghana.’[[560]](#footnote-560) The whole affair had enshrined, indeed almost deified, Nkrumah as the living embodiment of the nation. The collapsing of the President, the Party, the nation and the state into a single identity was presented in numerous references throughout the daily newspapers, far beyond only those articles concerning the Kulungugu trials. On the fourteenth anniversary of the founding of the CPP, a poet wrote in the Evening News, ‘We Owe it all to one unselfish soul, Osagyefo, the idol of all youth! Whose name is writ in with fire on a scroll, A symbol of a faith, a light – a truth! To win, this simple man has toiled and braved Colonialism’s tempests. By God’s grace, He lives within the people he has saved, And made them a new and greater race!’[[561]](#footnote-561)

These events culminated in the declaration of a one-party state on 2 October 1962. This was seen around the world as a reaction to the bombings, but it had in fact been planned for some time.[[562]](#footnote-562) Six months earlier, the government had published a paper entitled ‘Work and Happiness,’ which outlined plans for a one-party state.[[563]](#footnote-563) The CPP newsletter, *The People,* claimed that ‘currently there is a national cry throughout the country calling on the Government to effect without delay a one-Party system which the people believe would suit them best as they are convinced that it would harmonise diverse opinions for the good of all.’[[564]](#footnote-564)

Despite the best efforts of the CPP and Nkrumah to present the one-party state having the full support of the Ghanaian people, the proposal was met with concern and condemnation around the world. The CPP’s newsletter conceded as much:

The foreigner would wonder why all this clamour for a one-Party system by the Ghanaian people. The concise answer is … that a multi-Party system is entirely alien to the traditional concept of government in African Society. Moreover a one-Party system provides the best answer for the problem of government in Africa.[[565]](#footnote-565)

Despite these efforts to present this as a move towards a more legitimate, ‘authentic’ form of African governance, there was some internal criticism levelled against Nkrumah and his followers.[[566]](#footnote-566) Komla Gbedemah had, by this time, left the country, in what amounted to a self-imposed exile.[[567]](#footnote-567) Despite his absence, he voiced his concerns about the proposals. In an open letter to the President, Gbedemah levelled numerous criticisms at Nkrumah, encompassing everything from the leader’s personality to the government’s economic policies. The most stinging attack was reserved for the proposed one-party state:

The one party state you now propose to force down the throat of the nation **never** was at issue till September 1961. With its “establishment” by evading the only legal method available to do so… you are ensuring for all time or for many decades to come, unless it is earlier ended by a bloody revolution, **which God forbid in Ghana**, that only men of your party, some of whom are in it today more because of what they can get out of it than for what they put into it, will be always in power, since no other party is allowed to be born, nurtured and to grow to such strength as to displace yours through the ballot box.

…But Dr Nkrumah, if you will **not** consult the people on the “one party” issue, if you will cling to power and put your party’s interest above the nation’s, then it can only be true here as it was elsewhere when it was stated that **“power tends to corrupt”** and **“absolute power tends to corrupt absolutely”**…[[568]](#footnote-568)

The ‘Work and Happiness’ proposals were nevertheless adopted, ostensibly in response to popular demand, in a simple announcement – in instructive contrast to earlier constitutional changes, such as the establishment of the Republic, via a plebiscite. The announcement was made in October 1962, prior to the trial of the assassination co-conspirators. Ushered in shortly after the Kulungugu bombing, it became associated with defending the nation, bound up in a narrative of violence and legitimacy, characterised as a necessary measure to protect the President and the nation.[[569]](#footnote-569)

When the assassination case came to trial, the newspapers were at fever pitch. The trial was portrayed in the press as delivering justice for the Ghanaian people against a small band of terrorists who wanted to destroy the nation. Despite the prevailing depiction by the press and CPP officials of the guilt of the accused, the trial did not go according to plan. Chief Justice Sir Arku Kosah found the defendants not guilty, arguing that there was not enough evidence to prove that Adjei, Adamafio and Crabbe were involved in a plot to kill the president. In response, protests sprung up through Accra, with signs and placards decrying the judge’s decision and demanding a retrial. The front cover of the *Ghanaian Times* was dominated for weeks by images of crowds outside the courthouse, though as previously discussed in reference to other protests, it is possible that the government backed, and encouraged, these events.[[570]](#footnote-570)

Nkrumah quickly responded to the situation, and in so doing destroyed the established practice of non-intervention in the judicial system and the relative independence of the judiciary.[[571]](#footnote-571) Nkrumah used his presidential powers to successfully demand the immediate dismissal of Kosah. Crabbe, Adamafio and Adjei were detained again, this time without the promise of a trial. In response to Nkrumah’s actions, the government-owned *Ghanaian Times* announced on 12 December 1962:

SHAME! The masses know they are guilty. The country-wide concern for the security of the State has burst out in demonstrations against the lack of responsibility on the part of Sir Arku Kosah, the former chief justice, in failing to communicate with the Head of State before the verdict in the treason trial of the conspirators was given. At the same time, there is a massive renewal of confidence in Osagyefo’s leadership over the steps taken by the Government in the interests of State security with the dismissal of Sir Arku Kosah and the detention of the three conspirators – Adamafio, Ako Adjei and Coffie-Crabbe.[[572]](#footnote-572)

By the end of 1962, domestic politics had taken a radical turn, influenced by both internal political competition and its apparent link with external affairs. 1962 was an important turning point in Nkrumah’s presidency, because it was at this point that the process of collapsing Pan-Africanist, nationalist, neo-colonial and socialist discourses into a single narrative began (this will be covered in more detail below). Nkrumah’s growing apprehension regarding neo-colonialism leeched into domestic affairs, as challenges to both his policies and authority were interpreted through the dual paradigm of Pan-Africanism and neo-colonialism. Because the nominally extra-statist Pan-Africanism had been conflated with the internal politics of the nation, so criticism at the national level was increasingly attributed to neo-colonial external intervention in national politics. Because the discourse of neo-colonialism could, as discussed, be applied to many types of activity and behaviours, it was a useful tool in the fight against internal dissent. The clampdown on organised opposition to the government and the extension of security measures for arresting and detaining critics, even amongst senior leaders of the CPP, was constantly justified in the name of protecting the nation from external threats and ridding Africa of neo-colonialism.

By such means, authoritarian practice continued to increase in 1963, with many opposition leaders either arrested or forced into exile. Those fleeing the country moved both to Europe and to Ghana’s neighbours, Cote d’Ivoire and Upper Volta. Tense relations between Ghana and these two states were exacerbated by their presence.[[573]](#footnote-573) Relations between Ghana and her neighbours continued to decline, in part as a result of Nkrumah’s constant accusations of coup plots emanating from hostile governments.[[574]](#footnote-574) For Nkrumah, the presence of his critics in neighbouring states was clear evidence of their collaboration with neo-colonial powers, thereby legitimising his own actions in Ghana. This view also legitimised a far more aggressive stance in African and international affairs.

Less than a year after Nkrumah claimed to have ridden Ghana of internal threats, a new challenge presented itself at the continental level. The establishment of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in May 1963 was both a threat and an opportunity for the Ghanaian president. It threatened Nkrumah’s leadership in Africa and his hegemony over continental definitions of Pan-Africanism. It did however provide a further opportunity to extend his leadership and to implement, in organisational form, his Pan-African vision. The OAU, the first continent-wide institutional realisation of the Pan-African ideal, was an experiment to bring together the increasingly divided states of Africa.[[575]](#footnote-575) The OAU can be seen as an attempt to address the damaging effects of ideological rivalry across the continent, in the form of the Monrovia-Casablanca division.

Despite his public enthusiasm for the establishment of a single African organisation, Nkrumah’s feelings about the specific proposals for the OAU were very different. This was not the form of Pan-African governance that Nkrumah had hoped for. He was not the organiser, and Ethiopia, not Ghana, was the host of the opening summit. His own radicalism was absent from the OAU’s founding charter, which principally reflected the ideas and approaches of the Monrovia Group rather than the Casablanca powers.[[576]](#footnote-576) One of the guiding principles of the organisation was to defend the sovereignty, ‘territorial integrity and independence’ of African states, reflecting the moderate, statist, views of the Monrovia Group, rather than the radical unifying perspective of the Casablanca bloc.[[577]](#footnote-577)

In order to understand Nkrumah’s scepticism about the OAU, it is necessary to examine the broader context in which it was established. The catalyst for the Addis Ababa summit came from Ethiopian leader Haile Selassie and Nkrumah’s ally, Sékou Touré, who agreed in June 1962 to bring together the heads of independent states for discussions on forming a continent-wide organisation. This reflected the fact that Nkrumah was no longer the single driving force of Pan-Africanist initiatives. As Scott Thompson noted, ‘the failure of all Ghana's African initiatives up to this point had been so pronounced that even Nkrumah was aware that the Pan-African lead was no longer in Ghanaian hands.’[[578]](#footnote-578) Although he was committed to the establishment of a single African government, Nkrumah’s attention was elsewhere, concentrating on domestic matters throughout 1962. The establishment of the one-party state, the redirection of national policy towards socialism (or ‘Nkrumahism’), and the attempts on Nkrumah’s life, all led to a temporary redirection of his focus away from the continent. Nkrumah made belated but unsuccessful efforts to regain the momentum, making overtures to the Liberian government in the hopes of co-sponsoring a continental political organisation, but it was too late.[[579]](#footnote-579) Touré in particular proved highly adept at gathering support across Africa for Selassie’s proposals, and had even criticised Nkrumah’s ideological, demagogical approach to African unity at the UN General Assembly.[[580]](#footnote-580)

Nkrumah’s attempts to reassert Ghanaian leadership were further tested in relation to the new organisation. As the initial motivation for the Addis Ababa summit was to bring together the Casablanca and Monrovia Powers, it was envisaged that the OAU charter would be based those of the two groups. For Nkrumah, this was a major disappointment. Having previously been forced to accept a more conservative Casablanca charter than he had hoped for, he now feared that the Charter for the first continent-wide organisation would lack what he regarded as a ‘true’ Pan-Africanist vision.

However, Nkrumah could not risk isolating himself from these processes, so he took the opportunity of the inaugural Summit Conference in May 1963 to voice his opinions on the proposed organisation. Two days after the Ethiopian Emperor gave an impassioned speech exhorting the assembled leaders to build a representative body for Africa, Nkrumah gave an address to the heads of state.[[581]](#footnote-581) Noting Ghana’s contribution to this project in hosting the CIAS five years earlier, Nkrumah went on to express his support for the proposed organisation via a critique of neo-colonialism:

We are now throwing off the yoke of colonialism as fast as we can, but our success in this direction is equally matched by an intense effort on the part of imperialism to continue the exploitation of our resources by creating divisions among us…[[582]](#footnote-582)

Comparing the two leaders’ statements highlights the division between Selassie’s vision of African **governance** and Nkrumah’s vision of an African **government.** The Ethiopian leader presented the OAU as a vehicle for African representation at the international level, to strengthen the voice of Africa in the Cold War.[[583]](#footnote-583) It would, Selassie argued, also strengthen Africa’s ability to raise standards of living, increase levels of education and inter-state interaction.[[584]](#footnote-584) Selassie’s conception was clearly rooted in social and cultural development. In contrast, Nkrumah highlighted the economic strength that would come from unity. In a strongly Marxian analysis, Nkrumah pointed to the negative effects of foreign corporations and their extraction of African capital. He argued that an organisation to represent and unite African states would be able to effectively prevent further exploitation.[[585]](#footnote-585)

Despite his efforts, it was clear Nkrumah’s demands would not be met. Divisions among the Casablanca Powers made it impossible for them to present a united front.[[586]](#footnote-586) The overwhelming majority of states were also in favour of a more practical and moderate Charter than Nkrumah. The final Charter, signed by thirty-two governments on 25 May 1963, clearly reflected Ethiopian priorities.[[587]](#footnote-587) It declared that the intention of the OAU was to ‘safeguard and consolidate the hard-won independence as well as the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our states…’ and to ‘reinforce the links between our states by establishing and strengthening common institutions…’[[588]](#footnote-588) It did make reference to neo-colonialism, and the need to work in unison to remove that threat from Africa, but it was clear the that this was not intended to be the starting point towards the territorial integration of African states into a continental government. Indeed, the Charter guaranteed the territorial sovereignty of all African nations, effectively vetoing progress towards a ‘United States of Africa'. It was therefore, from Nkrumah’s perspective, a deviation from Pan-Africanism that would ultimately prevent African unity by falsely placing the OAU at the pinnacle of Pan-African achievement. Nkrumah stated in a public address that ‘a new period has opened in contemporary African history with the convening of the Addis Ababa conference… The theme of Addis Ababa was the unity of the African peoples in order to attain the overwhelming economic, financial and cultural advantage which lie readily available to all of us upon our Unity.’[[589]](#footnote-589) However, this speech went on to exhort the CPP, and by extension the people, to action, thereby suggesting that the aims of the Addis Ababa meeting did not go far enough.

After its founding, Nkrumah’s dissatisfaction with the OAU steadily increased. He rarely worked within the confines of the Charter, instead relying on the BAA to implement Ghana’s African policy. The OAU provided a forum for criticism of Ghana by other African states, which challenged Nkrumah on its activities in relation to the Congo, Togo, and southern Africa.[[590]](#footnote-590) According to reports in June 1965, a ‘dossier of subversion’, summarising years of rumours and complaints from countries including Niger and Togo, was presented to the Ghanaian delegation to the OAU. It was asked to explain the actions of the BAA in relation to what these nations regarded as their sovereign internal affairs.[[591]](#footnote-591) Accusations ranged from Ghana harbouring fugitives to actively supporting coup attempts.

Such tensions were partly the result of the actions of A.K. Barden, George Padmore’s protégé and replacement as Director of the BAA. Under Barden’s direction, the BAA had considerably expanded its activities and budget whilst remaining outside of official governmental oversight. The BAA now provided ideological training and instruction in practical guerrilla military skills at the Winneba Institute, as well as offering freedom fighters’ refuge at the African Affairs Centre. Ghana’s neighbours viewed the BAA’s activities with suspicion, seeing the Accra-based freedom fighters as ‘more of a threat to state power than the embodiment of Pan-African liberation.’[[592]](#footnote-592) As Ghana-Togo relations declined, the Togolese government hinted that the BAA was training Togolese dissidents to overthrow its President.[[593]](#footnote-593) Similarly, Nigeria and Cote d’Ivoire voiced their concerns about the organisation, in both the press and the OAU’s forums. As early as 1962, Nigeria had voiced concerns about Ghana’s support for opposition groups within Nigeria, and by 1965, Ghana was having to publically refute these claims.[[594]](#footnote-594)

Nkrumah also challenged aspects of the newly signed OAU Charter, including its provisions to support liberation movements in the remaining colonial territories. By providing bilateral support to select liberation movements outside OAU auspices, Nkrumah attempted to re-establish his credentials as Africa’s leading Pan-African authority. This now involved a more determined focus on radical Pan-Africanist outcomes, supporting those groups within the colonial territories that shared a similar political position. Groups such as the PAC (South Africa), the Monomotapa National Democratic Party (Mozambique), and Sawaba (Niger) had either been banned or were actively persecuted in their home countries for their ‘radical’ views. It is important to note that while the PAC and the MNDP were fighting to end colonialism, Sawaba was an opposition movement in independent Niger intent on overthrowing the government. These diverse groups were however united to the extent that they all cited Pan-African unity as a driving principle in their actions. Because of this, they found in Nkrumah an ideological partner willing to provide financial, material, and political support.[[595]](#footnote-595)

This shift towards offering support for groups such as Sawaba, which opposed independent African governments, rather than simply movements seeking liberation against colonialism, reinforced perceptions of Nkrumah as an ideologue committed to undermining the sovereignty of African states.[[596]](#footnote-596) This claim was evinced by his support of Sawaba, characterised by the BAA as a liberation group. Nkrumah challenged the predominant theories of sovereignty by asserting his own notions of statehood, and used the BAA to further his particular image of the independent African state. His characterisation as an autocratic ideologue in continental affairs was a development that closely paralleled Nkrumah’s consolidation of all meaningful domestic political power in himself as the personal embodiment of the state, the nation, and the party.

## Pan-African Nationalism: the Elusive Search for the Continental Nation, 1964-1966

By early 1964, for the reasons cited above, Nkrumah contemplated both his and Ghana’s considerably weakened position in continental leadership, amidst growing internal dissent and discord. This situation characterised his final two years in power. It is important to avoid a teleological reading of the February 1966 coup as inevitable. At the time, this third stage was understood as a period of consolidation, rather than inevitable decline.

The result of these changes was apparent in the changing role that Pan-Africanist and nationalist narratives played in Nkrumah’s political discourse. The two concepts had previously existed in relation to and with a degree of independence from each other; over time Pan-Africanism had, as illustrated above, gradually taken precedence over a more pragmatic nationalism as the primary driver of government policy at home and abroad. In the final two years of his rule, Nkrumah tended to bring the two together, collapsing the meanings and nuances of the two paradigms to create, it is argued, a third phase of ‘Pan-African Nationalism.’ This was not a sudden shift in ideological output in reaction to the changing continental context. Rather, it was the culmination of developments over the preceding seven years. An increasingly entrenched, narrow interpretation and application of Pan-Africanism, combined with the conflation of self, state, and nation, developed in response to the increasingly challenging national and continental contexts faced by Nkrumah. As his actions in response to the OAU had already demonstrated, Nkrumah was unwilling or unable to negotiate and compromise on Africa-wide or Ghanaian affairs. Bretton’s characterisation of the Ghanaian state as a ‘political machine’ was particularly apt in the final years of Nkrumah’s administration, as he increasingly relied on state-initiated physical force and intimidation to maintain his rule.[[597]](#footnote-597) Bretton rightly argues that ‘the use of the term [political machine]… should not suggest any resemblance to conventional mechanical devices... It appears to function reliably only for one purpose: It was instrumental in Nkrumah’s seizure of power and it kept him at the pinnacle for nearly a decade.’[[598]](#footnote-598) Whilst the applicability of this model in the earlier period of Nkrumah’s rule is questionable, in the last years it certainly appears accurate. Nkrumah used the highly opaque political system, discussed below, to enforce his ideological position.

Nkrumah’s fight for the leadership of Pan-Africanism increasingly took place through the Bureau of African Affairs, which was now the main conduit for Nkrumah’s African policy. The BAA, having steadily expanded its role, was now the primary tool of foreign policy implementation, much to the chagrin of Ghana’s neighbours and detractors. Throughout 1964 and 1965, rumours about the activities of the BAA circulated and increased. In 1965, the OAU formally requested an explanation from the Ghanaian authorities about the nature of their support to freedom fighters, and specifically to opposition groups in member states.[[599]](#footnote-599) This aspect of BAA activity had increasingly created acrimony between Ghana and her West African neighbours. By January 1966, East African states and organisations were also complaining about Nkrumah’s attempts to dictate the future of the continent.[[600]](#footnote-600) Even Nkrumah’s approach to support for freedom fighters in UDI Rhodesia and Portuguese-controlled Angola caused tension.[[601]](#footnote-601) The Unilateral Declaration of Independence, announced on 11 November 1965, reinforced Nkrumah’s belief in the neo-colonial forces working to undermine majority Black rule in Africa. Although there was international condemnation of the Rhodesian government’s move, and certainly a marked degree of continental unity in opposition to the move, Nkrumah saw it as proof of the necessity for armed revolt in liberation. Blaming Britain for ostensibly supporting the Rhodesian ‘rebel regime,’ Nkrumah asserted: ‘the Government of Ghana believes that it is only by the use of force that this rebellion can be checked.’[[602]](#footnote-602) Nkrumah’s demands for military intervention, whether through the UN or the OAU, when taken in combination with the rumours surrounding Nkrumah’s motives in Africa, were out of kilter with the views of southern African pro-liberation countries such as Zambia and Tanzania, and were widely regarded with suspicion.[[603]](#footnote-603) The Ghanaian army was reportedly training for deployment to Rhodesia, though ultimately, the coup ended the possibility of Ghanaian engagement in Southern Africa. Indeed, Major Akwasi Afrifa, himself a senior officer in the military who would have had access to such information, claimed that Ghanaian involvement in Rhodesia was the catalyst for the coup three months later.[[604]](#footnote-604)

Simultaneously, Nkrumah was forced to contend with a declining national economy. Despite considerable efforts to achieve rapid modernisation and industrialisation, Ghana remained largely dependent on cocoa exports, making it susceptible to fluctuations in the international market. At Independence, the value of the crop was exceptionally high.[[605]](#footnote-605) However, a downturn in the international market from 1962 combined with rising inflation to weaken Ghana’s trading position. These problems would have been politically difficult in any circumstances, but they were disastrous in the context of national independence. Nkrumah had promised that independence would bring economic growth and development to Ghana. Socialist economic policies required increased government spending to develop a substantial public sector, yet this provided little financial benefit.[[606]](#footnote-606) Ghana’s post-independence Development Plans had set ambitious targets for continued growth and development which, it was now clear, could not be met. Nkrumah’s financial commitments to freedom fighters and sympathetic governments across Africa was seen as directly contributing to the continued downward spiral of the economy. The inversion of the national economy, in which national wealth was directed towards foreign causes, provided no tangible benefit to Ghanaians and created further tension between the citizenry and the state and their respective visions of Ghana and Africa.

Public perceptions of Ghana’s economic position during this period are difficult to pin down, though Appiah has suggested the mood was one of doubt or uncertainty.[[607]](#footnote-607) By 1964, Nkrumah had effectively silenced the opposition, and the media, either censored or owned by the government, was largely silenced. There was, therefore, no public outlet for concerns or frustrations over economic issues or government spending on, for example, Pan-African projects. Kate Skinner, using monthly government reports from a number of districts across Ghana, suggests that there was some effort made to inform Nkrumah of public frustration at the increasingly regular shortages and declining living standards.[[608]](#footnote-608) Though the statements on discontent were often phrased to limit criticism of the government and its perceived role in the economy, their existence supports the idea that there was a simmering discontent, and that at the very least local government officials were concerned by it. Retrospectively however, the 1966 coup was justified by criticism that Nkrumah had been ‘turning inside out’ the Ghanaian economy, with national resources channelled not to internal development but rather to continental liberation.[[609]](#footnote-609)

Nkrumah’s response to these economic difficulties was articulated through the paradigm of Pan-Africanism and its established binary opposite, neo-colonialism. Expenditure on Pan-African projects, most notably the BAA and its associated institutions, was justified because it was only continent-wide liberation that would ultimately secure long-term economic growth and development. In his 1964 Christmas and New Year address, Nkrumah stated:

we hear a lot about the fall in our foreign exchange reserves… Countrymen: The experience we are having in Africa today in trade and commerce with the outside world, fortifies my conviction that without unity based on a continental Union Government for all Africa, our hopes and aspirations for the economic emancipation and stability of our individual States will be shattered.[[610]](#footnote-610)

This absolute commitment to Pan-Africanism meant that Barden, the BAA Director, effectively had an unlimited budget, in contrast to many government ministries. Barden, characterised by critics as power-hungry and lacking in ideological conviction, became the figurehead of an increasingly unpopular element of government policy.[[611]](#footnote-611)

Nkrumah’s neo-colonial paradigm was deployed to de-legitimise internal opposition to government spending. Groups or individuals deemed to be demanding too much from the state, supposedly because of their own corruption or laziness, were deemed to be neo-colonialists who sought to benefit from economic instability. This discourse collapsed the boundary between national and continental concerns, creating a single narrative that could explain and legitimise government actions as intrinsically linked to Africa’s wider liberation.

Ghana’s trade unions were a central target of Nkrumah’s discursive linkage of economic difficulties, internal dissent and external destabilisation. The labour movement, a key component of the pre-independence CPP-led nationalist movement, had already been the subject of Nkrumah’s ire. In July 1961, a strike by dock workers in Sekondi-Takoradi, Ghana’s main industrial port, was characterised by the government as a malevolent initiative of colonial agents, devious members of the opposition, and disgruntled trade unionists, directed against ‘the people.’[[612]](#footnote-612) The Secretary General of the Trade Unions Congress, John Tettegah, was subsequently removed and replaced by Joseph Kwaw Ampah, a man considered ‘more loyal to the Leader.’[[613]](#footnote-613) The labour movement was thereby reduced to little more than a vehicle for government policy.[[614]](#footnote-614) Strikes were banned and alternative methods of complaint and protest were effectively outlawed.[[615]](#footnote-615) The increasingly tense atmosphere did provide union leaders with the opportunity to gain power and personal influence in political circles, but frustration amongst lower ranks of the labour movement found no outlet.

Nkrumah’s now tireless search for neo-colonial enemies within Ghana was in 1964 extended to the police and the military, in response to another assassination attempt at Flagstaff House. The loyal press expressed outrage on behalf of the ‘masses’, which served to justify a further crackdown on critical speech and association, and the widespread use of arrest and detention to silence opposition.[[616]](#footnote-616) High profile political and military figures were not immune from these crackdowns. Lieutenant General Joseph Arthur Ankrah, the first Ghanaian commander of the military (who would become Head of State after the 1966 coup), was removed from his position in July 1965, accused of organising a failed coup. Nkrumah’s dismissal of top generals allowed him to demonstrate to the public the very necessity of these crackdowns, giving physical form to neo-colonialism in the media. It suggested an image of the leader in absolute control, beyond the threat of military revolt or assassination. In February 1966, only a few weeks before he was deposed in a military takeover, Nkrumah explained at the Opening of Parliament the phenomenon of recent coups in other African states, justifying in the process the dismissal of the generals two years earlier:

Normally, the duty of the armed forces is to defend and support the Civil Government, and not to overthrow it. It is not the duty of the army to rule or govern, because it has no political mandate… What therefore has led to the military intrusions and interference and violence which we are now witnessing… Their root cause can be found not in the life and traditions of the African people, but in the manoeuvres of neo-colonialism.[[617]](#footnote-617)

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During this period, Nkrumah framed his argument in this dual discourse of Pan-African nationalism, opposed to neo-colonialism, the main enemy of the people. Nkrumah repeatedly referenced ‘the people’ as the source of CPP legitimacy, relying on the language of mass nationalism to justify the increasingly autocratic political process. What constituted ‘the people’ was however another area of necessary ambiguity: the phrase was used to denote both Ghanaian nation and the African continent.

Nkrumah’s final foray into international affairs should be understood as an effort to re-establish himself as an important global actor, thereby bypassing his problems and opponents at home and on the African continent. It was however this initiative that would provide the coup leaders with the opportunity to overthrow his government. Nkrumah’s decision to travel to Peking in February 1966 enjoyed, as Scott Thompson has described it, ‘a solid beginning.’ He sought to mediate a peace agreement between the US and North Vietnam (DRV) to end the escalating violence in the country. However, as with many of Nkrumah’s later attempts to assert leadership in international affairs, ‘the genuine opportunity to exert influence was lost in pursuit of illusions; professional judgment was subordinated to personal ambition.’[[618]](#footnote-618)

Nkrumah’s involvement in diplomatic efforts to end the Vietnam War was arguably an attempt to demonstrate Africa’s relevance in international mediation, and perhaps also to display Nkrumah’s influence to the United States. Mazrui suggests that Nkrumah’s involvement in mediation was based on ‘his belief that Africa had been kept out of decisions affecting the world for far too long.’[[619]](#footnote-619) As there was international support at the UN and among Commonwealth members for outside mediation, Nkrumah took the lead, initially suggesting that the United States temporarily halt their bombing campaign against North Vietnam. When the US refused, Nkrumah opted to support the Commonwealth proposal for an Afro-Asian group of mediators. Ali Mazrui has noted that the level of concern that Nkrumah showed the conflict was not borne simply of his desire to both assert and lead an African presence in international affairs, it was also a result of the widely-held fear that the local conflict could escalate into global conflict if any superpowers were to become involved.[[620]](#footnote-620) The presence of both the USA and China in Vietnam thus added to the urgency of the situation. In July 1965, a Commonwealth delegation including Ghanaian representatives visited North Vietnamese leaders to garner opinions and potential support for an envisaged Afro-Asian-organised mediation conference between the protagonists.[[621]](#footnote-621) As it became clear that these efforts would need the backing of the DRV’s most prominent supporter, China, Nkrumah personally arranged meetings with Chinese leaders to discuss the issue.

On 21 February 1966, Nkrumah flew from Accra to Peking, leaving Ghana at a time when the ‘danger signs [were] mounting.’[[622]](#footnote-622) Nkrumah had not travelled abroad since the OAU summit in Addis Ababa in 1963 and, as Bretton noted, ‘one absolute requirement for maintaining personal rule is [the] continuous physical presence of the ruler at the center of the control machinery.’[[623]](#footnote-623) In Nkrumah’s absence, opposition forces within Ghana mobilised. On 24 February, a convoy of military vehicles arrived in Accra, bringing troops from Tamale and Kumasi directly to Flagstaff House, Radio Ghana, and Osu Castle. Within an hour, the Accra police force had arrested most government ministers. Shortly after 6 a.m., Colonel Emmanuel Kotoka took to the radio to explain the events that had taken place:

Fellow citizens of Ghana, I have come to inform you that the Military, in co-operation with the Ghana Police, have taken over the government of Ghana today. The myth surrounding Nkrumah has been broken. Parliament is dissolved and Kwame Nkrumah is dismissed from office. All ministers are also dismissed. The Convention People’s Party is disbanded with effect from now. It will be illegal for any person to belong to it. We appeal to you to be calm and co-operative; all persons in detention will be released in due course. Please stay by your radios and await further details.[[624]](#footnote-624)

According to Kotoka’s friend and co-conspirator, General Afrifa, there was only limited resistance to the coup, involving some skirmishes around the Presidential Palace.[[625]](#footnote-625) Nkrumah’s post-coup memoirs, written in Guinean exile, suggest otherwise. He had heard reports of indiscriminate shooting, looting, and vandalism on the part of the rebelling army, which he inferred as the breakdown of law and order in his absence.[[626]](#footnote-626) To those who supported it, the coup meant liberation and a return to democracy. To those who opposed it, it was cowardly and dictatorial, a removal of the people’s choice in favour of a military elite.

It is particularly noteworthy that the army officers who overthrew Nkrumah utilised some of the same discursive meta-narratives he had successfully deployed to win and to advance his hold on power over the previous decade. In the radio broadcasts made by the military leaders on the day of the coup, they expressed their commitment to Pan-Africanism, couched in the language of nationalism. Nkrumah was characterised as a national enemy, a despot who had gone too far. As a result, Kotoka and his allies were forced to act on behalf of the nation and of the people. In one radio broadcast, the military council that assumed control of the country stated:

The Army command with the co-operation of the Ghana Police and with the full support of the people decided that the time had come to re-set alight the fire of freedom and justice – the twin and sacred words of Ghana’s motto – which two words had been subjected to degradation and abuse.[[627]](#footnote-627)

Yet in the same broadcast, it was made clear that this was the Pan-Africanism of the OAU, rather than that espoused by Nkrumah:

We have sought to … free ourselves from the despotic and tyrannical rule of Kwame Nkrumah... We affirm our support and belief in the O.A.U. whose charter and constitution still guide out actions. Our belief in the emancipation of the African continent has not been shaken. And we shall forever support this noble organisation.[[628]](#footnote-628)

Indeed, the new rulers of Ghana prioritised cautious, moderate diplomacy and friendly inter-state African relations (which Nkrumah was perceived to have damaged) and concerted action over single continental government. In short, the coup resulted in the realignment of Ghana’s Pan-Africanism with that articulated by the OAU.

## Conclusion

This chapter has sought to identify the principal turning points in Nkrumah’s interpretation and use of Pan-Africanism and nationalism, the two meta-narratives which underpinned his political beliefs and the formation of his government’s domestic and foreign policies. Through a study of key events, and with a particular focus on Nkrumah’s reaction to and characterisation of them, it is clear that these were neither static concepts, nor did they operate entirely independent of each other. Over the nine years that Nkrumah held power, there were three identifiable phases in their appropriation and discursive deployment.

The period immediately after independence, from March 1957 to 1959, was one in which a relatively moderate nationalism held sway. It was the paradigm through which Independence had been achieved, and was subsequently deployed to explain international relations and economic development in the young country. Although the arguments and discourses that Nkrumah articulated were primarily couched in the language of nationalism, there was nevertheless an underlying Pan-Africanism that informed his decisions. This period was characterised by Nkrumah’s relatively positive relations with the western powers and his participation in the non-aligned movement.

The second phase was characterised by a more limited deployment of nationalism and the growing strength of a radical Pan-Africanism in Nkrumah’s discourses on politics, economics and society. Once again, the dominance of one meta-narrative did not result in the exclusion of the other. This period, from 1960 to early 1964, forced Nkrumah to contend with the changing reality of African and international affairs. The growing number of independent states, the development of regional blocs, and particularly the Congo Crisis, all forced a reconsideration or reinterpretation of Nkrumah’s position. As a result, Nkrumah articulated growing hostility towards the West and to capitalism, through a narrowing interpretation of Pan-Africanism that increasingly focused on a specific set of criteria, on which his support for liberation movements was determined: ideological perspective, a commitment to African unity, and perhaps most importantly, a commitment to Nkrumah as director of the Pan-African project.

The final period, from 1964 to the coup in February 1966, was characterised by a distinctive Pan-African nationalism. It was in these final years that the two meta-narratives were recast, through an engagement of specific discourses, into a singular concept. This was used to legitimise and justify both the government and its policies, including its increasingly unpopular approach to support for liberation movements across Africa, not only against colonial states but also some post-colonial African governments. In attempting to combine the two meta-narratives, Nkrumah was attempting by ideological means to reassert his control of a deteriorating situation that was increasingly out of his control. ‘The people’ that had supported him in his rise to power were ultimately abandoned by him in his search for Pan-African unity, and the nation that he had led to independence rejected the heavy price he expected it to pay in the name of Pan-African unity.

The extent to which the coup which overthrew Nkrumah had popular support is a highly contested issue. Those who remained loyal to the former president claimed foul play; that Nkrumah had pushed against neo-colonialism and the Western powers had finally pushed back. Those in the opposition praised the actions of the generals, liberating the nation from the grasp of a dictator who was ruining their country. It is however telling of the continuing potency of these Pan-Africanist and nationalist meta-narratives that both sides continued to characterise these events in such terms.

The following chapter will examine how the period of Nkrumah’s rule of independent Ghana were experienced by the small group of African American émigrés who moved to Ghana after 1957. As they attempted to fulfil their own individual Pan-Africanist dreams, they had to confront the realities of life in Africa, a place which could no longer be an imaginary construct. Simultaneously, they would have to respond to the Pan-Africanism they experienced in Ghana. As this chapter has demonstrated, this Pan-Africanism changed over time, and as such, the African American émigrés had to adapt their views and ideas in response to this as well.

# **Chapter 5. Confronting Pan-Africanism: African-Americans in Ghana, 1957-1966**

*In another way, we have a strong link with the new world. There exists a firm bond of sympathy between us and the Negro peoples of the Americas. The ancestors of so many of them come from this country. Even today in the West Indies, it is possible to hear words and phrases which come from various languages of the Gold Coast.*

* Kwame Nkrumah, *I Speak of Freedom* (1973)

A few minutes before midnight, on 6 March 1957, the British flag at Christiansborg Castle, the symbolic home of colonial authority in the Gold Coast, was lowered for the last time. Foreign dignitaries and journalists from around the world were in attendance to witness this historic event, and Nkrumah could proudly declare to the world that Ghana was in the vanguard of continental independence. His announcement of Independence at the Old Polo Grounds appeared to reaffirm his commitment to Pan-Africanism, and his leadership of the decolonisation process confirmed his role as a national leader. Although, as mentioned before, Nkrumah had downplayed the radical aspects of his politics in the run-up to that moment, he had successfully led the country to independence, confirming to his supporters worldwide his image as the guiding light of continental liberation. Ghana was now a bastion of independence, a base for freedom fighters from the African continent, and a source of inspiration for the wider world.

Africans of the diaspora were quick to note this inspiration, and many now looked to the country for support. Returning to the case studies of individual migrants initially examined in Chapter 3, this chapter will analyse their experiences of living in Ghana, examining how they responded to the changing interpretations of Pan-Africanism and nationalism during their time there. It will initially discuss their expectations of life in Ghana, specifically what role they believed they would play in the newly independent country. Having already constructed ideas and opinions of ‘Africa,’ for some these ideas worked in combination with a Garveyite belief in the need to ‘return’ to their ancestral homeland, and as such they imagined a life for themselves in Ghana, a life which would allow them to exercise certain beliefs and hopes that were unavailable to them in the USA.

The second section of this chapter will then examine the realities that these individuals experienced in Ghana. Situated, as they were, ‘at the center of international anticolonial projects,’ the work that they undertook, their social lives, and their experiences of politics gave them a unique perspective of Ghana’s early years, but living there also challenged their preconceived notions of Africa, and the aspirations they held for Ghana.[[629]](#footnote-629) The realities that these men and women documented and recounted were framed in the prior experiences and memories that each brought with them, and with the public discourses with which they engaged both before and during their time in Ghana.[[630]](#footnote-630) It was not a homogenous group or class of African Americans that chose to emigrate. There was a wide diversity of life experiences among those who left the USA, and this is reflected in the diversity of their responses to life in Ghana. To fully understand and appreciate this diversity, a wide range of sources is needed, and in looking at memoirs, both published and unpublished, personal letters and articles written by the individuals, it is possible to grasp the range of experiences they had in Ghana, and their reflections upon them in the aftermath of their time there.

## Hopes and Expectations of Ghanaian Life, 1957-1962

For several decades, Africa and the mass anti-colonial independence movements had provided an increasingly popular symbol of liberation for African American political activists.[[631]](#footnote-631) For moderates engaged with the NAACP, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and similar organisations, African independence movements highlighted the strength and power of mass involvement and peaceful protest. For more radical activists, the CPP, Nkrumah and the politics that he promoted - the unity of African peoples, nonalignment, and notions of African pride (expressed through the ‘African Personality’) - provided a powerful antidote to both the pervasive racism of US politics and the moderation of the NAACP-led CRM.[[632]](#footnote-632) As Tyson notes, a small group of radicals perceived a powerful connection between their ‘freedom struggles’ and ‘the anticolonialism of the emerging Third World, especially African nationalism.’[[633]](#footnote-633) In 1953, Robert F. Williams, friend and mentor to Julian Mayfield, wrote ‘Go Awaken my People,’ a poem which captured the role of Africa in the development of civil rights and black power ideologies:

Go awaken my people from Texas to Virginia,

Tell them of our glorious brothers in the colony of Kenya.

Go tell my people that the dawn has come,

Sound the trumpet, beat the drum!

Let the tyrant shudder, let the oppressor tremble at the thunder,

For the tide of humanity rises to sweep the despot under.[[634]](#footnote-634)

For some African Americans, the march towards African independence was a partial model of political change, elements of which could be emulated in the United States.[[635]](#footnote-635) For a smaller minority however, the continent’s rapid march towards political independence was too attractive to simply observe from afar. They wished to be a part of it. Interest in and engagement with Ghana increased throughout the 1950s, and there was a steadily growing African American presence in the country towards the latter half of the decade.[[636]](#footnote-636)

Horace Mann Bond and St Clair Drake were the first of the group of émigrés to arrive in the country. Bond’s focus throughout his career had been on the improvement of educational standards for African Americans and the global black community. Though not as explicitly political in nature as some of the other émigrés’ activities, Bond believed that education was a key foundation for the uplift of this population. Throughout his working life, he attempted to gently influence the policies and decision-making bodies involved in education, and thus Rita Norton is correct in her summation of him as a ‘behind the scenes activist,’ adopting a guiding, almost paternalistic, role in his social interactions, and volunteering ‘for roles that would allow him to influence policies which would help advance long-range goals for black civil rights.’[[637]](#footnote-637) It was perhaps this belief that he could quietly guide Ghana’s government that directed his focus to the country, and helped him identify the role he believed he could play in Ghana’s development.

However, Bond appears to have had an additional reason for his interest in Ghana. Although he went to Ghana to support the Africanisation of the education system, he also worked closely with an American corporation – United American Management Corporation (UAMC). This company was involved in finance, construction and mineral extraction across Africa. Although the precise nature of Bond’s work for United American is unclear, Wayne J. Urban suggests that UAMC President L. Edgar Detwiler sought out Bond’s help as a middleman precisely because of his connection to the new political elite in the country. [[638]](#footnote-638) Bond used his network of colleagues and associates to introduce Detwiler and UAMC officials to key individuals in the Ghanaian government and civil service using the connections he had established prior to leaving the USA in 1957. It is however unclear if his motivation for working with UAMC was simply a financial consideration (as the corporation paid for his travel) or whether he believed building business links between the USA and Ghana as a precursor to (or necessary part of) a global Pan-African network.

Bond’s relationship with UAMC undoubtedly problematises any neat characterisation of his relationship with Pan-Africanism. Unlike other Pan-Africanists who saw their embrace of the concept as central to the resolution of political and personal problems, Bond appears to have identified with Africa in a way that was entirely compatible with the promotion of American business interests allowed him to maintain a patriotic pro-American worldview.[[639]](#footnote-639) It is perhaps best to understand him as inhabiting an ambiguous space, in which Pan-Africanist radicalism could be pursued alongside American national and commercial interests. Pan-Africanism underpinned his interest in Africa, and the potential that Ghana held for his particular ambitions regarding education, but a desire to develop the USA’s position in Africa shaped the actions he believed necessary to do this.

Though he had made numerous trips to the Gold Coast prior to 1957, Bond’s primary reason for travelling there after independence was the invitation to be involved in the Africanisation of the curriculum and the staff at the University of Ghana (this will be discussed below). Whilst this was in the immediate term a national project, Bond linked it to a global Pan-African ambition – the (re)establishment of African culture and history as equal to that of the West. He clearly hoped that Ghana, or at least its education system, would provide an example of Afrocentric education that could be emulated around the world.[[640]](#footnote-640) As such, Ghana provided something of a blank canvas upon which he could deploy his own expertise to develop a global black education programme.

Through his work at Lincoln University, Bond had established connections with a number of future African leaders, including Nkrumah. Through this friendship, Bond was able to offer the opportunity of a lifetime to his friend and colleague, St Clair Drake. Like Bond, Drake worked on projects he believed were explicitly linked to the projection of the ‘African personality,’ Nkrumah’s attempt to assert an African voice in international affairs. Drake also believed that Ghana and Nkrumah would provide a model that Africans across the continent and the diaspora could reproduce.

Drake also shared Bond’s hope that Africa would provide the opportunity for African American experts to make decisive contributions to the development of the continent. But more than Bond, Drake was deeply committed to the political life of independent Africa, and rather than being a guiding influence, Drake was more interested in supporting the efforts of Africans to establish themselves as experts and leaders in their own right. His first opportunity in political affairs came on the eve of independence, when he advised the Prime Minister’s Office on which African Americans should be invited to the celebrations, identifying high-ranking public figures including Thurgood Marshal, A. Philip Randolph, and Willard Townsend.[[641]](#footnote-641) Though he did not himself attend the celebrations, he was clearly invested in presenting the ‘best’ of African America to the newly independent state. Through recommending these men to the Ghanaian authorities, Drake was thereby establishing a ‘class’ of African Americans that he hoped Africans would draw on to support independent governments, and in so doing positioning himself as a well-connected individual who would prove indispensable to Ghana’s political elite.

In 1958, Drake and his wife, Elizabeth, moved to Ghana.[[642]](#footnote-642) Where previously he had visited to undertake research for jobs in the USA, he was now taking a larger step to support Ghana’s independence and development. Drake had been hired as the head of the Department of Sociology at the University of Ghana at Legon. Whilst the main purpose for his employment was teaching, his position at the university allowed Drake to integrate his political interests and activism into academic research, reflecting his belief that politics and academia should function in concert.[[643]](#footnote-643) He had already sought to make his research politically relevant. His first major survey of the Gold Coast was undertaken while he still worked at the University of Chicago, in 1955. This was an analysis of mass media, examining how people used the media, and what they read and listened to.[[644]](#footnote-644) The results provided the CPP with vital information about the concerns and interests of Gold Coast citizens, and highlighted Drake’s abilities to undertake research useful to the relevant authorities. His following research projects will be discussed in detail below.

Julian Mayfield arrived in Ghana much later, in 1961. Having fled the United States with his wife several months earlier, he spent some time in Britain applying for visas before moving on to Africa. He never gave an explicit reason for choosing Ghana as his destination. It is however probable that Ghana’s political atmosphere and the policies and ideological position of its leaders appealed to Mayfield. As discussed previously, Mayfield had by 1961 already attempted to place race at the centre of his developing worldview. Mayfield thus believed that in Ghana, under an African leader, he would be able to fully realise his own potential, as a writer and Black activist.[[645]](#footnote-645) The role that Nkrumah played in influencing Mayfield, and the importance placed on Pan-Africanism was certainly reflected in the work that he undertook whilst in Ghana (see below).

Mayfield reflected on his experiences of life in Ghana only after he left the country in 1966. He did however write extensively during his time in Ghana, working as a freelance journalist and as a writer in the President’s Office, though these pieces were primarily concerned with events in the USA and represented Mayfield’s attempts to continue the work he had undertaken there. He sought to define a connection that could bridge the geographical divide between the diaspora and the continent, and used journalism to do this. His unpublished memoirs, the fullest account of his time in Ghana, must be read with a degree of caution precisely because they were written retrospectively, almost a decade after his departure. Whilst Mayfield wrote that he initially experienced incredible joy and fulfilment at life in Ghana, by the end of his stay, he appeared completely disenchanted by the experience, and ultimately let down by Ghana’s leaders. His own accounts, written afterward, are not simply an account of his stay. Rather, they demonstrate an attempt to explain this distancing between his own hopes and the perceived failures of Nkrumah and his colleagues. In summarising one of Mayfield’s manuscripts, publisher Angus Cameron astutely summed up Mayfield’s own conflicting views of Ghana, ‘Kwame Nkrumah is, in this manuscript a symbol of what is good, what is bad, what is feasible, what is impossible in Africa'.[[646]](#footnote-646)

It was in fact Maya Angelou who best attempted to capture Mayfield’s early attitude to life in Ghana, and his at times unquestioning commitment to their African experience as the remedy to the racism of the USA.

The group’s leader, if such a collection of eccentric egos could be led, was Julian … [Mayfield] brought to Africa varying talents, energies, vigor, youth and terrible yearnings to be accepted. On Julian’s side porch during warm black nights, our voices were raised in attempts to best each other in lambasting America and extolling Africa.[[647]](#footnote-647)

Angelou, who also wrote about this period more than a decade later, presents a far more challenging picture of their early stay in Ghana. She recalled a bittersweet relationship with Ghana upon her arrival, and in her recollection of Mayfield in 1963, she suggests that he may have been aware by this time of the problematic nature of the unquestioning support for Nkrumah and his vision of Ghana amongst their group of African-Americans:

… [U]nder no circumstances did we mention our disillusionment at being overlooked by the Ghanaians. We had come home, and if home was not what we had expected, never mind, our need for belonging allowed us to ignore the obvious and to create real places or even illusory places, befitting our imagination.[[648]](#footnote-648)

Whilst Angelou may have felt the realities of life encroaching on the small group of émigrés early in her stay, Mayfield arrived in Ghana two years prior to her, at a time when Nkrumah’s star was still rising internationally. The government’s Pan-African policies were seemingly popular, and Nkrumah still appeared to be a dominant figure amongst Africa’s independence movements; there was therefore no immediate reason for Mayfield to doubt his assumptions about the country and its leader. Certainly, in comparison with the United States, Nkrumah appeared to offer everything that Mayfield was searching for. By 1961 at least, neither the US government nor the leaders of civil rights organisations had successfully addressed the welfare and socio-economic conditions of African Americans, instead prioritising the voting issues and segregation and seeking to achieve ‘formal equality.’[[649]](#footnote-649) Kevin Gaines argues that it was the inability of mainstream CRM groups to address such issues that made ‘Ghana’ a symbol of black power in the minds of African Americans.[[650]](#footnote-650) Nkrumah’s reputation, and the claims he made for the country, did not have to reflect the reality of Ghanaian life, so long as Julian Mayfield and others who watched it from afar believed it to be true. Like its celestial namesake, the Black Star of Africa – the very symbol of Ghana’s independence – drew the diaspora towards it with an almost gravitational pull. Mayfield’s reaction to life in Ghana was, he tells us, overwhelmingly positive. In Nkrumah he identified a leader whose politics were similar to his own.[[651]](#footnote-651) Nkrumah’s brand of radical African socialism was a welcome antidote, for Mayfield, to the politics of the US civil rights movement. He saw in Ghana the realised potential of black people and the benefits that self-rule had brought to Africa.

Mayfield’s move was a momentous experience for him, but it was inevitably overshadowed by the arrival in Ghana of W.E.B. Du Bois. Du Bois’ decision to move to Ghana was mostly ignored by the American press, since he was now seen as a leader of the past. His ‘homecoming’ to Ghana was, in sharp contrast, celebrated in Ghana’s national press. Du Bois, who had only visited Ghana on one other occasion, was already ninety-three years old when he left the United States for Ghana in October 1961. He had by this time virtually retired from public life in the US, having separated from the NAACP and endured a high-profile court battle with the American government. Though his legacy as an early champion of African American rights was secure, Du Bois was no longer the only champion, and his particular skills were considered antiquated.[[652]](#footnote-652)

Du Bois had first met Nkrumah at the Manchester Congress in 1945. Despite their ideological differences, Nkrumah recognised the important contribution that the elderly gentleman had made to the African cause.[[653]](#footnote-653) Du Bois was also something of a celebrity, a statesman without a state who could bring gravitas to Nkrumah’s Pan-African ambitions. Unlike the others studied here, Du Bois was invited personally by the Prime Minister.[[654]](#footnote-654) It is unclear whether he would have considered moving to any African state had it not been for the invitation. Though he held Africa, and (increasingly) African liberation movements, in high regard as a model for African American liberation, he had hitherto made no attempts to emigrate. Unlike Garvey, who considered the physical return to Africa fundamental to the liberation of the diaspora, Du Bois had been more concerned with emphasising the cultural links between the two communities and improving the state of African American society *within* the US.[[655]](#footnote-655) This had however changed, and Du Bois’ participation in the 1945 Manchester Congress was a clear demonstration of his increasing belief that the African continent itself was the locus of African and diaspora liberation. He was however unable to attend Ghana’s Independence Day celebrations because the US government seized his passport, and it was not until 1961 that he left for Ghana.

For Du Bois, it was not simply the appeal of Pan-African politics that took him to Ghana. Rather, it was the materialisation of his cultural Pan-Africanism, and specifically the possible realisation of his long dreamt of *Encyclopaedia Africana* project. When Nkrumah informed him in February 1961 that funds had been secured for the project, this provided reason enough to move.[[656]](#footnote-656) In this *Encyclopaedia*, the cultural component of Du Bois’ conceptualisation of Pan-Africanism was fully expressed. The project was intended to catalogue, detail and express the cultures of Africa, and the contributions of African cultures to the world. Nkrumah, speaking in 1964 (the year after Du Bois’ death), noted:

To him this was an exciting States [sic] to produce such an Encyclopaedia. It is perhaps not without significance that Du Bois should have to wait until the very sunset of his life to find encouragement and support for this project, not in the abundance of the United States, but rather in an Africa liberated from the cramping and oppressive conditions of colonial rule.[[657]](#footnote-657)

Though he died in 1963, and the project was never completed, for Du Bois this opportunity was undeniable proof of the status of Nkrumah’s Ghana as the global leader of Pan-Africanism. His enthusiasm for the project was palpable, and his interest in making it a success was apparent.[[658]](#footnote-658) The project itself could also be encompassed within the contrasting visions of Pan-Africanism of Du Bois and Nkrumah. Therefore, for Du Bois, Ghana represented both the culmination of his life’s work, and the potential for true Pan-African unity.

The last of this sample group to move to Ghana was Maya Angelou, who arrived there in July 1963. Angelou’s subsequent account of her time in Ghana provides one of the most detailed accounts from an émigré perspective in the early years of independence. As mentioned in Chapter 3, Angelou had decided to leave Egypt and a failed relationship, but her move to Ghana was unplanned. Intending to spend only a few days there en route to Liberia, her son’s car crash and his subsequent recovery prevented her from leaving.[[659]](#footnote-659) As his health improved, Angelou began to venture out into Ghanaian society, encountering, amongst others, her old friend Julian Mayfield and his group of African American friends, who she referred to as ‘Revolutionist Returnees.’[[660]](#footnote-660)

It was only at this point, two months after her arrival that Angelou began to express an interest in Ghana and in staying there. In her autobiography she recalled her delight at the sight of a black government in action:

Seeing Africans enter and leave ... [Flagstaff House]... made me tremble with an awe I had never known. Their authority on the marble steps again proved that Whites had been wrong all along. Black and brown skin did not herald debasement and a divinely created inferiority.[[661]](#footnote-661)

Although she describes Kwame Nkrumah as a ‘brilliant president,’ she recalls it was not the politics of Ghana, but rather its people, that attracted her most:

I admitted that while Ghana’s domestic and foreign policy were stimulating, I was captured by the Ghanaian people. Their skins were the color of my childhood cravings: peanut butter, licorice, chocolate and caramel. Theirs was the laughter of home, quick and without artifice. The erect and graceful walk of the women reminded me of my Arkansas grandmother, Sunday-hatted, on her way to church. I listened to men talk, and whether or not I understood their meaning, there was a melody as familiar as sweet potato pie, reminding me of my Uncle Tommy Baxter in Santa Monica, California. So I had finally come home.[[662]](#footnote-662)

This was, perhaps, a romanticised version of Ghana, written long after she returned to the USA, but the idea of ‘home’ was a crucial motivation for moving to Ghana, and shaped Angelou’s view of the country. Indeed, it continues to be a key attitude amongst more contemporary diaspora ‘returnees’ to Africa.[[663]](#footnote-663) Angelou had never been a particularly radical individual. She had previously worked with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and broadly supported the values and aims of the CRM. It was during her time in Cairo that Angelou began to express an interest in Pan-Africanism, and although she did not adopt the meta-narrative as a personal ideology, she was increasingly sympathetic to its proponents and its aims. Angelou’s relationship with Ghana and with Africa must therefore be seen as more spiritual, rooted in a faith in a common ancestry and heritage. For Angelou, living in Sub-Saharan Africa was a homecoming. Her ancestors had been taken from Africa, but had survived the cruelty of slavery, so that she could return to the once-again independent Ghana.

This sense of returning ‘home’ influenced Angelou’s perspective of Ghana throughout her time in the country. She was searching for a place, both physical and spiritual, that welcomed her as much as she wanted to be there. This, then, can be seen as her primary hope for life in Ghana – that Ghana, her ancestral homeland, would welcome her as the ‘prodigal child, having strayed …had at last arisen and directed herself back to the welcoming arms of the family…’.[[664]](#footnote-664) Angelou however, as mentioned before, also recalled an awareness of the dislocated space she inhabited in Ghana. The other émigrés examined here also developed, to varying extents, an awareness of their liminal and contradictory position; as both ‘returnees’ and as foreigners in a culture that was not their own. The following section will examine the processes by which they came to this realisation, and its consequences.

## The Realities of Life in Ghana, 1962-1966

As discussed previously, African Americans, and the group of émigrés under study here, identified, through a creative construction of ‘Africa’ and Ghana, a place in which they could invest their hopes and ambitions for the future. However, by taking the decision to relocate to Ghana, émigrés were forced to reconsider these hopes, as they were confronted by a reality which challenged their expectations and left them re-evaluating their roles in both Ghana and Pan-African liberation struggles. Their respective re-evaluations were in part a consequence of the lack of clarity regarding the role that the Ghanaian government expected diaspora immigrants to play.

Nkrumah had, at Independence, sought to establish Ghana first and foremost as a strong independent nation. The lack of emphasis placed on Pan-Africanism in the early years after independence meant there was only limited discussion of the meta-narrative in the national context, and it was not immediately clear that Pan-Africanism was, in Nkrumah’s vision, an essentially Africa-led movement. Whilst Ghana was promoted on the global stage as the bastion of African liberation and African rule, and thus as a desirable place for *all* ‘Africans’ to go, it was made clear that no-one would be welcome who did not contribute through hard work to the cause of Ghana’s ‘economic liberation.’[[665]](#footnote-665) In particular, those wanting to ‘return’ had to be able to make a contribution that Ghanaians could not. This implicit assumption on the part of Nkrumah and the government was not however explicitly expressed in law, and thus those who emigrated there did not always fulfil this basic criterion. Angelou recounts an occasion where, in Ghana, she met an African American couple, newly arrived to the country.[[666]](#footnote-666) The husband had been a dock worker in Chicago, and his wife a Playboy Bunny. Their skills were not in great demand in Ghana. However, not every new American arrival was as ill-suited to Nkrumah’s vision of Pan-African Ghana.

As discussed above, Du Bois was invited to Ghana to undertake a project specifically in the interests of Pan-Africanism and the support of African heritage. His work complemented and supported the government’s aims. Indeed, the Academy of Science and Knowledge was a quasi-governmental body, and Nkrumah was its Chairman.[[667]](#footnote-667) Du Bois’ status in Ghana as a doyen of Pan-Africanism was maintained in the national press through articles he wrote about African civilisations. This elevated status removed him, to some extent, from the daily life of many other African American émigrés.

This also meant that he was insulated from the effect of the changing relationship between the USA and Ghana. Gaines has noted that this relationship, though never particularly stable for ideological reasons, was of pressing importance due to the demands of the Cold War.[[668]](#footnote-668) During the first years of independence, Nkrumah’s expressed views on socialism and on the Cold War were limited to vague pronouncements, in a context in which his government relied heavily on funding from western states for major modernisation projects. In this context, positive diplomatic relations were of more importance than ideology in the search for rapid development. One indication of Nkrumah’s willingness to downplay diplomatic conflict was his handling of the Gbedemah incident.[[669]](#footnote-669) In October 1957, K.A. Gbedemah, a close friend of Nkrumah and Finance Minister (1954-1961), had travelled to the United States on business, but was turned away (along with an African American friend) from a restaurant in Delaware.[[670]](#footnote-670) Gbedemah was, of course, infuriated by the experience, and contacted media outlets about the incident. The event made headlines in the United States, and within a matter of days, Gbedemah had been invited to the White House for a meeting with the President.[[671]](#footnote-671)

In stark contrast to the immediate response of the US government, Nkrumah’s reaction was to play the whole event down. The incident was a non-story in Ghana’s press. There were no public pronouncements against the US authorities or racial segregation there. The government’s response to the Gbedemah incident was undoubtedly influenced by, and therefore subordinated to the necessities of, the ongoing negotiations over the Volta River hydroelectric station funding.[[672]](#footnote-672) As Ebere Nwaubani notes, ‘There was certainly a great deal of pragmatism in Nkrumah’s foreign policy, a pragmatism dictated by the Volta project… the USA and Ghana needed each other. For its own part, Ghana needed US assistance for its economic development...’[[673]](#footnote-673) This is particularly true of the initial independence period, when Ghana’s foreign policy lacked the militancy that characterised it in later years. Nkrumah was more concerned about ensuring funds for rapid national industrialisation and modernisation than ideological positioning.

Gaines argues that, as a consequence of the Cold War, diplomatic relations with the USA came to have a significant impact on the daily experiences of African Americans in Ghana.[[674]](#footnote-674) Regardless of the state of the relationship, the USA’s position gained a disproportionate level of influence and inadvertently shaped the experience of the émigré community. It should be noted, however, that as the above example indicates, these relations were initially cordial, at least in their public manifestation. Although Angelou, for example, was aware of the difficulties of being African American within Ghanaian society, the consequences of these developments in the US-Ghana relationship were not immediately visible to those in the émigré community.[[675]](#footnote-675)

Du Bois’ work in many ways protected him from the antagonisms of international affairs because his work engaged with Pan-Africanism, and not directly with communism. Similarly, Drake and Bond’s work was closely related to political life, and specifically the political life of Ghana and Africa. They carefully maintained an anti-colonial position without openly criticising the USA or Ghana’s Western partners. The social circles in which they moved reflected this relatively elite position and purpose, meaning that they had little contact with broader sections of the Ghanaian ‘masses.’ [[676]](#footnote-676) As a result, any changes in official international relations had a limited impact on these individuals. Drake’s work on the Tema Harbour reconstruction, and other sociological surveys, as well as the fact that the projects that he worked on were (for the most part) successfully completed, meant that for Drake at least, Nkrumahist policies were never under challenge, and therefore were not experienced as having failed.[[677]](#footnote-677)

The Tema redevelopment project had begun in 1951, after Nkrumah had become Leader of Government Business, still under the oversight of the colonial authorities. After independence the project progressed more rapidly, and the redevelopment of the small town into an industrial harbour became one of the flagship modernisation projects of the Nkrumah government.[[678]](#footnote-678) Drake’s role in this major project was to study the potential problems arising from modernisation and urbanisation, a subject on which he was already considered an expert in the United States.[[679]](#footnote-679) As mentioned before, Drake perceived this work in Ghana as complementary to, or guiding of, Nkrumah’s nationalist and Pan-Africanist policies. Nkrumah confirmed this when he spoke at the official opening of the new harbour in February, 1962:

By concerted action we can build international highways which will connect Tema to other capitals beyond the boundaries of Ghana… Thus, in this harbour of Tema, we see a unifying force and an essential requirement in the progress towards African unity… Takoradi harbour was conceived in the interest of a colonial economy. The vision which created Tema is entirely different. Tema is the signpost of the future. It represents the purposeful beginning of the industrialisation of Ghana.[[680]](#footnote-680)

Drake’s belief in Nkrumah and Ghana was being affirmed; he could see the outcome of his research take shape in the new town, a physical demonstration of Drake and Nkrumah’s commitment to both the development of Ghana and the unity of the African continent.

To the extent that Bond was engaged in nation-building projects, he, like Drake, was able to witness the physical implementation of his policy recommendations. He however never demonstrated the same level of support or reverence for Nkrumah as Drake; this reflected his particular interpretation of Pan-Africanism. In 1950, Bond had declared: ‘To Africa I carried lenses, some usual, some unique. I had had some study of African culture, economics, politics; twenty-five years of experience in American educational institutions; and a lifetime spent as an American of African descent… This last was my most special lens.’[[681]](#footnote-681) Urban argues that this aspect of Bond’s self-perception, his awareness of the African element of his identity, was a primary motivator for his interests and activities in Africa, as he searched for the ‘antecedents of his people.’[[682]](#footnote-682) This suggests that, for Bond, Ghana was as much about discovery for him as an American as it was about implementing an African paradigm.

As mentioned above, Bond’s relationship with Ghana was never as passive, nor his support for Nkrumah as unquestioning, as others such as Drake, and it was perhaps his commitment to the American aspect of his identity, and ultimately to the USA, that marked him out. As the above quote suggests, Bond saw his American identity as a strength that could be brought to bear in his work around the world. This is not to suggest that he distanced himself from all Afrocentric projects and opportunities. During his time in Ghana, he participated in a council investigating the Africanisation of the University and college curricula, as well the possible Africanisation of the staff, and in this endeavour he was ultimately successful. Overall, however, Bond’s experience was similar to that of Drake. As a consequence of his work and his social life, his contact with ‘ordinary’ Ghanaians was severely limited. The fact that he did not intend to settle permanently also limited his contact and socialisation with Ghanaians outside elite academic and political circles.

Wayne J. Urban suggests another reason for Bond’s distance from the political life of Ghana. He notes that Bond went to Africa as a representative of several major American corporations and universities.[[683]](#footnote-683) Bond hoped to promote, through closer business and education ties, between the newly independent African states and the USA, thereby promoting American values and outlook in the fractious Cold War world.[[684]](#footnote-684) He does, however, state that Bond sought to use these associations with corporations and private organisations to advance the cause of Africa in America, and to support the development of African education.[[685]](#footnote-685) Letters demonstrate his commitment in this regard, using his connections with US businesses to promote the effective Africanisation of Ghanaian business.[[686]](#footnote-686) In 1960, Bond wrote to a colleague in the US, that:

The development in Ghana (as seen in Accra)… places the problem of business education for that country on a very different plane than may be found in other areas.… I found that in Barclay’s Bank, in Accra, a handsome new banking facility [for training]… “Africanization” program has extended has extended to the bank… although there may be some provision of opportunity for observation, and practice … that would be sensible.[[687]](#footnote-687)

Whilst Bond was undoubtedly passionate about contributing to African development, it is clear that he, much like Du Bois, understood this contribution in paternalistic terms. This paternalism was demonstrated in his inaugural address as president of Lincoln University a decade earlier, when he stated that the University had been founded for the ‘redemption of Africa by American Negroes.’[[688]](#footnote-688) Though he never expanded on what he meant by ‘redemption,’ his membership of the Committee on the University of Ghana, and his desire to inform and guide the changes to the University from this position of seniority, were certainly complementary with this idea of African redemption.[[689]](#footnote-689)

The first meeting of this committee took place in December 1960. It was to make recommendations regarding the transformation of the University College of Ghana and the Kumasi College of Technology into fully-fledged universities. Several months later, the Committee produced a report making recommendations to Ghana’s Parliament. By the end of 1961, its recommendations had been accepted: University College was now upgraded to the University of Ghana, Legon, and the Kumasi College of Technology was rebranded the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. This gives a sense of both the narrow elite echelons of Ghanaian society amongst whom Bond (like Drake and Du Bois) moved, and the extent to which his views were fully accepted by and in accordance with the views of Ghana’s government. Bond’s view of Ghanaian development, and his faith in the role that he would play in it was thus unchallenged by his experiences there. Rather, his experiences validated his belief that African Americans could provide American leadership to Africa, and guide new states to maturity in line with western liberal politics.

It was however during this period, from late 1960 to 1961, that seeds of discord were sown between the Ghanaian authorities and African Americans living in the country. This was largely the result of the crisis that followed Congo’s achievement of independence in June 1960. Throughout 1960, Nkrumah had been developing his policy of ‘positive neutralism’ in foreign affairs, yet increasingly engaged with the Soviet Union to seek support for modernisation projects.[[690]](#footnote-690) This raised concerns in Washington, although the US ambassador in Accra argued that positive neutralism would not negatively affect Ghana’s relations with the USA.[[691]](#footnote-691) However, the interventions of both the USA and Ghana into the Congo crisis brought these latent tensions between the two governments to the fore.

As discussed previously, the USA’s interference in the Congo situation, as well as its attempt to use UN troops for their own purposes, increasingly alienated Ghanaian leaders and Lumumba’s supporters. The US authorities, who were already quietly concerned about Lumumba’s politics, grew alarmed when the Prime Minister turned to the Soviet Union for support against the Belgian presence in the country. He had previously requested a US presence, but this had been turned down, and when Lumumba requested Soviet support, they provided military advisors and weapons for the Congolese military. The US’ unwillingness to get directly involved did not go unnoticed, and increased suspicion about the Superpower’s intentions on the continent among Lumumba’s supporters and allies. Lumumba’s dismissal in September 1960 and his assassination in January 1961 further enraged his supporters and allies across Africa. Rumours of CIA involvement led to increasingly vocal criticism of US foreign policy in the Ghanaian press.

By January 1961, the attitudes of Ghana’s political elite towards the USA had cooled to the point where a Senate mission to Africa stated that

The extreme symptoms of this condition [are] Ghana's angry opposition to US policies, primarily toward the Congo, and secondarily toward Algeria and colonial issues raised at the UN. On our side, conjectures in the [US] press about Ghana slipping into the communist bloc have materially affected our official relations.[[692]](#footnote-692)

What had at first been a drift away from the USA, in line with Nkrumah’s policy of positive neutralism in the context of the Cold War, had by 1961 turned into a marked hostility towards the policies of the United States in Africa.

It was the American community resident in Accra who bore the brunt of this increased hostility, and the African Americans among them were not immune from this changed atmosphere. The fact that both Julian Mayfield and Maya Angelou moved to Ghana in this period of diplomatic dislocation ultimately characterised their experiences, in a highly negative manner. Mayfield, who moved to Ghana in late 1961, began his time there with a great sense of belonging and purpose.[[693]](#footnote-693) As highlighted above, Angelou’s recollection of Mayfield and his friends gives a different picture. Angelou, who moved to Ghana in 1963, suggested that Mayfield’s group was by that time aware of the contradictions and difficulties facing African Americans living in Ghana, though also that they were unwilling to openly acknowledge these problems.[[694]](#footnote-694) This suggests that in that two-year period, the declining diplomatic relationship between Ghana and the USA began to affect the émigré communities directly.

The principal sources of information on Mayfield’s life in Ghana are the unpublished manuscripts written in the 1970s after he returned to the US.[[695]](#footnote-695) The retrospective nature of these sources makes it difficult to gauge Mayfield’s feelings about Africa and Ghana as he experienced them at the time, since they were written after his radical change of opinion, and are characterised by the negative feelings with which he left Ghana in 1966. However, his work in the Publicity Secretariat of the President’s Office and at the state-owned *Ghanaian Times* also suggests a growing awareness and potential discomfort with the relationship between African Americans and Ghanaians (if not with Ghana more generally). These two jobs appear to have overlapped considerably. The *Ghanaian Times* was a government-owned publication, and like all newspapers, was subject to state censorship. Though the precise relationship between the newspaper and the President’s Office was vague, it is likely that much of the work that Mayfield undertook was in relation to both jobs.

Mayfield recalled that in his role at the Publicity Secretariat, he ‘produced mostly unsigned material for broadcasting and reproduction in the national newspapers.’[[696]](#footnote-696) However, it is unclear whether the articles that he did specifically author and publish in newspapers were a part of his work at the President’s Office or a private undertaking on his part.[[697]](#footnote-697) Despite his interest and support for African affairs, and particularly for radical African politics, his newspaper articles were almost exclusively about events in the United States. This is of significance when we consider Mayfield’s attitudes towards the civil rights movement. Before he left the US in 1961, he had become disillusioned with the demands and achievements of the CRM. This opinion did not change during (or after) his time in Ghana. For example, in a newspaper article about the 1963 Accra demonstration supporting the March on Washington, Mayfield claimed that the ‘Kennedy Administration’s civil rights bill “doesn’t go far enough,” continuing:

The rights for which Afro-Americans are fighting were guaranteed to our country’s citizens generations ago by the amendments to the American Constitution… The fact that no government has been willing to enforce those guarantees is indicative of the moral failure of a society which preaches to the world that it is the best and most democratic on earth.[[698]](#footnote-698)

Despite his opinions on the failures of the Kennedy administration and the movement itself, Mayfield still attended the march in Accra referred to. It is also possible that he played a role in organising the event. He was in the front line of the march, and was widely quoted in press reports on the day. However, it is impossible to state with any certainty whether this is the case. In August 1964, he commented on a photo of James Farmer taken during the Harlem Riots the month before. Of the man bloodied and being dragged off by police officers, Mayfield declared ironically that ‘[when he] preaches “passive resistance” to white violence… You see what happens.’[[699]](#footnote-699) In the same article, he wrote: ‘The spirit of freedom and defiance is greater than any force the white racists of America can mount. It cannot be stilled. Spurred on by the African Revolution and the support of their African brothers, the battle will continue… unabated.’[[700]](#footnote-700) Mayfield was not alone at the newspaper in his opinions on the issue. A few months earlier, in May 1964, the *Ghanaian Times* editor-in-chief, and Mayfield’s superior, T.D. Baffoe, returned from a trip to the USA as part of a Ghanaian delegation. Commenting on what he witnessed, he wrote:

The Afro-Americans’ struggle strengthened by the successes of the African Liberation movement and the social and ideological revolution raging in our continent, is now beyond the point of appeasement and empty civil rights platitudes… The feeble [civil rights] leadership that had risen every now and then had only led the struggling and angry masses in demonstrations into the cages of police assaults and into floods of despair and humiliation, while the so-called civil rights leaders only escaped into safety to dine and wine with so-called white sympathizers to their own prestige and brief sensations as “heroes” – their shortlived [sic] militancy bought over by powerful interests that desire to see the black man perpetually kept down under the borderline of human progress.[[701]](#footnote-701)

Baffoe, like Mayfield, drew a link between what he referred to as the ‘revolution’ taking place in Africa and the attempts by African Americans to gain equal rights under the law. Mayfield repeated this sentiment after the assassination of Malcolm X a year later:

Of all the Afro-American leaders, Malcolm X has several distinctions. He was the only one of national prominence and with a significant following who understood that the black man’s struggle in America was inextricably linked with the African revolution in particular… He was the only leader… who understood and believed in every fibre of his body that the black man in the United States had no real future in the framework of U.S. capitalism, and that the black race would be signing its death warrant if it threw in its lot with the world’s most formidable imperialist power.[[702]](#footnote-702)

However, this perspective on American race relations was not necessarily shared by the Ghanaian authorities. For example, Nkrumah never challenged the US government directly over the position of African Americans. His willingness, however, to allow reports of police brutality against peaceful protestors, of lynching and Ku Klux Klan retaliations, to appear prominently in state-owned newspapers certainly helped to discredit the US government and its representatives in Africa, and its claim that the USA was a beacon of freedom and democracy.[[703]](#footnote-703) This can, in part, be demonstrated through the relationship between Nkrumah and Baffoe, Mayfield’s employer. Henry L. Bretton found that Baffoe had previously been bribed by Nkrumah to publicly support his government and refrain from all forms of criticism.[[704]](#footnote-704) Bretton also argued that Baffoe remained a very close ally of Nkrumah throughout his years in power.[[705]](#footnote-705) Whilst Baffoe was not the most sycophantic of Nkrumah’s journalistic supporters, he was among those most prepared to do their master’s bidding.[[706]](#footnote-706) The control that Nkrumah held over information and the media was institutionalised through the Publicity Secretariat and the BAA (which shall be discussed in greater detail below), and great attention was paid to articles and authors considered oppositional to Nkrumah’s ideological position.[[707]](#footnote-707) Given the powerful grip that Nkrumah exercised on information output during this period, it is highly unlikely that articles such as those of Baffoe or Mayfield could have been published without these institutions’ tacit approval.

The majority of articles that Mayfield wrote for the *Ghanaian Times* about civil rights in the US were however not judgemental; in certain cases he went so far as to praise the successes of the CRM.[[708]](#footnote-708) Whilst this was incongruous with Mayfield’s prior statements on the matter, positive coverage of the civil rights struggle had the effect of discrediting the US government.[[709]](#footnote-709) Mayfield also tended to overstate the esteem in which Nkrumah and Ghana were held in the eyes of African Americans.[[710]](#footnote-710) His journalism consistently implied that Nkrumah had widespread international support and respect, boosting his reputation in Ghana and challenging US government assumptions about the ability of civil rights amendments to placate the African American population. For example, when he wrote that ‘the war of vilification against Kwame Nkrumah and Ghana has had on Afro-Americans exactly the opposite effect from that desired by its perpetrators,’ Mayfield was referring to the propaganda initiated by the US government.[[711]](#footnote-711) This invited both a nationalist response from readers – the US government was challenging Nkrumah’s emergence as a world leader – and inferred that Ghana offered a greater inspiration for African Americans than that provided by US political leadership.

In this instance Mayfield both encouraged and reflected Nkrumah’s increasingly recalcitrant view of opposition. His reports reflected Nkrumah’s growing reliance on ‘neo-colonialism’ as a tool for explaining the turn of events on the continent. In the midst of the Congo Crisis, Nkrumah told the National Assembly: ‘What is going on now in the Congo is a typical example of this latest kind of imperialist and colonialist manoeuvre… The interests that are engaged in the Congo are empires in themselves, and those in Katanga especially have fabulous advantages which they are loath to abandon.’ In the final passage of this speech, he drew a direct link between Congo, Ghana and the wider African struggle, when he warned the Assembly: ‘This is a turning point in the history of Africa. If we allow the independence of the Congo to be compromised in any way by the imperialist and capitalist forces, we shall expose the sovereignty and independence of all Africa to grave risk. The struggle of the Congo is therefore our struggle.’[[712]](#footnote-712)

In the same year, the government, under Nkrumah’s orders, organised an ‘anti-neo-colonialist’ march in Accra. It is perhaps worthy of note that the organising committee planned that ‘the essence of the demonstration should be its spontaneity and should not be given the impression that it was planned’![[713]](#footnote-713) The demonstration was not only a challenge to neo-colonialism elsewhere on the continent: it was an attempt to impress upon the world the continued vitality of Nkrumah’s leadership of Ghana.

*Figure 1: Demonstrators at the Anti-Neo-Colonialism Demonstration, Accra, 17 August 1962*



*Source:* Bureau of African Affairs, ‘Anti-Neo-Colonialist Demonstration,’ GPRL BAA/RLAA/424, George Padmore Library, Accra, Ghana.

When recalling the work he did for the President’s Office, Mayfield implied that a lot of it was not of his choosing.[[714]](#footnote-714) Mayfield’s focus on American affairs in his journalism was not simply indicative of the broader attempts by the Ghanaian government to undermine US legitimacy in Africa. It demonstrated his unwillingness, or perhaps inability, to let go of the American aspect of his identity. It reflected his continued investment in the outcome of the civil rights movement, even if Mayfield did not subscribe to its relatively moderate methods. This continued attachment to his country of origin presented a challenge for his status as an émigré to Ghana, and was illustrative of a faultline in Nkrumah’s own vision of Pan-Africanism. As has been previously argued (in Chapter 2), Nkrumah’s conceptualisation of Pan-Africanism had effectively removed any independent role for the diaspora in Africa’s post-colonial development. This perspective arguably brought some benefits to Ghana. The newly independent country received a steady stream of highly skilled and motivated African-Americans who supported and legitimised a wide range of modernisation and development projects. But this meant that a number of ‘returnees,’ such as Mayfield, ‘returned’ to a country that had no obvious place for them, and no clear idea of their position within the new Ghanaian social order. The inability to resolve this issue ultimately led to Mayfield leaving Ghana in January 1966, less than a month before the coup.

The difficulties experienced by Mayfield and his friends in settling into their new ‘African’ lives were compounded by the deteriorating relations between the USA and Ghana described above.[[715]](#footnote-715) Mayfield increasingly felt that African Americans resident in Ghana were being ostracised by politicians and being punished for their American identity, implying that there was widespread suspicion towards the African American community. Nkrumah’s increasingly vocal opposition to the USA, especially after the days of the Congo Crisis, was translated into a broader, widespread, suspicion of all American activities in Ghana. He wrote that a number of African Americans felt that they ‘love[d] Ghana – or, to be more accurate, the idea of Ghana without really liking her,’ demonstrating the importance of the romantic image of black liberation over the realities of Ghana.[[716]](#footnote-716) Such a statement suggests that his earlier writing on Ghana, as well as the memories of others (including Angelou), were overly romanticised and sycophantic in their praise of the nation and its leaders. Though he did not write of his feelings at the time, he claimed in the 1970s that his disillusionment had begun around 1964. One indication of the disillusionment that Mayfield clearly felt by the time he left Ghana in January 1966, is an ostensibly fictional story written in 1974-75. In this, Mayfield hints at his disillusionment with both Ghana and Nkrumah. The fictional character Bruce, having fled the US after a gun fight, moves to Ghana:

[he] managed to escape to Ghana where he had worked under a leader he genuinely thought to be a socialist. By his own estimate, he had written nearly a million words in support of the Kwame Nkrumah government which had collapsed overnight as soon as the leader left the country on a state visit. Almost a million words for Ghana radio, television and magazines…[[717]](#footnote-717)

Though presented as fiction, the narrative closely reflects Mayfield’s own experiences, and the bitterness in his words is inescapable. Though he never stated that he resented or regretted his time in Ghana, the implication in this story was that Nkrumah’s failure to fully adhere to a socialist programme led to his downfall. There is also a sense that Mayfield felt this was a personal betrayal – he had committed himself and worked to achieve these worthy goals, but Nkrumah had failed to do so.

Mayfield’s changing attitude towards Ghana must be understood through his journalistic works. In his newspaper articles, he attempted to find a new framework in which African Americans, and the diaspora more broadly, could contribute to Pan-Africanism as it had been reconstituted by Nkrumah. Like Maya Angelou a few years later, Mayfield attempted to construct a relationship between African American actions against segregation and African anti-colonial movements, that together potentially constituted a single ‘African Revolution.’[[718]](#footnote-718) By couching African American struggles in the language of African struggles for independence (and opposition to neo-colonialism), by invoking the image of freedom fighters and discourses of liberation (both physical and mental), he attempted to reconcile the incongruity of being an American of colour in Africa. Mayfield drew on the increasingly popular idea of internal colonisation as a means of explaining both the situation in the USA and highlighting the need for closer study of and connections to African liberation movements.[[719]](#footnote-719) In an article entitled ‘Kwame Nkrumah: the Afro-American and Kwame Nkrumah,’ published in the British Communist magazine *Labour Monthly*, Mayfield made this relationship explicit:

Racial doctrinarianism has been the hammer used to destroy the black man’s personality, his self-esteem, his image of himself. As much as any person alive, Kwame Nkrumah has helped to begin the reconstruction of that personality, has helped to restore the black man’s self-confidence… today in Africa and in the western world we are witnessing the emergence of a new black man, proud, daring and resourceful, standing firmly on his own feet, looking the whole world in the eye, with the certain knowledge that there is no mountain in the world he cannot scale, no obstacle he cannot overcome. Such a man is unconquerable and never really dies, for in him burns that brightest of all flames, the human spirit.[[720]](#footnote-720)

In developing a discourse linking the two movements, Mayfield contributed to the process of redefining older forms of Pan-Africanism, and reimagining them in a new, modern, context. Though not alone in this process - many African Americans were themselves questioning the ideological underpinnings of the CRM and rethinking ideas of black pride and black power, Mayfield was the most vocal of the émigrés in his later disillusionment with Ghana and his advocacy of Black Power ideas. In doing so, he developed ideas that would later be identified as core constituents of the Black Power movement’s ideology.[[721]](#footnote-721)

Clayborne Carson has defined this ideology as originating in the civil rights protests, which ‘awakened dormant traditions of black radicalism and racial separatism by fostering among black people a greater sense of pride, confidence, and racial identity.’[[722]](#footnote-722) This was central to the emergence of Black Power organisation and thinking in the mid-1960s. Both Brenda Gayle Plummer and Timothy Tyson have demonstrated the importance of international affairs in the development and emergence of the Black Power Movement. Tyson and Plummer both identify the movement’s older historical roots in Garveyite notions of Pan-Africanism.[[723]](#footnote-723) The established account of this final ‘phase’ of the civil rights era has characterised the movement as a negative response to the limited success of the civil rights movement.[[724]](#footnote-724) Revisionists have more recently sought with some success to draw it in to a longer narrative of civil rights history.[[725]](#footnote-725) Both schools of thought have, however, overlooked the contribution that notions of Africa and African experiences of Pan-Africanism made to African American ideas of race pride. Julian Mayfield (who never of course identified himself as a ‘Black Power’ activist during his time in Ghana) provides a symbolic example of this contribution. Mayfield’s ideas were certainly similar to those espoused by leaders of the Black Power movement by the end of the 1960s.

Ideas of race pride in their clearest form had first been promulgated by Marcus Garvey, though, for the reasons discussed in previous chapters, these ideas had lost a great deal of popularity from the 1920s onwards. However, for younger African Americans in the 1960s, the simple message of black pride was a persuasive one. As Carson has demonstrated, one of the first organisations to adopt a black power stance was the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), a youth organisation originally been set up in August 1960 to encourage voter registration drives in the South.[[726]](#footnote-726) SNCC leader John Lewis also spoke at the same Washington rally where Martin Luther King gave his ‘I have a dream’ speech. Lewis drew a clear link between African and African American struggles in declaring: ‘”One Man, One Vote” is the African cry … It is ours, too.’[[727]](#footnote-727) The SNCC leadership increasingly considered the treatment of African Americans as analogous to the treatment of colonised Africans, reflecting the influence of Frantz Fanon in their changing ideology. As SNCC asserted the centrality of African American leadership and self-sufficiency, they rejected liberal non-racialism (or race-blindness) as a necessary corollary to the Black Power they wanted to advocate. In the proposition paper arguing for the exclusion of whites from SNCC in 1966, white members were compared to ‘the white civil servants and missionaries in the colonial countries who have worked with the colonial people for a long period of time and have developed a paternalistic attitude toward them.’[[728]](#footnote-728) The position paper went on to make explicit the relationship between the colonised peoples of the world and African Americans, outlining the role that both Africa and Pan-Africanism could play for the organisation:

The reality of the colonial people taking over their own lives and controlling their own destiny must be faced. Having to move aside and letting the natural process of growth and development take place must be faced… The broad masses of black people react to American society in the same manner as colonial peoples react to the West in Africa and Latin America, and had the same relationship--that of the colonized toward the colonizer.[[729]](#footnote-729)

The president of SNCC during this time, Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture) based his criticisms of integrationist politics partly on the powerful alternative that he believed Pan-Africanism offered.[[730]](#footnote-730) Explaining the central role that Africa and the national independence movements played in the development of black power, he wrote that it was his father, returning from ‘newly independent Ghana’ who came back to them:

…full of a vision of how African independence and black peoples’ power… How … President Kwame Nkrumah… had led his ministers onto the floor dressed in the humble cloth cap and coat of a convict. The man who had once worn the costume of colonial humiliation and subjugation was now the leader of the nation, my father exulted.[[731]](#footnote-731)

For Mayfield, as for Carmichael a few years later, the relationship between Africa and black power was central. He identified the race pride element of Nkrumah’s Pan-Africanism, altering it slightly from its origins in anti-colonial rhetoric to a more positively characterised black pride discourse. This shift away from Garvey’s ‘Africa as a continent’ to ‘Africans as a race’ (focused on the continent but inclusive of the diaspora) can be understood as an attempt by Mayfield to rehabilitate the diaspora within universal conceptions of the black world, and to redefine the limits that Nkrumah had placed on Pan-African inclusion. In a short piece written (anonymously, but almost certainly by Mayfield) in 1963 to commemorate the death of Du Bois, this combination of ideas is apparent:

[L]ast night’s demonstration and the historic Civil Rights March in Washington and Accra today shall be remembered as fitting tributes to a fighter for Freedom and Peace who bestrode the world of struggle and knowledge like a Colossus for over sixty years… **Ghanaians, Africans, people of African descent, and fighters for Peace and Socialism, take a message from Du Bois to fortify your courage and firm resolve against imperialism and Jim-Crowism**…[[732]](#footnote-732)

By the time of his return to the USA in 1968, Mayfield’s transition to a Black Power mentality was nearly complete. By the time he left Accra for Ibiza, Spain, in January 1966, his frustrations were mirrored in Ghanaian society, as commodity shortages and unemployment continued to grow. It remains unclear why he chose to move to Spain rather than back to the USA, to which he only returned in 1968. But, by 1968, the Black Power movement was beginning to emerge, and Mayfield’s ideas had become much clearer. As discussed above, Black Power intellectuals, Mayfield included, adopted and adapted elements of Pan-Africanism, reflecting Black Power’s attempt to free African Americans from the moderate and non-racial strictures of the CRM. The overlapping nature of Pan-African and Black Power discourses is demonstrated in a reflection by Mayfield on Nkrumah’s death in 1972:

Now here was the black leader of a small, unimportant one-crop country who challenged every basic moral and philosophic concept of Western civilisation; in effect, a NIGGER who dared to assert that Western civilisation was the worst thing which had ever happened to Africans. And worse, a NIGGER who had both the platform and the charisma to persuade millions of other NIGGERS to thin[k] as he did… The foolishly timid will think that I am dragging race into this discussion out of the blue. Indeed, rigid, traditionalist Marxists … always tend to subordinate consideration of race to class, but Kwame Nkrumah, a child of colonialism, knew better.[[733]](#footnote-733)

This obituary was of course hardly an accurate reflection of the views of Nkrumah, who certainly did not seek to reject the positive contribution of Western civilisation to Africa. Yet for Mayfield, his reading of Black Power backwards to Nkrumah’s political philosophy provided a bridge between the Pan-Africanism he had sought and the situation that Ghana faced by the second half of the 1960s.

As mentioned before, Angelou’s account of life in Ghana is the most detailed provided by any of these émigrés, and it reveals many of the social issues that ‘regular’ African Americans encountered living in what she increasingly identified as a foreign country. Angelou arrived in mid-1963, after the collapse in diplomatic relations between the USA and Ghana. By this time, the suspicion and frustration that had been levelled at the USA by political elites had trickled down to the Ghanaian masses. Indeed, Angelou recounts a number of occasions when she was attacked because of her nationality. On one such occasion, after a disagreement with a receptionist at the Ghana Broadcasting office, the receptionist responded, ‘American Negroes are always crude.’ Angelou was dismayed by the assumption behind the remark, believing that this opinion ‘could only have been garnered from hearsay.’[[734]](#footnote-734) She then questioned why her presence had elicited such a response, hypothesising that it reflected the fact that, whilst the receptionist was African, Angelou was herself the descendant of slaves, inheriting that barbaric and ‘brutalized’ legacy.[[735]](#footnote-735) Angelou reflected: ‘The questions temporarily sobered my intoxication with Africa. For a few days, I examined whether in looking for a home I, and all the émigrés, were running from a bitter truth that rode lightly but forever at home on our shoulders.’[[736]](#footnote-736)

Angelou’s experience of Ghana was similar to that of Mayfield, to the extent that they moved in similar circles. Having met in New York in 1959, the two quickly reconnected when Angelou arrived in Accra, Mayfield encouraging her to enjoy Ghana while her son was in hospital. He introduced her to his friends and the community of African Americans with which he associated. Whilst they both enjoyed relatively prestigious jobs and positions - Mayfield working at Flagstaff House and Angelou at the University at Legon - they had contact with a much broader swathe of Ghanaian society than Drake, Bond or Du Bois. Their responses to this interaction were however very different.

Angelou’s accounts of verbal abuse or dismissal by Africans forced her to reconsider the relationship between ‘Africans’ of all backgrounds, a relationship that Du Bois and other earlier Pan-Africanists had argued was one of simple unity and common identity.[[737]](#footnote-737) The differences between Angelou and Mayfield were apparent in their approach to this issue. Mayfield, as discussed above, attempted to redress the perceived imbalance between the diaspora and Africa by developing a new understanding of race pride. In contrast, Angelou appears to have internalised the issues it raised, questioning herself repeatedly about the effects of slavery on the development of the African American personality.[[738]](#footnote-738) Through her writing it is clear that she continued to associate the ‘negative’ elements of the African American identity with the experience of slavery and segregationist violence against African American communities.[[739]](#footnote-739) In contrast to this, the positive elements were historically African. Indeed, Angelou believed that most African American cultural forms had African origins. By the time she left Ghana in 1965, she appears to have found some solace in the idea that the two communities could in this way be united: by honouring this African heritage and agitating for equality in the United States. Not unrelated to this, she ultimately came to the conclusion that the USA, not Africa, was home.

## Conclusion

For all of the émigrés discussed in this chapter, their hopes and expectations led them to look at Ghana through the lens of their American experiences. They invested in Ghana in the belief that they would be able to fulfil their political aims and ambitions unhindered. The outcome and consequences of testing this belief in the realities of post-colonial Ghana varied, depending on the nature of their engagement with and work in the newly independent country. Those who operated at a remove from the general public, working in politics and academia, faced little or no challenge to their preconceived notions of Africa and its relationship to the diaspora. Du Bois, Drake and Bond all experienced this particular ‘type’ of Ghana. For each of them, it reaffirmed the beliefs about Africa and its diaspora they had developed before leaving the USA, and the work that they did confirmed their expectations of Ghana. Du Bois passed away before anything could challenge his long held beliefs, and Bond continued to support African American contact with Ghana. Drake, who was the most ardent supporter of Nkrumah in this group, continued his vocal support for the deposed President long after popular and international support had waned.

In contrast to the remarkably positive, if somewhat false, atmosphere that these elite members of the African American community inhabited, those without specialist and in-demand skills experienced a steady disillusionment towards the realities of life in Africa, which failed to live up to the image they had created for it. Both Julian Mayfield and Maya Angelou experienced a growing degree of hostility towards them from Ghanaian society. Their unchosen association with a hostile United States forced them to acknowledge the failure of the hopes that had brought them to Ghana. This shared acknowledgement however led the two to draw very different conclusions about their experiences. Angelou internalised the discontent, examining the nature of the diaspora experience for clues to explain the large gap between the émigrés and their new home. This re-examination of the importance of the slave experience in forming the African American identity ultimately led Angelou to reconsider her belief that Ghana was her home, meaning that her decision to return to the USA in 1965 was a positive one.

Mayfield proved unwilling to surrender the radical political and social ideas that the Ghana government had advanced, and he tried to adapt them to reflect, rather than contradict, his experience as a ‘returnee.’ The elements of Pan-Africanism and the ideas of social organisation that he brought together centred on notions of race pride, and attempts to rid Africa of the ‘colonised mind’, something he believed was also necessary for the diaspora.[[740]](#footnote-740) These ideas and beliefs did not coalesce into a new meta-narrative or ideology whilst he was in Ghana, and for years after his departure, he felt betrayed by the promised African revolution that did not liberate him. Mayfield continued to advocate support for Africa after 1966, but his experience of Africa caused him to return to the USA in search of a set of ideas that would explain what had gone wrong. His confusion at the political situation in Ghana, and in particular the failures of Kwame Nkrumah to address the problems he identified, was not abated by the rise of the Black Power Movement, of which he was nevertheless an advocate.

**Conclusion**

*Pan-Africanism… has been the rallying slogan, the springboard, the ideological vehicle for the common efforts of exiled Africans, West Indians, and American Negroes to advance the cause of Africa and of Africans. But Pan-Africanism, like Joseph’s coat, is described in many colors…*

* Samuel W. Adam, *Pan-Africanism Reconsidered* (1962)

This thesis has examined the particular iteration of Pan-Africanism that emerged under the guidance and leadership of Kwame Nkrumah, the first leader of the first post-colonial state in Sub-Saharan Africa. Yet to understand the full scope of his Pan-Africanism, how he understood and used the meta-narrative, and imagined the future of Africa, it has been necessary to place this analysis within a much broader scope of inquiry. This thesis has therefore explained Pan-Africanism in late-colonial and post-colonial Ghana in relation to its longer history as a set of ideas and political movements in both Africa and the African diaspora, particularly the United States of America.

Before considering the wider implications of the research presented here, it may be helpful to briefly summarise the core arguments of the thesis. Chapters 1 and 2 analyse the long history of Pan-Africanism, and the contexts in which it developed: the United States and the Caribbean, and the Gold Coast/Ghana in particular. This historical overview emphasised that Pan-Africanism did not develop along a smooth linear trajectory. Although Pan-Africanist thinking developed around core themes and notions that were relatively consistent over time, it was subject to numerous contestations and reinterpretations by numerous individuals and movements, arising from the specific context in which they operated. In the US and the Caribbean it was initially associated with the experiences and legacy of slavery and segregation, and proponents viewed it as a framework within which to explore and explain the situation facing ‘Africans’ of the diaspora. In the Gold Coast however, it emerged in a very different forum. Indigenous political discourses in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries did not incorporate or consider the global African population: instead, they generally adopted a Eurocentric model of nationalism to advance the views (and the social standing) of a small intellectual class. Having asserted the idea that the Gold Coast colonies comprised a ‘nation’, complete with the tropes and implications of the Western understanding of the concept, debates within Gold Coast politics moved on to consider the rights of the wider population. This shift, much like earlier developments, occurred partly in response to external events; in particular, the Second World War caused a disruption in the pre-existing socio-political order, to which Gold Coast political activists responded with alacrity. The differing experiences of the legacy of slavery and of colonialism created an early division within the Pan-Africanist community that would come to have a profound impact on expectations and experiences of Nkrumah’s Pan-Africanism after Ghanaian independence in 1957.

These chapters demonstrate the necessity of a longer temporal scope than is generally deployed in considerations of Pan-Africanism. This is because, when taken in a chronological order, several processes in the formulation of Pan-Africanism, from Edward Wilmot Blyden to Kwame Nkrumah, become clear. Each individual intellectual who contributed to the meta-narrative, whilst understanding the concept in different ways, used it in a similar fashion, as both a tool for explaining the injustices and hardships they perceived, both past and present, and as a framework in which a better future could be achieved. As discussed in the Introduction, the viability of any meta-narrative depends on its ability to address perceived injustices with both an explanation for their existence and a method for change.

Whilst each locality and period produced variations of Pan-Africanism, no variation was produced in a vacuum. The interactions of the Pan-African intellectual community were by no means peaceful, but their arguments and conflicts provided the crucible in which shared Pan-Africanist ideas were ultimately forged. Understanding Nkrumah’s Pan-Africanism of the early 1960s, for example, requires a greater understanding, for example, of the heated debates between Du Bois and Garvey. In the dynamic exchange of ideas with fellow activists and intellectuals, Pan-Africanism ultimately developed a core set of ideas or values, and a shared sense of community amongst those who contributed to it. The interaction of intellectuals across an extended time period therefore constitutes a fundamental part of the history of Pan-Africanism.

Pan-Africanism was not however constructed solely by intellectuals; the enduring importance of the meta-narrative can be found amongst the audience and support base it generated in African and diaspora communities, which also contributed to the development and deployment of Pan-Africanist ideas. Chapters 3 and 5 examined the experiences of such actors amongst the African American community. The former examined how the experiences of African Americans influenced their opinions and beliefs about ‘Africa’ in general, and the Gold Coast/Ghana in particular. The African American press played a central role in informing and reflecting the African American community’s imagining of the continent and its peoples. This thesis demonstrated the changing press characterisation of ‘Africa’ during a relatively short period of time, and the ways this characterisation was shaped by changes in both Africa and the United States. From the emergence of a dedicated African American press in the 1910s to the mid-1930s, these characterisations were influenced by the Western-centric colonial view of Africa. Incorporating aspects of Harlem Renaissance thought and art, ‘Africa’ was presented as exotic and beautiful, but also distant, ‘authentic’ and certainly not ‘modern.’ However, and in keeping with the colonial worldview, the black press suggested that Africa’s parlous situation could be improved through education and missionary activity. This characterisation was deployed in support of the African American civil rights cause, as journalists and intellectuals argued that the work of educating and ‘civilising’ Africa provided an opportunity for the African American community to demonstrate their value to the USA. Though certainly not the only event to challenge perceptions of the continent, the Italian invasion of Abyssinia in 1935 shifted the paradigm through which ‘Africa’ was constructed, away from imperialist interpretations and towards an Afrocentric one. Throughout the invasion and in the years afterwards, the African American press came to show ‘Africa’ and Africans as deserving of support and solidarity, not via a colonial relationship, but as equals.

It would be impossible to appreciate the changing relationship between African Americans and ‘Africa’ without acknowledging the considerable impact of the Second World War. Western opposition towards rapid decolonisation, and indifference towards the challenges facing newly independent African states, provided proof that the colonial powers did not have the best interests of the global African population in mind, and that mutual support and solidarity between Africans everywhere was the best option for improving the lives of Africans and the diaspora. ‘Africa’ was no longer exotic and unknown – it was rather increasingly familiar, tangible, explicable, coherent, homogenous, and, in some characterisations, a place of promise, providing opportunities of which the African diaspora – by means of slavery and segregation – had been deprived. These characterisations ultimately played a role in promoting and advancing certain understandings not only of Africa but also of Pan-Africanism.

This argument was demonstrated through a close examination of the experiences and ideas of a select group of African Americans who would eventually move to post-independence Ghana. Just as Pan-African leaders and thinkers differed over the nature of Pan-Africanism, so did such individuals. This variation in Pan-African thought and practice arguably ensured it a broad audience, but this lack of consensus has troubled scholars of the subject, whose efforts to identify a single definition of Pan-Africanism fails to grasp the complexity of the meta-narrative and leads to the characterisation of ‘difference’ as non-adherence to the supposed fundamentals of a true Pan-Africanism, and to the flexibility of the concept as intellectual weakness.[[741]](#footnote-741) This thesis has attempted to redress this problem by embracing the variation and fluctuation in the Pan-Africanism as a central part of the meta-narrative, reflecting both its strengths and weaknesses.

The degree of variance that existed in expressions and understandings of Pan-Africanism was further explored in Chapter 5, in which the experiences of this small émigré group in newly independent Ghana is considered against the backdrop of Nkrumah’s changing interpretation of Pan-Africanism, discussed in Chapter 4. Though each individual migrant had their own hopes for this experience, each had to ultimately reconcile their perceptions and aspirations with the reality of life in a newly independent country. The extent to which this affected their own perceptions of Ghana and Nkrumah and understanding of Pan-Africanism varied however: St Claire Drake, for example, continued to support Nkrumah as the latter’s expression of Pan-Africanism developed in the ways discussed in Chapter 4. Even after the 1966 coup, Drake publicly defended the ex-president and his work. Julian Mayfield and Maya Angelou, however, both struggled to resolve the differences they experienced with their understanding of political change. When they left Ghana, they did so with a sense of disappointment or dislocation, but with some appreciation of the disjuncture between Ghanaian experiences of racially-based oppression and their own, and the consequences that held for differing interpretations of Pan-Africanism. They returned to the USA in search of new ways to explain the historical injustices experienced by African Americans, and the ways these differed from the African experiences.

Even in such a brief overview of the thesis, it is starkly apparent that the history of Pan-Africanism is not a linear or a neat one. It spans continents and communities, and has taken on numerous manifestations throughout its existence. In analysing the construction and use of Pan-Africanism, in Ghana and in the diaspora, it is argued that Pan-Africanism is best understood as a meta-narrative, not an ideology. Although this may seem like a subtle distinction, it has significant consequences for how we perceive and assess the power of ideas in historical context. When Pan-Africanism is analysed as a meta-narrative, it brings several factors into clearer relief. Firstly it enables the full scope and potential that the promoters of Pan-Africanism understood it to be held in view. As discussed in the Introduction, ‘ideology’ refers to the interpretation of a particular slice of reality. ‘Meta-narrative,’ in contrast, incorporates a broader sweep, and enables a focus on *all* aspects of historical reality and future potential. Understanding that meta-narratives such as Pan-Africanism function(ed) as a lens through which the past could be understood just as much as the present allows for a more balanced approach to the study of political thought in historical contexts. African political history need not focus solely, as it often does, on the implementation of specific government policies; greater attention is needed in regard to how proponents used political meta-narratives to discuss and promote a certain understanding of history, and the impact that this had on wider society. Assigning a normative definition of success or failure to the meta-narrative overlooks the multiple ways in which it may have influenced societies. It is clear that in viewing the world through a Pan-African paradigm, the impact of the meta-narrative can be understood to have been profound. The quality of Pan-Africanist thought and action, when removed from a narrow assessment of policy design, implementation or outcome, enables a more nuanced appreciation of the ways in which political ideas spread and are deployed in society.

Similarly, the ability of a meta-narrative to incorporate various layers of meaning makes the level of flexibility inherent in it immediately apparent. Perhaps one of the most enduring legacies of misreading these paradigms has been the attribution by academics of highly specific definitions and boundaries, which has led to major constraints in understanding variations of meaning across time and space. This thesis has demonstrated that part of the enduring popularity of Pan-Africanism, and indeed nationalism as well, was its compatibility and capacity for syncretic combination with a wide range of more localised issues and meanings. In developing such a broad narrative, Pan-Africanist intellectuals created a powerful political discourse that was also open to interpretation. For the masses, in both Ghana and the diaspora, Pan-Africanism could mean many different things, and could contain a host of possibilities for the future that addressed the particular concerns of sections of these societies. Even a brief examination of the history and ideas of a small number of individuals has demonstrated the wide range of meanings that emerged from the broad sweep of the Pan-Africanist meta-narrative.

In challenging the perception that Pan-Africanism is a fixed idea, this thesis has examined the development of the meta-narrative across a broad sweep of history. In doing so, it has been both necessary and instructive to examine the individual trajectory of Kwame Nkrumah and assess the considerable changes in his own understanding and deployment of Pan-Africanism, before and particularly during his time in power as ruler of the newly independent Ghana. These successive iterations were prompted by the interplay between Ghanaian, African-wide and international forces and factors, as Nkrumah responded, along with his followers, to re-envisage his imagined future whilst incorporating the reality of governing an independent state at what was undoubtedly a tumultuous period in African history. Through an assessment of his time in power, and the phases of his rule employed in Chapter 4, it is clear that Nkrumah’s Pan-Africanism was altered in response to what he believed were challenges, both international and domestic. However, it is too simple to suggest a *realpolitik* approach to the meta-narrative because, as Nkrumah altered and refined Pan-Africanism to respond to these events external to his own understanding, his own interpretation of Pan-Africanism influenced how he perceived these events. His ideological pronouncements were not therefore simply the product of pragmatic reaction, and what at times appears in Nkrumah’s work to be contradictory is best understood as the product of the dialectical interplay between his Pan-Africanist worldview and his developing understanding of Pan-Africanism in relation to the dynamics of historical change in Ghana, Africa, and the wider world.

In adapting the meta-narrative to face the many challenges of state administration and international diplomacy, Nkrumah provides a prime example of the flexibility of Pan-Africanism. To maintain both the popularity of his ideas amongst Ghanaian citizens and his position as *the* Pan-African leader of Africa, Nkrumah adapted his message and policies accordingly. This highlighted his remarkably flexible approach to leadership, an aspect of his style of leadership and view of politics that has been overlooked in much of the literature on his rule, or explained away as hypocrisy and inconsistency. In the period of negotiation immediately prior to independence, Nkrumah confronted the considerable divisions within Gold Coast society; through the deployment of a narrative of national unity, one which was in Nkrumah’s mind inseparable from Pan-Africanism, he sought to paper over the cracks within Gold Coast society, and bring its different components together in a single cohesive unit. Those who disagreed or refused to participate in Nkrumah’s project were therefore characterised not simply as the political opponents of Nkrumah or of his policies, but as enemies of the nation. Nkrumah’s distinctive binding together of Pan-Africanism with nationalism, in the last years of his rule, brought to the fore his capacity to deploy the meta-narrative in multiple forms. For example, Pan-Africanism provided both a guiding principle and a concrete method for the ultimate goal of continental unity. Simultaneously, it provided an explanation for the policies adopted in national governance. In accordance with the ultimate goal of continental unity, Pan-Africanism became the legitimising principle for rapid industrialisation, nationalisation of certain industries, and policies intended to develop a national cohesion. Within this, personal responsibility and hard work were highlighted by Nkrumah as the individual’s contribution to the success of Pan-Africanism at both the national and continental levels.

Pan-Africanism also provided Nkrumah and his government with legitimacy for their actions in national and international affairs. Government policies that negatively impacted on free speech, the press, and the organised opposition were all justified, under the label of Pan-Africanism, as fundamental to the pursuit of continental African unity and liberation. The commitment of Ghanaian resources to anti-colonial groups and activities was depicted as necessary for securing the independence for all of Africa, thereby guaranteeing in turn the continuing freedom of Ghana. Though such an approach initially appeared to be relatively well received, amidst the general euphoria of the independence transition, opposition to Nkrumah’s policy of supporting anti-colonial movements spread as the Ghanaian economy faltered. It is, as this thesis has noted, difficult to accurately assess the extent of this discontent, given the level of censorship which existed. It is clear, however, that frustration had mounted to such an extent that, by early 1966, military leaders were confident that a coup against the government would be widely welcomed by the very people who had once provided Nkrumah’s staunchest support base.

Those who came to embrace Pan-Africanism had diverse interpretations of the idea, yet they shared the belief that Pan-Africanism was a useful guide to a desirable future for Africans of both the continent and the diaspora. As discussed in Chapter 3, ‘Africa,’ as an imagined construct, had played a subtle yet significant role in shaping the African American perceptions of the continent. It was used to advance certain understandings of the continent, its peoples, and its politics, all of which fed into contemporary African American concerns. Thus, in the early years of the African American press in the USA, ‘Africa’ was discussed in imperial tones, reflecting the wider Western view that Africans were incapable of self-government and requiring of external ‘assistance’ to progress. In the aftermath of the 1935 Italian invasion of Abyssinia (Ethiopia), the notion of redemption, for the diaspora, was increasingly understood as being achievable through Africa, as readers were encouraged to view the experience of the continent and its inhabitants as similar and related to their own. After 1945, ‘Africa’ became a source of inspiration for the emergent civil rights movement, and the parallels between the struggles for civil equality and for national independence were highlighted more explicitly. The press coverage of African affairs provided background reinforcement for the Pan-Africanist narratives that, though side-lined by the 1940s, still proved popular among some members of the African American community.

owMany African Americans therefore had great expectations for both Pan-Africanism in general and for Nkrumah’s Ghana in particular, where Pan-Africanism apparently operated as a real manifestation of their own hopes and ambitions. Some felt, to varying degrees, a dissatisfaction or disillusionment with life in the United States, in relation to both the hardships faced by African Americans and the CRM as it unfolded in the 1950s. The émigrés to Ghana in particular viewed the CRM as a thoroughly inadequate response to the profound political and personal challenges they faced. It is however equally clear that the experiences and world-view of the individuals concerned ultimately shaped their perception of Pan-Africanism. For those like St Claire Drake, and to a lesser extent, Horace Mann Bond, Pan-Africanism was principally an academic pursuit, which allowed for the promotion of African and diaspora history, heritage and culture in the face of white supremacy. For Julian Mayfield and others like him, it was a political discourse that provided an avenue for Black self-determination, in both a post-colonial African context and in racially diverse countries like the USA.

The result of these differing aspirations can be found in their distinct expectations for, and subsequent memories of, Pan-Africanism as a lived experience in post-colonial Ghana. Though only around two hundred African Americans moved to Ghana in the years following independence, such variations within this population clearly had a profound impact on how they perceived the Pan-African project of Nkrumah’s government. In the act of moving to Ghana, émigrés and Pan-Africanist supporters were forced to reconcile the expectations they had of Pan-Africanism with the realities of life in post-colonial Africa as non-Ghanaian nationals. Even the process of reconciling to this reality resulted in a wide variety of outcomes. Some appeared willing to overlook actions by the Ghanaian state that might have challenged their particular understandings of Pan-Africanism. For example, despite Nkrumah’s anti-democratic measures, such as banning opposition parties and introducing the Preventative Detention Act, St Claire Drake continued to champion his cause. Even after the 1966 coup, Drake maintained this position, complaining to the American press when they felt that Nkrumah had been wrongfully accused, and arguing that the coup was not the result of popular discontent but rather of external forces plotting against the radical leader. In contrast, Mayfield, writing in his unpublished memoir years later, recognised the failings of the government and the limitations of Nkrumah’s Pan-Africanism as it related to members of the diaspora. Maya Angelou certainly expressed disillusionment at her diaspora experience, and ultimately was forced to acknowledge the differences that existed between Ghanaians and the diaspora, differences that their shared skin colour could not conceal.

The disillusionment that some émigrés articulated, and the contradictions their experiences revealed, did not however signal the end of Pan-Africanism’s influence, and as argued in Chapter 5, those who experienced this dislocation did not disengage from political thought altogether. Drake and Mayfield, for example, subsequently engaged in a reconsideration of the constituent parts of Pan-Africanism, and reconstructed them into a new paradigm that they could support. Though it would be reductionist to suggest that Pan-Africanism led directly to the Black Power Movement, there is clearly a connection between the two meta-narratives, at least for their audiences. In reconstructing the key elements of Pan-Africanism, Mayfield and Drake highlighted race pride and self-reliance as core values in which they still believed. However, they began to alter the discourse away from Nkrumah’s geographically Afro-centric interpretation, and back towards the United States. They believed that their perceived exclusion from Ghanaian and African society was the result of their nationality, for as Americans in a Cold War context they were less than welcome. As a result, these émigrés believed that focusing more explicitly on the communities in the diaspora, in this case African Americans, would be more likely to lead to effective political change. Because of the necessarily limited chronology of this thesis, it has only touched upon the beginning of this transition; it would be some years before Drake and Mayfield could arguably be considered Black Power activists. However, it also highlights a potential avenue for future research, as the relationship between Pan-Africanism and other ‘radical’ Black philosophies is deserving of greater attention. The close links between the CRM and the Black Power Movement have already begun to challenge certain historiographical assumptions about the later stages of the civil rights era; situating Black Power ideas within a field of ideologies and meta-narratives that span the globe will provide vital context for its emergence as an influential set of ideas in the late 1960s and 1970s.[[742]](#footnote-742)

In examining the historical development of Pan-Africanism and its role in Ghana and the diaspora in the 1950s and 1960s, this thesis has raised several potential avenues for further related research. As mentioned previously, the approach that this thesis has advanced highlights the interplay of internal and external factors that influence the production of individual interpretations of Pan-Africanism. Though the focus here has been principally upon the Ghanaian experience, and the role of its government in formulating a Pan-Africanism that could potentially inspire and frame the nation, the continent, and the global black population, it is an approach that could be usefully applied to other key periods and figures of the Pan-African movement. This would enable a more holistic understanding of Pan-Africanism, which incorporates the individuals involved in the promulgation of particular understandings of Pan-Africanism and their audiences, as well as taking in to account the influence of their work and indeed the global reach of their ideas. As it stands, there exists a somewhat dislocated narrative of historical Pan-Africanism, one in which individual thinkers and activists are disconnected from the longer history of the meta-narrative.[[743]](#footnote-743) Relocating their individual stories into a longer history, but one that does not seek to reduce their personal experiences into a single homogenous narrative, would allow for a better understanding of Pan-Africanism and highlight the complex relationship between Africans, diaspora communities and the changing ideas of ‘Africa’ on which Pan-Africanism has been constructed.

A second area which would benefit from further consideration is the specific way in which such ideas of ‘Africa’ were constructed within the diaspora and indeed among continental Africans as well. In understanding African American attitudes towards the continent, this thesis has asserted that these attitudes were informed primarily by the media and reports of Africa by the very small minority who travelled there. This particular aspect, the media’s coverage of and influence on Pan-Africanism, the extent to which it responded to events and popular attitudes, and the interplay between the press, readers and broader societal influences, is a significant issue worthy of further research, since this construction of ‘Africa’ can help explain the positioning of Africa in the popular African American imagination. This area of research has recently come under greater academic scrutiny, though further study could extend the analysis of the Black press both temporally and geographically.[[744]](#footnote-744) Similarly, the research presented here focused on the African American press, yet this line of inquiry could helpfully be expanded to cover a broader swathe of the diaspora, such as the Black British, Caribbean, and even West African presses, drawing on the important research already carried out on print culture and knowledge production in the colonial period.[[745]](#footnote-745) Such research could look at the ways in which these localised presses became part of a global network, transmitting ideas about Africa between the individual newspapers in the US, Britain, the Caribbean, and African newspapers. Developing on this subject, analysis could usefully consider how this reflected in part the very different historical experiences of the black community in each area and simultaneously attempted to establish a single identity among them. The early dichotomy between the Caribbean and African American Pan-Africanist communities with regard to their own very different experiences of white supremacy has been very briefly discussed here, but it is a complex relationship, the nuance and richness of which deserves much closer attention.

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5. The concept of the Dual Personality was first coined by James Weldon Johnson, though W.E.B. Du Bois’ description, ‘double consciousness’ is perhaps more widely known. Both make reference to a perceived ability among African Americans, to see the world from both an American perspective (embodying the majority, White, perspective, and from a Black perspective (thus sharing a similar world-view to Africans and colonised non-White peoples around the world). Both Johnson and Du Bois saw this ability in a binary that divided the personal from the political spheres, thus making African Americans African in private and American in public. See W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 1-7; James Weldon Johnson, *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* (London, 2010), pp. 21-22. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
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16. Kenneth W. Harrow, ‘Introduction,’ *Research in African Literatures,* 32.3, Nationalism (2001), p. 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. *Ibid.,* pp. 33-34. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
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19. Wilks, *Asante in the Nineteenth Century,* p. 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
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26. McCaskie, *Asante Identities,* pp. 209-215. Here, McCaskie discusses the importance of a specific historiographical approach, *Alltagsgeschichte,* everyday history, and its relevance in studying the changes in Asante. Such an approach suggests that over a long period there were significant changes in Asante society, but in the day-to-day lives of the community there, these changes did not supplant aspects of a pre-colonial lifestyle.  [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. McCaskie, ‘Accumulation: Wealth and Belief in Asante History: II,’ p. 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. This allowance was demonstrative of the various approaches that Britain adopted in maintaining control over the Gold Coast and Asante colonies, with the Gold Coast falling under direct rule, but Asante and the Northern Territories being given a greater degree of autonomy through indirect rule. As a result, the legacy of Asante rule was arguably more visible throughout the colonial period than that of other areas or political entities. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
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43. Ama Biney, *The Political and Social Thought of Kwame Nkrumah* (New York, 2011). [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. *Ibid.,* pp. 11-27. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. *Ibid.,* p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Ahmad A. Rahman, *The Regime Change of Kwame Nkrumah: Epic Heroism in Africa and the Diaspora* (New York, 2007), p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Lou Turner and John Alan, ‘Frantz Fanon, World Revolutionary,’ in Nigel C. Gibson (ed.), *Rethinking Fanon: the Continuing Dialogue* (New York, 1999), pp. 103-118. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (London, 2001), *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York, 1967). [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940: the Past of the Present* (Cambridge, 2002), p. 161. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Thomas Hodgkin, *Nationalism in Colonial Africa* (London, 1957). [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. See John Darwin, *The End of the British Empire: the Historical Debate* (Oxford, 1991); Peter J. Cain, *British Imperialism: Crisis and Deconstruction 1914-1990* (London, 1993); Nicholas J. White, *Decolonisation: the British Experience since 1945* (London, 1999). [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. White, *Decolonisation.* White’s book, whilst self-consciously examining the British experience of the decolonisation, demonstrates to some extent the ongoing fascination with the British angle within decolonisation studies. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Henry L. Bretton, *The Rise and Fall of Kwame Nkrumah: a Study of Personal Politics in Africa* (London, 1966); Geoffrey Bing, *Reap the Whirlwind: an Account of Kwame Nkrumah’s Ghana from 1950 to 1966* (London, 1968);Robert H. Jackson and Carl J. Rosberg, *Personal Rule in Black Africa: Prince, Autocrat, Prophet, Tyrant* (Berkley, CA, 1982); Rooney, *Kwame Nkrumah*. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. The term ‘prison graduates’ was coined by the new generation of political leaders to mark the distinction between the older generation, who acted as a conservative elite, unwilling to engage the masses in demands for self-representation, and the newer political activists, who targeted the masses for that particular purpose. These leaders had been imprisoned at least once for their leading roles in anti-colonial agitation, and this fact was worn with a degree of pride. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Chris Allen, ‘Understanding African Politics,’ *Review of African Political Economy,* 22.65 (1995), pp. 301-320; Jean-Francois Bayart, *The State in Africa: Politics of the Belly* (Harlow, 1993); Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control* (Princeton, 2000); Joel Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World* (Princeton, 1988). [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. See, for example, Richard Jeffries, ‘The Labour Aristocracy? Ghana Case Study,’ *Review of African Political Economy*, 3 (1975), pp. 59-70. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Jeffries, ‘The Labour Aristocracy?’; Lester N. Trachtman, ‘The Labor Movement of Ghana: A Study in Political Unionism,’ *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 10. 2 (1962), pp. 183-200. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. In 1962, David E. Apter argued that this narrow focus was in fact necessary for political opposition in newly independent states. David E. Apter, ‘Some Reflections on the Role of a Political Opposition in New Nations,’ *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* 4.2 (1962), pp. 154-168. See also, Frederick Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society: the Labor Question in French and British Africa* (Cambridge, 1996); Richard Jeffries, *Class, Power, and Ideology in Ghana: the Railwaymen of Sekondi* (London, 1978); R.B. Davidson, ‘Labor Relations in Ghana,’ *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (1957), pp. 133-141; Rolf Gerritsen, ‘The Evolution of the Ghana Trades Union Congress under the Convention Peoples Party: Towards a Reinterpretation,’ *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana,* 13.2 (1972), pp. 229-244. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. David J. Finlay, ‘Students and Politics in Ghana,’ *Daedalus*, 97.1 (1968), pp. 51-69. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Richard Jeffries, *Class, Power, and Ideology in Ghana*, ‘The Labour Aristocracy?’; Gerritsen, ‘The Evolution of the Ghana Trades Union Congress’, pp. 229-244. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Gerritsen, ‘The Evolution of the Ghana Trades Union Congress,’ pp. 236-238. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Mahmood Mamdani, ‘A Critique of the State and Civil Society Paradigm in Africanist Studies,’ in Mahmood Mamdani and Ernest Wamba-dia-Wamba (eds), *African Studies in Social Movements and Democracy* (Dakar, 1995), pp. 602-616. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. David Brown, ‘Who are the Tribalists? Social Pluralism and Political Ideology in Ghana,’ *African Affairs*, 81.322 (1982), pp. 37-69; David E. Apter, ‘Ghana,’ in J.S. Coleman and C.G. Rosberg (eds), *Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa*, (Los Angeles, 1970), pp. 259-317. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. It is necessary to note here that the ‘opposition’ was of course diverse, and made up of both non-governmental and non-state groups, and parliamentary opposition. The organised parliamentary opposition parties were certainly ineffective in limiting Nkrumah’s actions, or at least appear to be such. Typically characterised as ‘tribal’ and outdated by Nkrumah and his supporters, the opposition to Nkrumah suffered from a number of key weaknesses that undermined their ability to launch a full scale attack on Nkrumah’s government and ideas. Chief among these weaknesses was regional division, as opposition parties emerged from local and regional affiliations, they were often in conflict with one another rather than the CPP, and failed to extend their individual influence beyond their regions. Secondly, and a charge often levelled against the parliamentary opposition was its relative conservatism in comparison, indeed in contrast, with Nkrumah and the CPP. See, for example, David Birmingham, *Kwame Nkrumah: the Father of African Nationalism* (Athens, OH., 1998), pp.130-35 [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Hodgkin, *Nationalism in Colonial Africa*, p. 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. *Ibid.* See also, Basil Davidson, *Black Star: A View of the Life and Times of Kwame Nkrumah* (Oxford, 2007). [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Allman, *Quills of the Porcupine,* pp. 184-92. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. David Brown, ‘Borderline Politics in Ghana: The National Liberation Movement of Western Togoland,’ *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 18.4 (1980), pp. 575-609; Allman, *Quills of the Porcupine.* [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Kate Skinner, ‘Reading, Writing and Rallies: the Politics of “Freedom” in Southern British Togoland,’ pp. 123-147. See also, Nugent, *Smugglers, Secessionists and Loyal Citizens on the Ghana-Togo Frontier.* [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. See T.C. McCaskie, *State and Society in Pre-Colonial Asante* (Cambridge, 1995); Hobsbawm, ‘Introduction: Inventing Traditions,’ in Hobsbawm and Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition,* pp. 4-6*.* [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Kate Skinner, ‘Reading, Writing and Rallies: the Politics of “Freedom” in Southern British Togoland’; Carola Lentz, *Ethnicity and the Making of History in Northern Ghana* (Edinburgh, 2006)*,* pp. 72-103. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. See, for example, Jeremy Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta* (New York, 1973), William Edgett Smith, *Nyerere of Tanzania* (Nairobi, 1974), Ladipo Adamolekun, *Sékou Touré’s Guinea: an Experiment in Nation Building* (London, 1976). [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Bretton, *The Rise and Fall of Kwame Nkrumah*. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Davidson, *Black Star*. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. See also David E. Apter, ‘Nkrumah, Charisma, and the Coup,’ *Daedalus*, 97.3 (1968), pp. 757-792; Bankole Timothy, *Kwame Nkrumah: His Rise to Power* (London, 1963). Although written prior to the coup, Timothy’s work is demonstrative of the biographical study, and remains one of the most important works on Nkrumah. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. T. Peter Omari, *Kwame Nkrumah: the Anatomy of an African Dictatorship* (Accra, 2000)*,* p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Omari’s work, listed above, remains one of the strongest academic attacks on Nkrumah and his rule [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Jean Allman, ‘Phantoms of the Archive: Kwame Nkrumah, a Nazi Pilot Named Hanna, and the Contingencies of Postcolonial History-Writing,’ *American Historical Review,* 11.1 (2013), pp. 104-129. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. *Ibid.,* pp. 124, 127-129. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Marika Sherwood, *Kwame Nkrumah: the Years Abroad, 1935-1947* (Legon, 1996). [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. For an oversight of these vast bodies of literature, and the complexities of the era, see Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, ‘The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past,’ *Journal of American History,* 91.4 (2005), pp.1233-1263; Peniel E. Joseph, ‘The Black Power Movement: State of the Field,’ *Journal of American History,* 96.3(2009), pp. 751-776; Peniel E. Joseph (ed.), *The Black Power Movement: Rethinking the Civil Rights-Black Power Era* (London, 2006). [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. See, for example, Mark Newman, *The Civil Rights Movement* (Edinburgh, 2004). The level of coverage that the Civil Rights Movement has received has resulted in the publication of numerous overview pieces that focus on the very specific period of 1955-1965. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Joseph, ‘The Black Power Movement: State of the Field,’ p. 751. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Dowd Hall, ‘The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past,’ pp.1233-1263. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Aldon D. Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change* (New York, 1984). See also Fanon Che Wilkins, ‘The Making of Black Internationalists: SNCC and Africa before the Launching of Black Power, 1960-1965,’ *Journal of African American History,* 93.4, New Black Power Studies: National, International, and Transnational Perspectives (2007), pp. 467-490. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. See also, Timothy B. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power* (Chapel Hill, NC., 1999); Simon Wendt, ‘The Roots of Black Power? Armed Resistance and the Radicalization of the Civil Rights Movement,’ in Peniel E. Joseph (ed.), *The Black Power Movement; Rethinking the Civil Rights-Black Power Era* (New York, 2006), pp. 145-165. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. The term ‘African America,’ as used by James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton, is instructive in demonstrating the element of separation that, once internalised, played a key role in self-identification among African Americans. Thus, African America refers the community as it existed through the slave trade, segregation, the Civil Rights Movement, and beyond, highlighting the continued presence of Africa in African American discourses on society and culture. James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton, *Long Road to Freedom: the Story of African America, Volume 1, From African Roots Through the Civil War* (New Brunswick, NJ., 2001), pp. 1-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Malcolm X wrote in his autobiography that ‘…I don't care what points I made in the interviews, it practically never got printed the way I said it. I was learning under fire how the press, when it wants to, can twist, and slant. If I had said "Mary had a little lamb," what probably would have appeared was "Malcolm X Lampoons Mary."’ Malcolm X, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (Harmondsworth, 1968), p. 344. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Most famous examples of the Harlem Renaissance include Langston Hughes, whose poetry and writing captured the sense of pride in the face of great opposition, and the growing conviction, within an admittedly small elite, that African American culture was of great importance to America. See Glen Jordan, ‘Re-membering the African-American Past: Langston Hughes, Aaron Douglas and Black art of the Harlem Renaissance,’ *Cultural Studies,* 25.6 (2011), pp. 848-891. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Larry Isaac, ‘Movement of Movements: Cultural Production in the Long Civil Rights Struggle,’ *Social Forces,* 87.1 (2008), pp. 33-63. Isaac argues that culture was a constant throughout the period of activism as a by-product of the civil rights movement itself, as implicit in the movement for legislative change was a desire to change the normative cultural beliefs that underpinned segregation and position of African Americans in American society. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Tony Martin, *Race First: the Ideological and Organizational Struggles of Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association* (London, 1976). [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. MichaelOmi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States From the 1960s to the 1990s* (2nd edn, New York, 1994), p. 55. For a broader examination of the construction of ethnicity and ethnic identity, see Joane Nagel, ‘Constructing Ethnicity: Creating and Recreating Ethnic Identity and Culture,’ *Social Problems,* 41.1, Special Issue on Immigration, Race, and Ethnicity in America (1994), pp. 152-176. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Sidney J. Lemelle and Robin D.G. Kelley (eds), *Imagining Home: Class, Culture and Nationalism in the African Diaspora* (London, 1994); Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*; Penny von Eschen, ‘Who’s the Real Ambassador? Exploding Cold War Racial Ideology,’ in Christian G. Appy (ed.), *Cold War Constructions: the Political Culture of United States Imperialism, 1945-1966* (Amherst, Mass., 2000), pp. 110-131. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. Lemelle and Kelley, ‘Introduction: Imagining Home: Pan-Africanism Revisited,’ in Lemelle and Kelley (eds), *Imagining Home*, pp. 1-16. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. Joy L. Abell, ‘Africa/American: Lorraine Hansberry’s *Les Blancs* and the American Civil Rights Movement,’ *African American Review,* 35.3 (2001), pp. 459-470; Jordan, ‘Re-membering the African-American Past,’ pp. 857-8, 860-62. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. See, for example, Jacob Drachler (ed.), *Black Homeland, Black Diaspora: Cross-Currents of the African Relationship* (London, 1975); Francis Njubi Nesbitt, *Race for Sanctions: African Americans against Apartheid, 1946-1994* (Bloomington, 2004); Ann Seidman, ‘Apartheid and the U.S. South,’ in Lemelle and Kelley (eds), *Imagining Home,* pp. 209-221. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Kevin Gaines, *American Africans in Ghana: Black Expatriates and the Civil Rights Era* (Chapel Hill, NC., 2007). See also, Kevin Gaines, ‘From Black Power to Civil Rights: Julian Mayfield and African American Expatriates in Nkrumah’s Ghana, 1957-1966,’ in Christian G. Appy (ed.), *Cold War Constructions: the Political Culture of United States Imperialism, 1945-1966* (Amherst, Mass., 2000), pp. 257-270. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. An exception to this is the recent work by Carol Polsgrove, which examines the role of the press in promoting anti-colonial activities across Africa, with particular reference to men such as George Padmore. Carol Polsgrove, *Ending British Rule in Africa: Writers in a Common Cause* (Manchester, 2012). [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Terence Ranger, ‘Towards a Usable African Past’ in C.H. Fyfe (ed.), *African Studies since 1945: A Tribute to Basil Davidson* (London, 1976), pp. 28-39. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Most famous of the Pan-Africanists who later moved to Africa was W.E.B. Du Bois, whose experiences will be covered in more detail below. Also among those who left were E.W. Blyden, who was born in the Danish West Indies in 1832 and eventually moved to Liberia. Later, George Padmore, born in Trinidad also moved to Ghana. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Rupert Emerson, ‘Pan-Africanism,’ *International Organization,* 16.2 Africa and International Organization (1962), p. 282. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. R. Chrisman, ‘Aspects of Pan-Africanism,’ *Black Scholar,* 4.10 (1973) pp. 2-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. *An Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade*, British Parliamentary Papers, House of Commons, 1807, Public General Act, 47 George III, c. 36 HL/PO/PU/1/1807/47G3n60 1807, *William Loney RN,* at <http://www.pdavis.nl/Legis_06.htm> [accessed 4/9/13]; *An Act for the Abolition of Slavery throughout the British Colonies,* Public General Act, 3&4 William IV, c. 73 HL/PO/PU/1/1833/3&4W4n223 1833, *William Loney RN,* at <http://www.pdavis.nl/Legis_07.htm> [accessed 4/9/13]. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. See Elizabeth Dimmock, ‘Women, Missions and Modernity: from Anti-Slavery to Missionary Zeal, 1780s to 1840s,’ *Itinerario,* 34.3, Missions and Modernity (2010), pp. 53-66. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. Kevin D. Smith, ‘A Fragmented Freedom: the Historiography of Emancipation and its Aftermath in the British West Indies,’ *Slavery and Abolition,* 16.1 (1995), pp. 114-116. It is worth noting here that the West Indies, much like the British colonies in Africa, varied greatly in political and social structures. Thus, while events and processes in Jamaica and Trinidad would highlight the position of an emergent political class, those of other islands would suggest otherwise. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. For an overview of the Reconstruction Era as it related to African American emancipation, see, for example, W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America: an Essay Towards the part which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct democracy in America, 1860-1880* (London, 1966); Michael Perlman, *Emancipation and Reconstruction* (Wheeling, Ill., 2003); Ronalde Butchart, ‘Black Hope, White Power: Emancipation, Reconstruction and the Legacy of Unequal Schooling in the US South, 1861-1880,’ *Paedagogica Historica,* 46.1 (2010), pp. 33-50; Eric Foner, ‘Rights and the Constitution in Black Life during the Civil War and Reconstruction,’ *Journal of American History,* 74.3 (1987), pp. 863-883. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. Johnetta Cross Brazzell, ‘Brick without Straw: Missionary-Sponsored Black Higher Education in the Post-Emancipation Era,’ *Journal of Higher Education,* 63.1 (1992), pp. 26-49. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. The idea of colonisation gained credence under the notion that colonies would relieve the USA’s race problem, and by extension, improve the economic lot of white workers. For an overview of its origins, see Eric Burin, ‘The Slave Trade Act of 1819: A New Look at Colonization and the Politics of Slavery,’ *American Nineteenth Century History,* 13.1 (2012), pp. 1-14; Claude A. Clegg, *Price of Liberty: African Americans and the Making of Liberia* (Chapel Hill, NC., 2004). The American Colonization Society presented the Liberia plan as morally righteous, and the best plan to improve the lives of freed slaves. See, Massachusetts Colonization Society, *American Colonization Society and the Colony at Liberia* (Boston, 1831). For arguments opposing the relocation of freemen to Liberia, see William Tremble, *The Liberian Crusade* (Louth, 1833). The Liberian project was a product of national discourses on race relations, but with regards to the specific Pan-Africanist relationship, it had a profound effect on self-identification among those who settled in Liberia and those who remained in the USA. For more on this, see James Sidbury, *Becoming African in America: Race and Nation in the Early Black Atlantic* (Oxford, 2007), especially pp. 131-202. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. E.W. Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race* (Edinburgh, 1967). This book, first published in 1887, was a study of the role of religion within African societies, how it had changed them, and so on. Blyden concluded that Islam was better suited to the African context, principally because Christianity required the sacrifice of numerous indigenous social norms and traditions, whereas Islam did not. In writing this he opposed the popular opinion among colonisers and missionaries that Christianity was both necessary and suitable in Africa. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. Kwame Anthony Appiah, ‘Pan-Africanism,’ in Kwame Anthony Appiah, Henry Louis Gates (eds), *Africana: Encyclopedia of the African and African American Experience* (2nd edn, Oxford, 2006). [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. Robert W. July, ‘Nineteenth Century Negritude: Edward W. Blyden,’ *Journal of African History,* 5.1, pp. 74-76. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. The title of ‘father’ of Pan-Africanism is hotly debated, and it is not the intention of this section to put forward an opinion on this matter, but rather to present, in chronological order, those individuals who made a large contribution to the development of the ideology, or its practice. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. As Alexandre Mboukou has noted, this would later receive a great deal of criticism, because of its similarity to colonial principles. Alexandre Mboukou, ‘The Pan African Movement, 1900-1945: A Study in Leadership Conflicts Among the Disciples of Pan Africanism,’ *Journal of Black Studies,* 13.3 (1983), pp. 283-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. Subsequent to this conference, the description of the meetings was changed to Congress. After the London meeting, Congresses were held in Paris (1919), London (1921 and 1923), New York (1927), and Manchester (1945). Notably, after the period of African decolonisation, subsequent Congresses were held in Africa, in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (1974), and Kampala, Uganda (1994). [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. Whilst this first meeting of Pan-Africanists was intended to be global in scope, in reality it reflected a colonial mind-set. The principal speakers were diaspora, at the 1900 meeting they were mainly from the Caribbean, with a smaller delegation from the United States and an even smaller number of delegates from Africa itself. It was not until the fifth Pan-African Congress in 1945 that the balance changed substantially to become dominated by African representatives. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. Mboukou, ‘The Pan-African Movement, 1900-1945,’ pp. 284-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. Du Bois coined the term ‘talented tenth,’ to describe the top ten percent of African Americans who had received a university education and constituted the educated elite of the diaspora. Though he used it in specific relation to the USA, the terminology is still useful in understanding educational and economic stratification in the West Indies in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. Tony Martin, *Race First: The Ideological and Organizational Struggles of Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association* (London, 1976), pp. 280-81. Booker T. Washington was arguably the first national leader of African Americans, though his views were often characterised by his opponents as apologetic than reformist. His ideas, which revolved around the notion that African Americans were fundamentally different to White Americans (and, inherent to his work, inferior to them), fell out of popularity in the 1920s and 1930s, when the push for equality within the existing state seemed to gain more traction on the national stage. [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. *Ibid.,* p. 282. Martin suggests that Garvey saw himself as the heir to Washington, justifying this position and explaining the difference in their ideologies as a consequence of the situations both men found themselves in. [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. Marcus Garvey, cited in Amy Jaques Garvey (ed.), *The Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey: Africa for the Africans, Volume 3* (London, 1967), p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. *Constitution and Book of Laws: made for the government of the Universal Negro Improvement Association, Inc., and African Communities’ League, Inc., of the World: in effect July 1918: revised and amended Aug. 1920: revised and amended Aug., 1921,* Box 1, Folder a5, Universal Negro Improvement Association, Central Division (New York), Records, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York*.* [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. Nicholas Patsides, ‘Allies, Constituents or Myopic Investors: Marcus Garvey and Black Americans,’ *Journal of American Studies,* 41.2 (2007), pp. 280-282. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. Despite cries of absolute equality, the UNIA Manifesto also states that an aim of the organisation was to ‘assist in civilizing the backward tribes of Africa.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. M.P Akpan, ‘Liberia and the Universal Negro Improvement Association: the Background to the Abortion of Garvey’s Scheme for African Colonization,’ *Journal of African History,* 14.1 (1973), pp. 105-127; Frank Chalk, ‘Du Bois and Garvey Confront Liberia: Two Incidents of the Coolidge Years,’ *Canadian Journal of African Studies,* 1.2 (1967), pp. 135-142; Richard West, *Garvey: Africa, Europe, the Americas* (Trenton, NJ., 1994). [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. UNIA/MSS 1066, 14/1, Administration, African Land Project, 1958; UNIA/MSS 1066, 14/20, Administration, Five Year Plan, no date; UNIA/MSS 14/22, Administration, Ghana Project, 1958, UNIA Collection, Manuscript, Archive and Rare Book Library, Emory University, Atlanta, GA (hereafter MARBL). These documents were from after Garvey had left the United States, but demonstrate the level of detail and thought that had gone into organising the diaspora’s return to Africa. [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. This was at a time when popular mainstream conceptions of Africa were almost unfailingly negative, characterising Africa as the ‘heart of darkness’ and a backward space devoid of ‘civilisation.’ For most people without personal experience of Africa, this was a readily acceptable idea, with a dual effect of discouraging any association with Africa and humiliating African Americans. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. Despite the emergence of Black political leaders in the period from the turn of the century to the mid-1910s, focus in the United States was still limited to the educated elite, which made up a very small percentage of the African American population. It was only this group that the government would work with (when it would work with any African Americans at all). [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. Patsides, ‘Allies, Constituents or Myopic Investors,’ pp. 280-81. See also, George M. Frederickson, *Black Liberation: a Comparative History of Black Ideologies in the United States and South Africa* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 150-158. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Oxford, 1994). This book, arguably Du Bois’ most famous publication, was first printed in 1903, and included a collection of articles which had been published in *The Atlantic* magazine previously. Throughout the book there are references to Africa and colonialism, but the focus is firmly on the improvement of African American lives. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. Martin, *Race First,* pp. 282-85. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. *The Crisis,* December 1924, p. 86. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. Garvey, ‘Dr. Du Bois Criticised,’ in Garvey (ed.), *More Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey,* p. 124. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. Marcus Garvey, *Negro World,* 1 January, 1921. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. W.E.B. Du Bois, ‘The Talented Tenth,’ in Booker T. Washington *et al*., *The Negro Problem* (Middlesex, 2007), pp. 11-25. [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
135. *Ibid.*, p. 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
136. Marcus Garvey, ‘The Negro, Communism, Trade Unionism and His (?) Friend: “Beware of Greeks Bearing Gifts”,’ Garvey (ed.), *Philosophy and Opinions, Volume 1* (1989), p. 71. [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
137. W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Oxford, 1994). [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
138. W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk,* p. 116. [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
139. The Niagara Movement has, due to its historical link to the NAACP, been broadly overlooked even in recent literature as a key step in the establishment of a national civil rights movement. For an overview of the consequences of this exclusion and a reinterpretation of the organisation, see Angela Jones, *African American Civil Rights: Early Activism and the Niagara Movement* (Santa Barbara, CA., 2011); ‘The Niagara Movement, 1905-1910: A Revisionist Approach to the Social History of the Civil Rights Movement,’ *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 23.3 (2010), pp. 453-500; Christopher E. Force, ‘Booker T. Washington and the 1905 Niagara Movement Conference,’ *Journal of Negro History*, 73.3/4 (1987), pp. 45-56. [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
140. These methods were outlined in early editions of *The Crisis.* See for example, *The Crisis,* April 1911. [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
141. For a detailed history of the founding of the NAACP, see Mary White Ovington, *Black and White Sat Down Together: the Reminiscences of an NAACP Founder* (New York, 1995); Manfred Berg, *The Ticket to Freedom: The NAACP and the Struggle for Black Political Integration* (Gainsville, Fla., 2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
142. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk,* pp. 1-7. See also, T. Owens Moore, ‘A Fanonian Perspective on Double Consciousness,’ *Journal of Black Studies,* 35.6 (2005), pp. 751-62. [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
143. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk,* p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
144. *Ibid.,* p. 3-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
145. James R. Grossman, *Land of Hope: Chicago, Black Southerners, and the Great Migration* (Chicago, 1989), pp.178-79. [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
146. E. David Cronin, *Black Moses: The Story of Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association* (London, 1969), p. 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
147. ‘Opinions,’ *The Crisis,* May 1917, p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
148. ‘Editorial,’ *The Crisis,* June 1917, p. 59. [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
149. The Paris meeting included a far greater number of African American delegates, as opposed to West Indians, who had made up the majority at the 1900 Congress organised by Sylvester-Williams. There were also more continental Africans in attendance, including Blaise Diagne, a member of the French Parliament from Senegal. [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
150. Clarence G. Contee, ‘Du Bois, the NAACP, and the Pan-African Congress of 1919,’ *Journal of Negro History*, 57.1 (1972), p. 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
151. *Ibid.,* pp. 14-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
152. Elliott M. Rudwick, *W.E.B. Du Bois: a Study in Minority Group Leadership* (Philadelphia, PA., 1960), pp. 208-216; Jean Suret-Canale, *French Colonialism in Tropical Africa, 1900-1945* (London, 1971), p. 451. [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
153. Martin, *Race First,* pp. 361-68. [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
154. Garvey, in *The Thoughts and Opinions of Marcus Garvey, or Africa for the Africans,* (London, 1967), p. 183. [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
155. *Ibid.,* p. 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
156. Marcus Garvey, cited in Martin, *Race First,* p. 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
157. Robert Whitaker, *On the Laps of Gods: the Red Summer of 1919 and the Struggle for Justice that Remade a Nation* (New York, 2008), pp. 47-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
158. Mark Ellis, ‘J. Edgar Hoover and the “Red Summer” of 1919,’ *Journal of American History,* 28.1 (1994), p. 44; Grossman, *Land of Hope*, p.4. [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
159. Grossman, *Land of Hope,* p.138. [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
160. The precise numbers injured or killed are unknown, but there is general consensus that these figures represent those harmed by race rioting, excluding other acts of violence that occurred in the same time period. Arthur Waskow, *From Race Riot to Sit-In, 1919 and the 1960s: a Study in the Connections between Conflict and Violence* (New York, 1967), pp.38-59, 304-307. [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
161. Jan Voogd, *Race Riots and Resistance: the Red Summer of 1919* (New York, 2008), pp. 24-33. [↑](#footnote-ref-161)
162. For a breakdown of these chapters and divisions by state, see Tony Morris, *Race First,* pp. 361-73. Campbell Gibson and Kay Jung, ‘Historical Census Statistics on Population Totals by Race, 1790 to 1990, and Hispanic Origin, 1970 to 1990, for the United States, Regions, Divisions, and States’ (September 2002), *U.S. Census Bureau,* [www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0056/twps0056.html](http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0056/twps0056.html) [accessed 20/7/14] [↑](#footnote-ref-162)
163. Mary White Ovington, cited in Cronin, *Black Moses,* p. 203. [↑](#footnote-ref-163)
164. Marcus Garvey, ‘The Redemption of Africa,’ in Garvey (ed.), *Thoughts and Opinions of Marcus Garvey*, pp. 139-40; ‘Only Freedom and Nationhood can bring Peace to Negroes,’ in *Ibid.,* pp. 141-42. [↑](#footnote-ref-164)
165. Countee Cullen, ‘To Certain Critics,’ in Gerald Lyn Early (ed.) *My Souls High Song: the Collected Writings of Countee Cullen, Voice of the Harlem Renaissance* (London, 1991), p. 206. [↑](#footnote-ref-165)
166. The headquarters of the UNIA was situated next to the Abyssinian Baptist Church on West 138th Street, in the heart of Harlem. The Church’s name was inspired by the independent African state. The symbolic link between the two organisations was rarely more than that, but it is a strong example of the close proximity that Pan-Africanism and nascent Black Pride shared in the inter-war period. [↑](#footnote-ref-166)
167. Countee Cullen, ‘Heritage,’ in *My Soul’s High Song*, pp. 104-108. [↑](#footnote-ref-167)
168. Warrington Hudlin, ‘Harlem Renaissance Re-Examined,’ in Harold Bloom (ed.), *The Harlem Renaissance* (Broomhall, PA., 2004),pp. 5-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-168)
169. As Hudlin, among others, has noted, the principal participants and patrons of the Renaissance were from the small African American middle class. Though patrons could afford to support the movement, they were wary of the position they held, and to an extent embodied the moderate values they believed existed in middle class society. Likewise, whilst the artists involved attempted to understand the totality of the experience of African American life, the extent to which the movement went beyond those involved with it and effected the masses is unclear. [↑](#footnote-ref-169)
170. As Alain Locke noted in 1925, ‘…the younger generation is vibrant with a new psychology; the new spirit is awake in the masses, and under the very eyes of the professional observers is transforming what has been a perennial problem into the progressive phases of contemporary Negro life.’ Alain Locke, *The New Negro: an Interpretation* (New York, 1968), p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-170)
171. As E. David Cronin has noted, the lack of record-keeping in numerous local branches and the breaking up of UNIA documents after Garvey’s deportation have made it impossible to pin down exact numbers. Cronin, *Black Moses,* pp. 204-207. [↑](#footnote-ref-171)
172. *Ibid.,* p. 205. [↑](#footnote-ref-172)
173. See L.L. Loate to the *Negro World,* 30 May 1925, reproduced in Robert A. Hill (ed.), *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers: Africa for the Africans, 1923-1945, Volume X* (London, 2006), p. 311. [↑](#footnote-ref-173)
174. In 1922, W.E.B. Du Bois added his voice to the growing calls for clarity on the state of UNIA funds, noting that the NAACP had asked to view UNIA books and had been refused. W.E.B. Du Bois, ‘Leroy Bundy,’ *The Crisis,* 22 January 1922, pp. 16-21. [↑](#footnote-ref-174)
175. The UNIA continued to exist in the USA, but the organisation had split into two separate organisations. Garvey had moved his headquarters back to Jamaica, and renamed the organisation the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League 1929 of the World (UNIA-ACL 1929). In New York, the organisation was simply called UNIA Inc., and the Presidency taken over by George Weston shortly after Garvey’s arrest. [↑](#footnote-ref-175)
176. Stewart E. Tolnay, ‘The African American “Great Migration” and Beyond,’ *Annual Review of Sociology,* 29 (2003), pp. 209-232. [↑](#footnote-ref-176)
177. Charles H. Wesley, ‘Organized Labor and the Negro,’ *Journal of Negro Education,* 8.3, The Present and Future Position of the Negro in the American Social Order (1939), pp. 449-461. [↑](#footnote-ref-177)
178. Rick Halpern, *Down on the Killing Floor: Black and White Workers in Chicago’s Packinghouses, 1904-1954* (Urbana, Ill., 1997), p.58. [↑](#footnote-ref-178)
179. Charles S. Johnson, ‘The New Frontage on American Life,’ in Locke (ed.), *The New Negro: An Interpretation* (New York, 1968),pp. 278-298. [↑](#footnote-ref-179)
180. Joseph Sparobin, *American Communism in Crisis, 1943-1957* (Cambridge, Mass., 1972), pp. 20-23. [↑](#footnote-ref-180)
181. Robin D.G. Kelley, *Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists during the Great Depression* (Chapel Hill, NC., 1990), pp.6-10. [↑](#footnote-ref-181)
182. Harvard Sitkoff, *A New Deal for Blacks: the Emergence of Civil Rights as a National Issues, Vol.1, The Depression Decade* (Oxford, 1978); Raymond Wolters, *Negroes and the Great Depression: the Problem of Economic Recovery* (Westport, CT., 1970); Nancy Weiss, *Farewell to the Party of Lincoln: Black Politics in the Age of FDR* (Princeton, 1983); Frederica H. Barrow, ‘Forrester Blanchard Washington and his Advocacy for African Americans in the New Deal,’ *Social Work,* 52.3 (2007), pp. 201-8.The impact of the New Deal on the growth of African American labour organisation is a highly contested area of study. Though federal law allowed for the incorporation of African Americans into existing unions, and made available the same legal rights and support to them, local and state officials were put in charge of the role out of these acts, which resulted in wide disparities. Racial prejudices attributed to the exclusion of African Americans from trade unions, and in some areas, labour markers altogether. See Steve Valocchi, ‘The Racial Basis of Capitalism and the State, and the Impact of the New Deal on African Americans,’ *Social Problems,* 41.3 (1994), pp. 347-362. Others have highlighted the problematic development of African American reliance on welfare policies, which they identify as originating in the New Deal. See David E. Bernstein, *Only one Place of Redress: African Americans, Labor Regulations, and the Courts from Reconstruction to the New Deal* (Durham, NC., 2001). [↑](#footnote-ref-182)
183. It is important to note here that the package of labour reforms brought in under the New Deal often had the effect of excluding African Americans from labour, housing and welfare, as they were enforced by state and local governments, thereby allowing local attitudes to shape the distribution of support to a greater degree. [↑](#footnote-ref-183)
184. The apparent abandonment of Black communists by Moscow for the political expedience of peace with the Nazis was downplayed by revisionist historians of American Communism, though the collapse of the Soviet Union and the opening up of the archives has forced a reconsideration of the relationship between the USSR and the CPUSA. For an overview of the literature on American communism, and the importance of the Soviet Union in funding and directing the CPUSA’s activities Pact, see Henry Klehr and John Earl Haynes, ‘Revising Revisionism: a New Look at American Communism,’ *Academic Questions,* 22.4 (2009), pp.452-462. [↑](#footnote-ref-184)
185. Bill V. Mullen, *Popular Fronts: Chicago and Africa-American Cultural Politics* (Urbana, Ill., 1999), pp.19-43 [↑](#footnote-ref-185)
186. George Shepperson, in St. Clair Drake and George Shepperson, ‘The Fifth Pan-African Conference, 1945 and the All African Peoples Congress, 1958,’ *Contributions in Black Studies,* 8.5, (1986), p. 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-186)
187. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Winston S. Churchill, ‘Atlantic Charter,’ signed 14 August 1941, *Avalon Project,* <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/wwii/atlantic.asp> [accessed 5/3/14]. [↑](#footnote-ref-187)
188. Elizabeth Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World: America’s Vision for Human Rights* (Cambridge, Mass., 2005), pp. 83-86. [↑](#footnote-ref-188)
189. Eve Darian-Smith, ‘Re-Reading W.E.B. Du Bois: the Global Dimensions of the US Civil Rights Struggle,’ *Journal of Global History,* 7.3 (2012), p. 485. [↑](#footnote-ref-189)
190. Carol Polsgrove, *Ending British Rule in Africa: Writers in a Common Cause* (Manchester, 2009), pp.1-22. [↑](#footnote-ref-190)
191. This is worthy of note as it represents the increasing shift in terms of ideological development from the diaspora to the continent. From this point on, Africans took on a more central role in the promulgation of new theories of Pan-Africanism. As Shepperson has noted, the 1945 meeting was also far more Left-wing than its predecessors, and more fervently anti-colonial. He suggests that this was the result of the attachment of leading members to the international trade union movement and to the Pan-African Federation, established in 1944 with much greater emphasis on anti-colonial agitation. Drake and Shepperson, ‘The Fifth Pan-African Conference,’ p. 38. [↑](#footnote-ref-191)
192. Jaquelyn Dowd Hall, ‘The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Use of the Past’ *Journal of American History,* 91.4 (2005), pp. 1233-1263. This may seem to suggest that the War had only a limited impact on the Civil Rights Movement post-1955, but the social, demographic and economic changes caused by the War, as well as the experiences of fighting brought back by troops all came to bear on the gradual increase in activism and support for a civil rights campaign. [↑](#footnote-ref-192)
193. The regression of this first bastion of Black pride continued unabated until it regained some popularity in the 1970s with the emergence of the Black Power movement. [↑](#footnote-ref-193)
194. Despite the success of the Pan-African Congresses in bringing together Pan-Africanists from around the world, there was no ‘mass’ element to them. These were conferences for leaders, aimed at discussing issues of race and colonialism, and engaging relevant governments to rectify iniquities, but to rally Africans of the continent and the diaspora together. [↑](#footnote-ref-194)
195. Other African Americans targeted by the House Committee on Un-American Activity included actor and communist party member Paul Robeson and author Langston Hughes. [↑](#footnote-ref-195)
196. See, for example, Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America: an Essay toward a History of the Part which Black Folk Played in the attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880* (New York, 1956). Du Bois proved adept at navigating the narrow space between rejecting American capitalism as it was disadvantageous to African Americans, and socialism which required a complete rejection of racial identity for a class-based one instead. [↑](#footnote-ref-196)
197. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America*, p.16. [↑](#footnote-ref-197)
198. *Ibid.*, pp.20-25. [↑](#footnote-ref-198)
199. Wilson Record, *Race and Radicalism: The NAACP and the Communist Party in Conflict* (Ithaca, NY., 1964)*,* pp. 175-176. [↑](#footnote-ref-199)
200. Gerald Horne, *Black and Red: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Afro-American Response to the Cold War, 1944-1963* (Albany, NY., 1986), pp. 151-152. [↑](#footnote-ref-200)
201. *Ibid.,* pp. 171-180. [↑](#footnote-ref-201)
202. Record, *Race and Radicalism*, pp. 72-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-202)
203. *Ibid.,* pp. 169-221. David Levering Lewis, *W.E.B. Du Bois: the Fight for Equality in the American Century, 1919-1963* (New York, 2000), pp.548-553. [↑](#footnote-ref-203)
204. For more detail on the mainstream Civil Rights Movement (1955-1965), see Aldon D. Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change* (New York, 1984) pp. 158-62; Mark Newman, *The Civil Rights Movement* (Edinburgh, 2004); Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge, MA., 1981); Wesley Hogan, *Many Minds, One Heart: SNCC’s Dream for a New America* (Chapel Hill, NC., 2007); J.C. Cobb, *The Most Southern Place on Earth:  The Mississippi Delta and the Roots of Regional Identity* (Oxford, 1992). These titles are a small representation of a very large body of literature, and represent some of the main perspectives and best overviews available. [↑](#footnote-ref-204)
205. Belinda Robnett has demonstrated, with a focus on women, how national organisations actively sought to translate national platform ideas into local narratives, to encourage a high level of grass-roots participation. Belinda Robnett, ‘African-American Women in the Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1965: Gender, Leadership, and Micromobilization,’ *American Journal of Sociology,* 101.6 (1996), pp. 1661-1693. Likewise, SNCC rejected a hierarchical structure, and instead encouraged members to organise local branches aimed at supporting the community. [↑](#footnote-ref-205)
206. In the Ghanaian Times of 31 August 1963, an unnamed journalist wrote that ‘This literary genius [Du Bois] was a dogged fighter in some of the finest causes of humanity.’ He left the United States because ‘he was as uncompromising as his shafts were devastating earned him the respect of many parts of the world but the implacable hatred of the white racists who, like the meanly-mouthed liberal reformists, see nothing but red in any activity directed against the shameful evils of a hypocritical society.’ Anon, ‘Demonstration by 250,000,’ *Ghanaian Times,* 31 August 1963, p. 5. August Meier wrote in *The Crisis* that ‘The NAACP and the Urban League reflect the outlook and aspirations of the middle class, which is actually not interested in the welfare of the masses of the race. The Negro press also, while it pretends to represent the aspirations of the race, actually exhibits the outlook of the bourgeoisie. It reflects the feelings of insecurity and inferiority among the black middle class by exaggerating … incidents indicating white recognition of individual Negroes.’ August Meier, ‘Some Observations on the Negro Middle Class,’ *The Crisis,* October 1957, p. 462. Both statements highlight the fact that the new Movement leaders still relied on the support of white liberals and feared radical elements, thus targeting other African Americans and distancing themselves from their activities. [↑](#footnote-ref-206)
207. Marcus Garvey wrote that ‘As we have in the past been living upon the mercies shown us by others, and by the chances obtainable, and have suffered therefrom, so will we in the future suffer if an effort is made now to adjust our own affairs.’ Marcus Garvey, *Philosophies and Opinions,* p. 37.See also, W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Autobiography of W.E.B. Du Bois: A Soliloquy on Viewing my Life from the Last Decade of its First Century* (New York, 1968). [↑](#footnote-ref-207)
208. Kwadwo Osei-Nyame, for example, refers to J.E. Casely Hayford, an early political leader in the Gold Coast (discussed below), as a ‘great figure of African nationalism and Pan-Africanism in the Gold Coast’ despite there being very little evidence to suggest that Casely Hayford was a nationalist in a post-1945 understanding, or a Pan-Africanist at all. Kwadwo Osei-Nyame, ‘Pan-Africanist Ideology and the African Historical novel of Self-Discovery: the Examples of Kobina Sekyi and J.E. Casely Hayford,’ *Journal of African Cultural Studies,* 12.2 (1999), p. 137. [↑](#footnote-ref-208)
209. Jean Allman, *The Quills of the Porcupine: Asante Nationalism in an Emergent Ghana* (Madison, 1993), p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-209)
210. This early scholarship, mainly produced in the 1950s and 1960s, placed most focus on the CPP as the creative force driving the creation of the ‘modern’ nation. Social cleavages such as ethnic differences and parliamentary opposition were ignored, or portrayed as outdated and unsubstantial. See Immanuel Wallerstein, *Africa: the Politics of Independence: an Interpretation of Modern African History* (New York, 1961), and *The Road to Independence: Ghana and the Ivory Coast* (Paris, 1964); Russell Warren Howe, ‘Gold Coast into Ghana,’ *Phylon Quarterly*, 18.2 (1957), pp. 155-161; David Kimble, *A Political History of Ghana: the Rise of Gold Coast Nationalism, 1850-1928* (Oxford, 1963).  [↑](#footnote-ref-210)
211. In this sense, the nation is not pre-determined, but the static outcome of a historical process that can be created or obtained. Such an argument undermines the importance of dynamic forces which seek to shape and reshape the nation during this process, which is itself continuous. For a discussion of this perspective and the limitations of such a paradigm, see Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940: the Past of the Present* (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 14-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-211)
212. John Parker, *Making the Town: Ga State and Society in Early Colonial Accra* (Oxford, 2000), p. 136. [↑](#footnote-ref-212)
213. What is commonly referred to as the Gold Coast was in fact a collection of territories, each of which had a different colonial relationship. The Gold Coast Crown Colony was established in 1874 and run by a Resident Governor, Ashanti (established as a British protectorate in 1896, then a colony in 1901) and the Northern Territories (declared a British protectorate in 1902) were both governed by Resident Commissioners who were answerable to the Gold Coast Governor. It was only in 1946 that the Gold Coast became a single colonial territory. [↑](#footnote-ref-213)
214. From the mid-1880s, the development of key industries, growth of a very small merchant class, the instalment of traditional authorities within the colonial power structure, and the increased access to education led to the creation of a bourgeois group of intellectuals, who considered themselves independent of the chiefs, urban and well-educated, often in the West. Excluded from both the traditional and the colonial power structures, this group began to look to new methods of social organisation and political agitation. For an analysis of this group in Accra, and how this dislocated position informed their self-identity, see Parker, *Making the Town,* pp. 123-28. [↑](#footnote-ref-214)
215. Parker, *Making the Town,* pp. 201-2. The specific policies were the Crown Lands Bill, 1896 and the Crown Lands Bill, 1897. Both bills attempted to bring all unoccupied land in the Gold Coast under the control of the Colonial Government. For an interesting examination of these and the reasons for the bills being brought into law, see Olufemi Omosini, ‘The Gold Coast Land Question, 1894-1900: Some Issues Raised on West Africa’s Economic Development,’ *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 5.3 (1972), pp. 453-469. [↑](#footnote-ref-215)
216. Kwame Okoampe-Ohoofe, *J.B. Danquah: Architect of Modern Ghana* (Bloomington, IN., 2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-216)
217. This is, in fact, indicative of the strength and problematic nature of the nationalist paradigm. Nationalist historiography has encouraged a teleological reading of African history and a depiction of *all* earlier African politics as ‘nationalist’ or leading towards nationalism. Falola’s contribution to the study of nationalism is particularly noteworthy for its depth and insight into the functioning of nationalism as a very broad idea, yet even he folds nineteenth and early twentieth century discourses on community and belonging into the ‘nationalism’ typically identified after 1945. Toyin Falola, *Nationalism and African Intellectuals* (Rochester, NY., 2001). [↑](#footnote-ref-217)
218. Joseph Casely-Hayford, *Gold Coast Native Institution, with Thoughts upon a Healthy Imperial Policy for the Gold Coast and Ashanti* (Memphis, TN., 2012), pp. 1-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-218)
219. Okoampe-Ahoofe, *J.B. Danquah*. Though the ARPS did push for greater representation of Africans by Africans, their support for greater democracy and enfranchisement was tempered by their belief that the majority of Gold Coast subjects were not ‘prepared’ for the responsibility of electing representatives. [↑](#footnote-ref-219)
220. H. Conway Belfield, ‘Report on the Legislation Governing the Alienation of Native Lands in the Gold Coast Colony and Ashanti, 1912’ in G.E. Metcalfe (ed.), *Great Britain and Ghana: Documents of Ghana History, 1807-1957* (London, 1964), p. 539. [↑](#footnote-ref-220)
221. This is a point that Dennis Austin highlights in his discussion of the rise of the CPP. Though Conway’s concerns were somewhat unfounded in this period, by the late-1940s, Austin argues, the popular protests were indeed the ‘herald of a struggle for power soon to be conducted by new leaders who drew their support from a much broader, more popular level...’ which represented a greater shift iin local politics and brought to the fore underlying discontents that small farmers had with the chiefs. Dennis Austin, *Politics in Ghana, 1946-1960* (Oxford, 1964), p.12 [↑](#footnote-ref-221)
222. An interesting comparison here can be drawn with the Nigerian intelligentsia and the work that it was producing at the turn of the century. With a much larger, and more diverse, population, the Nigerian intelligentsia that emerged was relatively small, and located primarily in the southern region of the country. Philip Zachernuk, in examining the history of this elite, demonstrated the dualisms that they sought to highlight to their audience. In attempting to establish the distance between the indigenous population and the colonisers, the intelligentsia would go on in the coming decades to draw on Garveyite ideas of race and Blackness to advance a separate sphere. That process, of indigenising cultural outputs, began at the turn of the century. *Colonial Subjects: An African Intelligentsia and Atlantic Ideas* (London, 2000). [↑](#footnote-ref-222)
223. Casely-Hayford, *Gold Coast Native Institutions,* p. 67. [↑](#footnote-ref-223)
224. *Ibid.,* p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-224)
225. The ARPS worked hard to strike a balance between challenging colonial order whilst maintaining connections with the chiefs, a vital source of power and social and political authority. They won the support of a number of chiefs, including Nana Sir Ofori Atta I, the *Okeyehene* (King) of Akyem Abuakwa, a highly influential civil servant, and the first African to sit in the Legislative Council in 1916. Ofori Atta was also the uncle of J.B. Danquah. [↑](#footnote-ref-225)
226. In 1903, Casely-Hayford wrote, ‘You may destroy a nation, but it is another thing to destroy the spirit of nationality.’ This highlighted the importance that he placed on the ideas underpinning nationalism, and the ability of the paradigm to act as a rallying point for individual subjects. Nationalism in this context provided both a language of unity for Africans in the Gold Coast, and a challenge to the perceived authority of the Colonial without a direct attack on that authority. Casely-Hayford, *Gold Coast Native Institutions,* p. 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-226)
227. ‘Petition of the National Congress of British West Africa,’ 19October 1920, in Metcalfe, *Great Britain and Ghana*, pp. 583-585. The National Congress of British West Africa was established in Accra in 1919, and was predominantly a Gold Coast organisation, with more than half of the founding members coming from the territory. Though this document was written in 1920, it is representative of the changing attitudes towards, and language of, nationalism. [↑](#footnote-ref-227)
228. The focus of political activity in the colony moved away from the traditional locations due to the requirements of the war effort. Stricter controls were brought in to guarantee the steady supply of resources and economic growth, and these controls affected a much larger section of Gold Coast society. David Killingray has written extensively on the consequences of imperial military policies on West Africa and the Gold Coast. See David Killingray, ‘Repercussions of World War I on the Gold Coast,’ *Journal of African History*, 19.1, World War I and Africa (1978), pp. 39-59, ‘The Idea of a British Imperial African Army,’ *Journal of African History*, 20.3 (1979), pp. 421-436. [↑](#footnote-ref-228)
229. Killingray, ‘Repercussions of World War I’. The need for uninterrupted supplies of certain resources, principally tin, as well as soldiers, brought a much greater level of government control as wartime laws were passed to ensure this continuous supply and halt any sort of anti-government activity swiftly. [↑](#footnote-ref-229)
230. Clifford repeatedly defended his plans for increased electoral representation in the Gold Coast to the Colonial Office and Parliament. He argued that there was now a substantial number of Gold Coast subjects who were well-schooled in legal and political systems who wanted to participate in the governing of the territory. For example, he wrote to Lewis Harcourt that ‘In the case of the Legislative Council… racial and tribal animosities and rivalries would not improbably be excited were any attempt made to confer the franchise upon the native population, and if its members were taught efficiently to exercise it.’ ‘Sir Hugh Clifford to Lewis Harcourt, 15 April, 1915,’ in Metcalfe, *Great Britain and Ghana,* p. 531. See also ‘Sir Hugh Clifford to A. Bonar Law, 25 November, 1915,’ pp. 556-557. [↑](#footnote-ref-230)
231. ‘Sir Hugh Clifford to W.H. Long, 15 August, 1917,’ in Metcalfe, *Great Britain and Ghana,* p. 559. [↑](#footnote-ref-231)
232. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-232)
233. ‘Speech of Sir Gordon F.G. Guggisberg in Legislative Council, 22 February, 1926,’ in Metcalfe, *Great Britain and Ghana*, pp. 601-604. [↑](#footnote-ref-233)
234. *Ibid.,* pp. 603-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-234)
235. Joseph Casely-Hayford and Nana Ofori Atta, ‘Proceedings in Legislative Council, 18th March 1926,’ in Metcalfe, *Great Britain and Ghana,* pp. 605-609. [↑](#footnote-ref-235)
236. Virtually all discussions of African nationalism in the twentieth century contain studies of the Second World War. For example, in discussing its impact on British Africa, Frederick Cooper draws a direct link between War-time labour and economic policies and post-war anti-colonial sentiments. Cooper, *Africa Since 1940*,pp. 31, 35-37. John Illife argues that World War Two ‘helped to focus African politics in the direction of territorial nationalism,’ the implication being that without it, any highly visible nationalist movements may have taken much longer to emerge. John Illife, *Africans: the History of a Continent* (2nd edn, Cambridge, 2007), p. 242. [↑](#footnote-ref-236)
237. This is particularly visible in broad studies of African history and studies of decolonisation. For example, see Cooper, *Africa since 1940*; John Darwin, *Britain and Decolonisation: the Retreat from Empire in the Post-War World* (Basingstoke, 2002); John D. Hargreaves, *Decolonization in Africa* (2nd edn, London, 1996). [↑](#footnote-ref-237)
238. Adrienne M. Israel, ‘Ex-Servicemen at the Crossroads: Protest and Politics in Post-War Ghana,’ *Journal of Modern African Studies,* 30.2 (1992), pp. 359-368. David Killingray, *Fighting for Britain: African Soldiers in the Second World War* (Woodbridge, 2010). [↑](#footnote-ref-238)
239. David Killingray, ‘Military and Labour Recruitment in the Gold Coast during the Second World War,’ *Journal of African History*, 23.1 (1982), p. 86. [↑](#footnote-ref-239)
240. PRAAD CSO 26/2/1, Americans in the Gold Coast, A. McAnley, ‘Americans in the Colony, 12th Feb 1943,’ Public Records and Archive Administration Department, Accra, Ghana (PRAAD). In this report, McAnley (an information officer for the Gold Coast Government) suggested that profiteering was so bad in the colony that Africans preferred the US to Britain. In the same report, McAnley also noted that ‘the meeting of the “Atlantic Charter” is mentioned by many of the literate class of people with doubt and suspicion. Its clauses are not known to people but still they guess them to be something including the annexation of the Colony and other African colonies to the Americans…’ [↑](#footnote-ref-240)
241. For an in-depth study of how government control effected Gold Coast society and its long-term consequences, see Rod Alence, ‘Colonial Government, Social Conflict and State Involvement in Africa’s Open Economies: The Origins of the Ghana Marketing Board, 1939-1946,’ *Journal of African History*, 42.3 (2001), pp. 397-416. [↑](#footnote-ref-241)
242. St. Clair Drake highlighted the importance of the cocoa producers to anti-colonial agitation and pro-independence movements in the Gold Coast. St. Clair Drake, ‘Prospects for Democracy in the Gold Coast,’ *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* 306, Africa and the Western World (1956), pp. 78-87. See also, David Meredith, ‘The Colonial Office, British Business Interests and the Reform of Cocoa Marketing in West Africa, 1937-1945,’ *Journal of African History,* 29.2 (1988), pp. 285-300; Rhoda Howard, ‘Differential Class Participation in an African Protest Movement: The Ghana Cocoa Boycott of 1937-38,’ *Canadian Journal of African Studies/ Revue Canadienne des Etudes Africaines,* 10.3 (1976), pp. 469-480; R.B. Davison, ‘Labor Relations and Trade Unions in the Gold Coast,’ *Industrial and Labor Review,* 7.4 (1954), pp. 593-604. [↑](#footnote-ref-242)
243. Reginald A. Cline-Cole, ‘Wartime Forest Energy Policy and Practice in British West Africa: Social and Economic Impact on the Labouring Classes 1939-45,’ *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute,* 63.1 (1993), pp. 56-79. [↑](#footnote-ref-243)
244. Prior to the introduction of the 1946 Constitution, there had been Constitutional reforms affecting African representation, in 1886, 1916, and 1926. Whilst all three allowed for an increasing indigenous mandate, it was believed that only the *hene* should represent the peoples, thus resulting in a overreliance on traditional authorities rather than an incorporation of the growing intelligentsia and middle class into the existing power structure. [↑](#footnote-ref-244)
245. PRAAD CSO 1/3/619, Constitutional Reforms, ‘Gold Coast Colony and Ashanti: the Gold Coast Colony and Ashanti (Legislative Council) Order in Council, 1946.’ The new constitution was made up of the President (the Governor), six Ex-Officio members (without voting powers), eighteen Elected Members, and six nominated members. The franchise was extended further in municipal areas and some provincial councils increased the number of electors. The Burns constitution, though relatively short lived, was recognised at the time as politically progressive, and placed Gold Coast political advancement far above the standard for British Africa. [↑](#footnote-ref-245)
246. PRAAD CSO 24/2/186, ‘Sessional Report by Dr. J.B. Danquah,’ pp. 8-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-246)
247. Sir Reginald Saloway, ‘The New Gold Coast,’ *International Affairs,* 31.4 (1955), p. 469. Sir Reginald Saloway was a Deputy Governor of the Gold Coast under Sir Charles Arden-Clarke from 1947, and Colonial Secretary from 1948, having previously worked for the Indian Civil Service. [↑](#footnote-ref-247)
248. CO 537/3559, no 2, [United Gold Coast Convention]: letter from K G Bradley to Mr Creech Jones on the Foundation of the UGCC. *Minutes* by J K Thompson and Sir T Lloyd, 12December 1947,’ National Archives of the UK (TNA). In this document, Bradley outlines some of the key points of the UGCC, including the fact that ‘The first aim of the party, as set out in paragraph 4(i) of the draft constitution is “to ensure that the control and direction of Government shall within the shortest possible time pass into the hands of the Natural Rulers and their people.”’ Bradley goes on to note that, despite this declaration of intent, the constitution also argues that the role of the party is “To ensure that persons elected to represent the people and their natural rulers in the Legislative Council, or in any future Legislative Assembly and Senate, shall be so elected by reason of their competence and not otherwise.” Thus it can be seen that through its founding document, the UGCC was attempting to secure independence with positions of power and authority for themselves. [↑](#footnote-ref-248)
249. T. Peter Omari, *Kwame Nkrumah: the Anatomy of a Dictatorship* (Accra, 2000), pp. 27-28. [↑](#footnote-ref-249)
250. Austin, *Politics in Ghana,* pp.12-20. [↑](#footnote-ref-250)
251. W. Arthur Lewis, *Politics in West Africa* (London, 1965), p. 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-251)
252. Ako-Adjei, cited in Marika Sherwood, *Kwame Nkrumah: the Years Abroad, 1935-1947* (Accra, 1996), p. 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-252)
253. Kwame Nkrumah, *Ghana: the Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (London, 1957). Although a number of chapters of this memoir are dedicated to his time overseas, Nkrumah skilfully wrote these chapters as a teleological history of Ghanaian nationalism, quickly establishing his own political ideas, but rarely discussing the more mundane details of his day-to-day life outside of the Gold Coast. [↑](#footnote-ref-253)
254. Sherwood, *Kwame Nkrumah*. Work has previously considered this period of his life, though without the depth or analysis that Sherwood has achieved. Bankole Timothy, *Kwame Nkrumah: His Rise to Power* (London, 1963)*,* pp. 25-36. [↑](#footnote-ref-254)
255. Sherwood, *Kwame Nkrumah*. There is very little written on Nkrumah’s University days, or indeed his time overseas more generally. Sherwood’s account sheds incredible light on this understudied area, drawing out Nkrumah’s time in the US and the UK to explain the development of his political ideas, as well as his personality and charisma – something which would be put to good use in his political career. [↑](#footnote-ref-255)
256. Lincoln University, as mentioned in previous chapters, was among a small number of historically black colleges. First established in 1845 as Ashmun College, it was later renamed after the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. Some of the first students went on the support the founding of the free state of Liberia, and the University had a reputation for producing some of the best African American lawyers, medics and artists of the time. Alumni included Nnamdi Azikiwe, the future President of Nigeria, who was one of the first African students to graduate with both a Bachelors (1930) and a Masters (1931). [↑](#footnote-ref-256)
257. Nkrumah did not come from a significantly wealthy family, and required assistance from his extended family to simply pay for the travel expenses. He arrived at the University with only £40, but was allowed to begin his studies with the support of the Dean and eventually obtained a scholarship. Kwame Nkrumah, *Ghana,* pp. 24-30. [↑](#footnote-ref-257)
258. By the 1930s, only about three per cent of the African American population was engaged in ‘professional’ work, including law, medicine, and the Church. The overwhelming majority (upwards of eighty per cent) were classified as semi-skilled or unskilled labour, with only a basic elementary school education. [↑](#footnote-ref-258)
259. This included any association with organisations such as the Communist Party and the UNIA. Even though there was a NAACP branch located nearby, membership was frowned upon. Sherwood, *Kwame Nkrumah*, p. 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-259)
260. Sherwood, *Kwame Nkrumah,* p. 34-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-260)
261. *Ibid.,* pp. 32-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-261)
262. Newton Hill, interviewed by Dabu Gizenga, cited in Sherwood, *Kwame Nkrumah: the Years Abroad,* p. 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-262)
263. It was at Lincoln that Nkrumah met his future Minister of Finance, Ebenezer Ako-Adjei. The first West African student at Lincoln was Nnamdi Azikiwe, the future President of Nigeria. Azikiwe’s experience in the United States was very different to Nkrumah’s, though this may have been in part because of *when* he was there. Azikiwe attended Howard University, Washington D.C., Lincoln University, and the University of Pennsylvania, between 1925 and 1930, returning to Lincoln to teach before returning to Nigeria in 1934. This same period saw the development of race awareness and the ‘New Negro,’ demonstrated most clearly by the Harlem Renaissance. He was involved with the UNIA, and socialised with members of the Writers’ Guild. By the time Nkrumah arrived, only a few years later, the New Negro movement seemed to be in decline, as the realities of the global economic crash sunk in and war became increasingly likely. It is interesting to note that whilst Azikiwe was a registered member of the UNIA, there is no record of Nkrumah ever joining the organisation. [↑](#footnote-ref-263)
264. Recent sociological studies of interactions between African Americans and Africans at US colleges have highlighted issues like language, academic expectations, financial issues, and perceived moral values as areas of group identification and exclusivity. These articles suggest that the low rate of interaction between the two groups is based on perceived irreconcilable differences in these areas. Though these are contemporary studies, given the much smaller number of West African students at Lincoln in the 1930s, these differences would most likely have seemed even greater. Jennifer V. Jackson, Mary E. Cothran, ‘Black versus Black: the Relationships among African, African American, and African Caribbean Persons,’ *Journal of Black Studies,* 33.5 (2003), p. 576-604; Kehbuma Langmia, Eric Durham, ‘Bridging the Gap: African and African American Communication in Historically Black Colleges and Universities,’ *Journal of Black Studies,* 37.6 (2007), pp. 805-26. [↑](#footnote-ref-264)
265. In his autobiography he wrote that ‘Independence for the Gold Coast was my aim. It was a colony and I have always regarded colonialism as the policy by which a foreign power binds territories to herself by political ties with the primary object of promoting her own economic advantage.’ Here, as in the rest of Nkrumah’s published work, the focus is clearly on him, alone. Nkrumah, *Ghana*, p. vii. [↑](#footnote-ref-265)
266. In the two chapters of his autobiography which focus on his time in the US, Nkrumah barely mentions any individual African Americans. He does reference two Africans, a Sierra Leonean in Harlem, New York, and a Lincoln University graduate from British Guiana, but there is virtually no recorded interaction between Nkrumah and African Americans. [↑](#footnote-ref-266)
267. Nkrumah used his autobiography to promote this image of himself, and on multiple occasions tells tangential anecdotes to prove this. For example, when discussing his stay in Liverpool whilst waiting for his US visa, he wrote ‘Bewildered and very much out of my depth I began to wonder if it would not be better to give the whole thing up and return home. But just as I was feeling particularly depressed about the future, I heard an excited newspaper boy shouting something unintelligible as he grabbed a bundle of the latest editions from a motor van, and on the placard I read: “*MUSSOLINI INVADES ETHIOPIA.*” That was all I needed… My nationalism surged to the fore; I was ready and willing to go through hell itself, if need be, in order to achieve my object.’ In such anecdotes, Nkrumah skilfully tied events in Africa into his personal history, thus creating an image of his life being intimately tied to that of Africa. Nkrumah, *Ghana*, p. 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-267)
268. Nkrumah begins his description of his travel to America by saying that ‘rather than dip into my precious savings to meet the cost of transport, I decided to stow away on a boat…’ This is a rather trivial detail, but it reinforces the image of Nkrumah as ‘common,’ having little resources but incredible drive, an image he maintained throughout his life. Nkrumah, *Ghana*, p. 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-268)
269. Kwame Nkrumah, *Towards Colonial Freedom: Africa in the Struggle against World Imperialism* (London, 1973). Interestingly it was republished in Accra in 1957. [↑](#footnote-ref-269)
270. *West African Review* (August 1936), p. 35. Kappa Alpha Psi was the first, and only, African American fraternity in the US college/university system. Established in 1911, by 1936, it had branches in all historically black colleges, and would later expand into desegregated colleges and campuses. [↑](#footnote-ref-270)
271. Nkrumah studied at the University of Pennsylvania from 1942 to 1945. Whilst there, he completed a Masters in philosophy, and began the process of applying for a PhD in the same department. He did not pass two entrance exams to the doctoral degree course until late 1944 and early 1945. According to Sherwood, there were also concerns raised by the organisations funding his research about his choice of topic. Though studying philosophy, he was interested in colonial affairs. This may also have delayed the start of his doctoral research. [↑](#footnote-ref-271)
272. There is no known date for Nkrumah’s involvement with or establishment of the African Students Association. [↑](#footnote-ref-272)
273. Nkrumah, *Ghana*, p. 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-273)
274. *Ibid.*, p. 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-274)
275. *Ibid.* Ako-Adjei would go on to become a Minister in Nkrumah’s government, and Quartey-Jones likewise benefitted from a close friendship with Nkrumah when he was rewarded with a position at University College, Achimota. [↑](#footnote-ref-275)
276. Though unrelated to the Association directly, it was during his time at the University of Pennsylvania that Nkrumah’s interest in ‘radical’ politics seems to have begun, and this may have influenced his leadership of the Association. Sherwood highlights his association with Dr Raymond Morrow, his academic supervisor. Morrow was a Professor of Moral and Intellectual Philosophy, he had studied in Moscow, Vienna and Munich, and activities in later years (such as petitioning the US government to abolish the House Un-American Activities Committee) certainly suggest a decidedly left-wing political world-view. Sherwood, *Kwame Nkrumah*, pp. 62-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-276)
277. Sherwood, *Kwame Nkrumah,* pp. 62-64. [↑](#footnote-ref-277)
278. According to his autobiography, it was his experience of working with African organisations in the United States and studying ‘the Negro from a religious, social and economic standpoint’ that led to him writing ‘Toward Colonial Freedom,’ Nkrumah*,* *Ghana*, pp. 42-47. [↑](#footnote-ref-278)
279. Colin Legum, *Pan-Africanism: a Short Political Guide* (London, 1965), pp. 153-55. This appendix contains the major resolutions passed by the Manchester Congress. [↑](#footnote-ref-279)
280. Delegates at the Congress represented a wide range of political or ideological positions. Although the majority of Africans present shared the ideological position of Nkrumah, others were more sympathetic to the idea of a commonwealth of independent states, whilst others wished for independence whilst retaining the special relationship with the former metropole. These differences were broadly categorised as an East-West divide, in line with the emerging Cold War world order. [↑](#footnote-ref-280)
281. George Shepperson and St. Clair Drake, ‘The Fifth Pan-African Conference, 1945 and the All African Peoples Congress,’ *Contributions in Black Studies*, 8.5 (1986), p. 39. [↑](#footnote-ref-281)
282. Nkrumah, *Ghana,* p. 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-282)
283. The Manchester Congress was certainly more radical in the shift from intellectual representation to mass, ‘revolutionary’ representatives, and was attended by a large number of trade unionists and political activists, there were still a number of intellectuals in attendance. See George Padmore, *Colonial and Coloured Unity: a Programme of Action; History of the Pan-African Congress* (2nd edn, London, 1963). [↑](#footnote-ref-283)
284. ‘The Fifth Pan-African Congress, Manchester 1945, Resolution V: Declaration to the Colonial Peoples,’ in Legum, *Pan-Africanism*, p. 155. [↑](#footnote-ref-284)
285. Opoku Agyeman, *Nkrumah’s Ghana and East Africa: Pan-Africanism and African Interstate Relations* (London, 1992), p. 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-285)
286. Elliot M. Rudwick, *W.E.B. Du Bois: a Study in Minority Leadership* (Surrey, PA., 1960), pp. 299-300. [↑](#footnote-ref-286)
287. CO 537/3558, no.122, ‘[Gold Coast Riots]: Outward Telegram no 259 from Mr Creech Jones to Sir G Creasy on the extent of Communist Influence, 18 March, 1948,’ in Richard Rathbone, *Ghana*, *Part 1, 1941-1952* (London, 1992), pp. 71-72; CO 537/4638, no 1, ‘[Political Developments]: Despatch from R Scott to Mr Creech Jones on the Agitation for Self-Government. *Minutes* by E G G Hanrott, L H Gorsuch and A B Cohen, 10 March, 1949,’ in Rathbone, *Ghana, Part 1,* pp. 118-127. [↑](#footnote-ref-287)
288. The authorities, being unable to stop it, had hoped that the boycott would be small-scale and short-lived. That it spread beyond the market women in Accra took them by surprise. [↑](#footnote-ref-288)
289. Superintendent C.H. Imray, cited in Israel, ‘Ex-Servicemen at the Crossroads,’ pp. 364-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-289)
290. Saloway, ‘The New Gold Coast,’ p. 469. [↑](#footnote-ref-290)
291. The Watson Commission report into the unrest highlighted the lack of opportunity for advancement among the young professional class, the growing political awareness throughout the colony, and the lack of educational and economic opportunities for the masses, and the potential unrest that this could cause should it continue unaddressed. ‘Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948,’ in Metcalfe, *Great Britain and Ghana,* pp. 682-686. The Coussey Commission Report took these considerations under advisement, and developed a new constitution that would extend the franchise to all tax payers and rent payers, and whilst maintaining the position of the chiefs to a degree, the Commission recommended the incorporation of more intellectuals into the legislature. ‘Report… by the Committee on Constitutional Reform, 1949,’ in Metcalfe, *Great Britain and Ghana,* pp. 689-91. [↑](#footnote-ref-291)
292. This exclusion was intended to bolster the position of the moderate elements of the UGCC, but ultimately it provided Nkrumah with a very powerful opportunity to attack the Party for collusion with the British and the continuance of colonial power. [↑](#footnote-ref-292)
293. The report recommended that there should be seventy-eight members of the Legislative Assembly, and no more than three unelected members, divided among the three regions. The Executive of the Legislature (the cabinet) would no longer be responsible to the Governor but rather to the Legislature itself, freeing it to a great degree from colonial oversight. In balance to these changes, the Report also recommended the establishment of a second chamber in which paramount chiefs and other unelected officials of such seniority would maintain some degree of political power. [↑](#footnote-ref-293)
294. Ebenezer Ako-Adjei, the UGCC leader who convinced Danquah and the others to offer Nkrumah the position of UGCC Party Secretary, left with him. [↑](#footnote-ref-294)
295. Nkrumah, *Ghana,* p. 105. [↑](#footnote-ref-295)
296. Allman, *The Quills of the Porcupine,* Richard Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs: the Politics of Chieftaincy in Ghana, 1951-60* (Oxford, 2000). [↑](#footnote-ref-296)
297. The ethnic make-up of the Gold Coast, much like many African states created by the colonial powers, was highly complex. Competing families and kin groups vied for British support, principally the Ga and Fanti, and the Ashanti. [↑](#footnote-ref-297)
298. Geoffrey Bing, *Reap the Whirlwind: an Account of Kwame Nkrumah’s Ghana from 1950 to 1966* (London, 1968), and CLR James, *Kwame Nkrumah and the Ghana Revolution* (London, 1977). [↑](#footnote-ref-298)
299. St Clair Drake, ‘Prospects for Democracy in the Gold Coast,’ *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 306, Africa and the Western World (1956), p. 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-299)
300. Kwame Nkrumah, ‘Editorial: The Era of Positive Action is Nigh,’ *Accra Evening News,* 15 December, 1949. [↑](#footnote-ref-300)
301. J.E. Edu, *The Amazing Story of the C.P.P* (Accra, 1954), p. 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-301)
302. *Ibid.* p. 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-302)
303. Nkrumah, *Ghana,* p. 115. [↑](#footnote-ref-303)
304. Nkrumah*, Ghana,* pp. 118-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-304)
305. Yaa Asantewaa, ‘Towards Freedom via Nkrumahism: Positive Action and Tactical Action in our Struggle,’ *C.P.P. Monthly Magazine “Freedom”* December 1952, p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-305)
306. Timothy, *Kwame Nkrumah*, pp. 92-98. [↑](#footnote-ref-306)
307. This particular attack on the opposition was more pronounced after independence and towards the end of Nkrumah’s time in power. Prior to independence, it was never spelled out so explicitly, but it can be found in speeches he and other CPP leaders gave at rallies and protests. [↑](#footnote-ref-307)
308. *Convention Peoples Party for the General Election July 1956: Operation Independence*, George Padmore Library, Accra, Ghana (hereafter GPL). [↑](#footnote-ref-308)
309. As will be discussed in a later chapter, there were some areas of opposition to Nkrumah that were linked almost directly to ethnic affiliation. The two most notable were in the Eastern region, where the population were a majority of the population were Ewe, and called for secession of the region to join the neighbouring state, Togo, where the population was majority Ewe as well. The other area that Nkrumah struggled to gain control in the early years of the party was the Northern Territories and Ashanti. The Ashanti chiefs were among the most powerful in the colony, and typically conservative in their political views. The Ashanti peoples were also wary of Nkrumah due to the historical power struggles between the Ashanti and the Southern ethnic groups, particularly the Ga and the Fanti. [↑](#footnote-ref-309)
310. The seats were divided between those open for popular vote, and seats reserved for chiefs and their representatives, which were not open for public vote. Kathryn Firmin-Sellers, ‘The Concentration of Authority: Constitutional Creation in the Gold Coast, 1950,’ *Journal of Theoretical Politics,* 7.2 (1995), p. 203. [↑](#footnote-ref-310)
311. Through the activities of the CPP and the UGCC, and in combination with the increasing use of nationalist rhetoric, Gold Coast society was encouraged to increasingly identify an ‘us against them’ mentality, which played well with the language of nationalism. There was no middle ground, and thus those who opposed the CPP or Nkrumah were characterised as supportive of colonialism and a threat to the Ghana nation. [↑](#footnote-ref-311)
312. This reading of Nkrumah’s ideology was particularly popular in the years after the 1966 coup that removed him from power. For example, in 1966, Henry L. Bretton cited Nkrumah’s ideological conviction as the principle reason for the coup, stating that ‘Nkrumah…opted to abandon the near for the far, the manageable though difficult for the unfathomable. To achieve his ambitious continental objectives, he harnessed the scarce Ghanaian informational skills in the Foreign Ministry, the African Affairs Secretariat, and the universities to international will-o’-the-wisps…’ Henry L. Bretton, *The Rise and Fall of Kwame Nkrumah: a Study of Personal Rule in Africa* (London, 1966), p. 141. [↑](#footnote-ref-312)
313. Frederick Cooper has noted the Colonial Office’s initial hope that Gold Coast subjects would not elect a ‘radical’ like Nkrumah, but after he won the election, the Authorities made the decision to work with him, accepting the will of the voters, and hoping that they could make a moderate of him. Cooper, *Africa Since 1940*, pp. 52-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-313)
314. Agitator, ‘African Survey,’ *Freedom,* December 1952, pp. 8-9. Agitator, in extolling the value of the CPP as the leader of the oppressed, wrote that ‘slowly and surely enslaved Africans are giving eloquent expression to their disgust and irritation against abominable imperialism and detestable racial discrimination that is the woe of Africans and other colonial people. Now these oppressed people are taking positive steps to rid themselves of the inhuman practices perpetrated by shameless people who give lip service to Christian principles of brotherly love but their hearts are nothing but whited sepulchres.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-314)
315. Whilst this was the CPPs public position, after private conversations with the Governor, Sir Charles Arden-Clarke, Arden-Clarke believed that Nkrumah’s push for constitutional change in 1952 was primarily an attempt to beat Danquah to the punch. Arden-Clarke wrote that ‘A Constituent Assembly is a favourite theme of Danquah’s, and it is probable that Nkrumah was advised by his Party to put the proposition to me owing to an apprehension that if the Government did not sponsor the idea Danquah would do so, and thus outbid them.’ CO 554/371, no 31, ‘[Constitutional Reform]: Letter from Sir C Arden-Clarke to W L Gorell Barnes Reporting his Discussions with Dr Nkrumah on future Prospects, 24 September, 1952,’ in Rathbone, *Ghana,* p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-315)
316. Reading modernity into African history is notoriously difficult, as is trying to pin down an exact meaning of ‘modernity,’ even in its European/Western usage. Its use in the Gold Coast reflects a common theme that emerged across Africa after 1945. This centralised the importance of industrialisation in all areas of production, the development of urban spaces, and, after independence had been achieved, a strong central government. Nationalism was inherent in and to this idea, as national unity was seen as necessary for the completion of any modernising projects. [↑](#footnote-ref-316)
317. Omari, *Kwame Nkrumah*, p. 85. [↑](#footnote-ref-317)
318. An early demonstration of the centrality of Nkrumah to the independence campaign can be found in the CPP’s newspaper, the *Accra Evening News*, and its motto ‘One Party, One Leader’ used since the newspaper’s establishment by Nkrumah in 1948. [↑](#footnote-ref-318)
319. Yaa Asantewa, ‘Towards Independence via Nkrumaism [sic]: Positive Action and Tactical Action in Our Struggle,’ in *“freedom”: CPP Monthly Magazine,* No.1 (December, 1952), p. 7. Yaa Asantewa is a pen-name, and a reference to Yaa Asantewaa, a queen mother and leader of the Asante rebellion against British colonisation of the Ashanti region in at the turn of the century. She is a popular national historical figure. [↑](#footnote-ref-319)
320. Though the structure of the chiefly hierarchy varied across communities, the position of Paramount Chief was an inherited position. Similarly, more senior positions in the structure were directly associated with the family of the Paramount Chief. The lower positions, however, such as the *Obirempon* (lower-level chiefs who oversaw the running of a small area within Asante) were appointments, selected by the Paramount Chief with the advisement of his court, and ultimately dependent on the *Asantehene* for their authority. Though the Paramount Chiefs did not have absolute power, they did control the ability of the nobility to rise through the ranks of chiefly society, and therefore personal rancour could play its role, as Nkrumah hoped it certainly would to his advantage. [↑](#footnote-ref-320)
321. Even by late 1956, there was little unanimity in the British House of Commons as to the development of Ghana as an independent territory. Though it was accepted that Independence was by now inevitable, the economic and social development of the country caused concern among British MPs, who feared that the small state would be unable to compete in international trade, and therefore fall back, away from modernity.

     House of Commons debate, Ghana Independence Bill, 11 December 1956, vol 562 cc229-326, <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1956/dec/11/ghana-independence-bill> [accessed 13/11/13]. [↑](#footnote-ref-321)
322. Kwame Nkrumah, *Forward Ever: speech delivered by the Life Chairman of the Convention People’s Party, Dr Kwame Nkrumah, on 24th October 1954*, GPL. [↑](#footnote-ref-322)
323. Timothy, *Kwame Nkrumah*, pp. 118-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-323)
324. This is especially true when considering the context of the speech in which the above quote was given. It was during this address to the Legislative Assembly that Nkrumah first introduced the White Paper calling for the Governor to request that the British Parliament pass a bill making Ghana independent. It was this White Paper that the eventual move to independence started with. [↑](#footnote-ref-324)
325. Kwame Nkrumah, Legislative Assembly Debate, 10July 1953, in Metcalfe, *Great Britain and Ghana*, p. 714. [↑](#footnote-ref-325)
326. Anon, ‘Editorial - Freedom,’ in *“Freedom”: CPP Monthly Magazine,* December, 1952, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-326)
327. There is little evidence to suggest that the CPP and its supporters were in fact harassed by the Gold Coast authorities. However, supporters such as Bankole Timothy did believe that the colonial authorities sought to remove Nkrumah from public affairs. [↑](#footnote-ref-327)
328. Yaa Asantewaa, ‘Towards Freedom via Nkrumaism [sic]: Positive Action and Tactical Action in Our Struggle,’ *“Freedom”*, p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-328)
329. K.A. Afriyie , ‘The C.P.P. in 1952,’ in *“Freedom”,* p. 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-329)
330. Marcus Garvey ‘Africa for the Africans,’ in Amy Jacques Garvey (ed.), *Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey* (2nd edn, London, 1967), pp. 50-53. [↑](#footnote-ref-330)
331. W.E.B. Du Bois, ‘The Talented Tenth,’ inWashington *et al*., *The Negro Problem* (Middlesex, 2007), pp. 11-25; *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York, 1994). [↑](#footnote-ref-331)
332. Legum, *Pan-Africanism*, p. 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-332)
333. After independence, Nkrumah established a number of new government bodies, often described as ‘quasi-governmental’ due to their independence from official government oversight, with the principle aim of political Pan-Africanism. These included the Bureau of African Affairs (BAA), run by George Padmore, which offered ideological and practical training for liberation fighters from other African countries (this will be examined further in later chapters). Whilst priority was given to political endeavours, Nkrumah did not abandon cultural projects. The establishment of the National Theatre of Ghana, run by Efua Sutherland (a key friend to Maya Angelou among others), is a prime example of this cultural effort to highlight, and draw international attention to, African theatre, dance and music. [↑](#footnote-ref-333)
334. In his editorials and his speeches, Nkrumah reasoned that political independence would be the bringer of modernity, though rarely gave concrete plans as to what ‘modernity’ might involve. When discussing plans for industrialisation, the expansion of education, and so forth, he never explained how these major projects would be financed. Issues such as tax, or sacrifice of living standards would have undoubtedly alienated elements of the CPP support base. [↑](#footnote-ref-334)
335. Allman, *The Quills of the Porcupine*, pp. 3-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-335)
336. There has been some debate over how best to characterise these parties, and the communities they sought to represent. D.E.K. Amenumey, for example, posits that the Togoland Congress was an organisation based on ideas of ethnic unity. In contrast, Meera Venkatachalam argues that the Party advanced an idea of community that was based on a number of different unifying factors. D.E.K. Amenumey, *The Ewe Unification Movement: a Political History* (Accra, 1989); Meera Venkatachalam, ‘Between the Devil and the Cross: Religion, Slavery, and the making of the Anlo-Ewe,’ *Journal of African History,* 53.1 (2012), pp.45-64. [↑](#footnote-ref-336)
337. Kwame Nkrumah, *Ghana,* p. 209. Nkrumah claimed that the NPP was made up of CPP candidates that he had fired for refusing to follow Party guidelines. The correlation he made between those excluded and the NPP was shaky, but it drove home the idea that the NPP was a Party of rebels and people who could not follow the law. [↑](#footnote-ref-337)
338. The number of CPP MPs remained the same as it had been in the 1954 election, which was the first election in which all representatives were directly elected. However, the Northern People’s Party increased their share of the vote, from twelve to fifteen seats. A new opposition party, made up of the remnants of the UGCC and a coalition of independents and opposition groups, gained twelve seats in the 1956 elections as well. [↑](#footnote-ref-338)
339. Jean Allman has employed the phrase ‘Ashanti nationalism’ in reference to the Ashanti people and region of the same name to identify the territorial difference between the Gold Coast as a whole and the Ashanti people. The Ashanti region is unique in the Gold Coast for the high level of ethnic homogeneity. In contrast, the Northern Territories and Togoland had a more mixed ethnic make-up, yet leaders that claimed to represent these regions implied a unity that was based on ethnic unity. [↑](#footnote-ref-339)
340. Adam Ewing, *The Age of Garvey: how a Jamaican Activist created a Mass Movement and Changed Global Black Politics* (Princeton, NJ., 2014),pp.130-32. [↑](#footnote-ref-340)
341. Doxey A. Wilkerson, ‘The Negro Press,’ *Journal of Negro Education,* 16.4 (1947) p. 514. In this article, Wilkerson explains some of the reasons why it was difficult to gain a clear picture of readership and circulation. [↑](#footnote-ref-341)
342. Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma: the Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (New York, 1944), p. 923. [↑](#footnote-ref-342)
343. Charles A. Simmons, *The African American Press: a History of News Coverage During National Crises, with Special Reference to Four Newspapers, 1827-1965* (London, 1998), p.27. See also, pp.40-41. [↑](#footnote-ref-343)
344. David T.Z. Mindich, *Just the Facts: How Objectivity came to Define American Journalism* (New York, 1998), p.114. [↑](#footnote-ref-344)
345. Frank L. Mott, *American Journalism II: a History of Newspapers in the United States through 250 Years, 1690-1940* (London, 2000). [↑](#footnote-ref-345)
346. Though coverage of African American affairs was certainly emotive, especially in cases of violence or persecution against African Americans, The attitude towards Africa was not unique to the African American press in this period, and was representative of a general focus on national issues. There had been earlier efforts to connect the struggle for emancipation and equality in the USA with global black affairs, especially the Haitian Revolution and its aftermath, but these had been limited at best. [↑](#footnote-ref-346)
347. One of the longest-running pieces carried by the *Pittsburgh Courier* was J.A. Roger, ‘Your History.’ This illustrated serialisationran for several decades, from 1934 to 1962, and featured brief explanations of historical figures from Africa and the diaspora and their ‘heroic deeds’. Rogers, who also published academic tracts on history and anthropology, worked as a journalist for the *Courier, The Crisis,* and even for the UNIA’s newspaper, *The Negro World.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-347)
348. ‘Italian-Abyssinian War Clouds Gather: Italy Mobilizes 250,000 Men for Abyssinia Service,’ *The New York Age,* 16 February 1935, p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-348)
349. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-349)
350. See, for example, J.A. Rogers, ‘Superman to Man,’ *The Afro-American,* 12 October 1923. ‘Superman to Man,’ initially self-published as a single novel in 1917, was a serialised story published weekly in 1923-24 in which the central character, the Pullman porter Dixon, uses scientific arguments to disprove the pseudo-scientific justifications for racism. [↑](#footnote-ref-350)
351. ‘Volunteers for Ethiopia,’ *The Afro-American,* 23 February 1935, p. 1; ‘Afro Letter-Writers Aroused by Abyssinian Situation,’ *The Afro-American,* 23 February 1935, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-351)
352. Robert F. Stansbury, ‘Letter to the Editor: Abyssinia will Defend her Temples of Freedom,’ *The Afro-American*, 23 February 1935, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-352)
353. See, for example, ‘Letter to the editor – Mussolini’s Threat to Abyssinia Hurls Real Challenge to our Race,’ *Pittsburgh Courier*, 26 January 1935, p. 2; ‘Letter to the Editor – Want to Join,’ *Pittsburgh Courier,* 27 July 1935, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-353)
354. Willie C. Prowe, ‘Letter to the editor – Know Your Race’, *Pittsburgh Courier,* 30 March 1935. [↑](#footnote-ref-354)
355. ‘Letter to the editor – “Friends of Abyssinia” Merit Support of Race,’ *Pittsburgh Courier,* 20 April 1935, p. 2; ‘Civilization,’ *Pittsburgh Courier,* 20 July 1935, p. 10; ‘Fear Race Issue in Africa; Powers Act to Curb Natives,’ *Pittsburgh Courier,* 5 October 1935, p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-355)
356. ‘Ethiopia has 50-50 Chance to Wine – Jones,’ *The Afro-American,* 14 September 1935, p. 1; ‘British Arms to Selassie: 13 Nations Outlaw Italy, League Votes Unanimously on Italian Boycott to Halt the Invasion of Ethiopia,’ *The Afro-American,* 12 October 1935, p. 1; ‘Italians Beaten, Flee: Panic Follows Wild Charge of Ethiopians in Surprise Attack,’ *The Afro-American*, 18 January 1936, p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-356)
357. J.A. Rogers, ‘Your History,’ *The Pittsburgh Courier,* 10 November 1934. [↑](#footnote-ref-357)
358. In the editorial comments of the first issue, Du Bois stated that ‘it will first and foremost be a newspaper: it will record important happenings and movements in the world which bear on the great problem of inter-racial relations, and especially those which affect the Negro-American… W.E.B. Du Bois, ‘Editorial Opinions,’ *The Crisis*,November 1910, p. 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-358)
359. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-359)
360. ‘History,’ *The Crisis online*, <http://www.thecrisismagazine.com/timeline.html> [accessed 10/11/12]. [↑](#footnote-ref-360)
361. Anon, *The Crisis,* January 1955. [↑](#footnote-ref-361)
362. Anon, *The Crisis,* March 1961. [↑](#footnote-ref-362)
363. Anon, ‘Trouble in Kenya,’ *The Crisis,* December 1952, pp. 651-53; Anon, ‘Jomo Kenyatta,’ *The Crisis,* p. 188; Anon, ‘Salute to Dr. Azikiwe,’ *The Crisis,* December 1960, p. 659. [↑](#footnote-ref-363)
364. By 1924, Liberia had settled its border disputes with the British authorities in Sierra Leone, and established a working political relationship and system with indigenous communities in the hinterland north of the coastal areas, thus maintaining its independence, and demonstrating the political, diplomatic, and economic skills of its leaders, and by extension, their diaspora. [↑](#footnote-ref-364)
365. W.E.B. Du Bois, ‘Opinions,’ in *The Crisis,* May 1924, p. 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-365)
366. J.A. Rogers, ‘Italy over Abyssinia,’ *The Crisis,* February 1935, p. 38. [↑](#footnote-ref-366)
367. George Padmore, ‘Ethiopia and World Politics,’ *The Crisis,* May 1935, p. 157. [↑](#footnote-ref-367)
368. Frank Füredi, *Colonial Wars and the Politics of Third World Nationalism* (London, 1994), p. 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-368)
369. Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1944). [↑](#footnote-ref-369)
370. J.A. Rogers, ‘”Pieces for the Indies”: A review of *Capitalism and Slavery* by Eric Williams,’ *The Crisis,* July 1945, p. 203. [↑](#footnote-ref-370)
371. George Padmore, ‘Cocoa War on the Gold Coast,’ *The Crisis*, February 1938, pp. 52-53. [↑](#footnote-ref-371)
372. Padmore, ‘Cocoa War on the Gold Coast,’p. 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-372)
373. Harold Preece, ‘Africa Awakes, *The Crisis,* December 1945, p. 348. [↑](#footnote-ref-373)
374. In 1947, spontaneous riots broke out around Accra and other major cities. These protests related to the provisions made for returning soldiers, and resulted in the Government Commission which recommended a greater level of African positions in the Legislative Assembly and higher ranks of the civil service. For more details on the 1947 riots and their aftermath, see Adrienne M. Israel, ‘Ex-Servicemen at the Crossroads: Protest and Politics in Post-War Ghana,’ *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 30.2 (1992), pp. 359-368; David Killingray, ‘Soldiers, Ex-Servicemen, and Politics in the Gold Coast, 1939-50,’ *Journal of Modern African Studies,* 21.3 (1983), pp. 523-534. [↑](#footnote-ref-374)
375. George Padmore, ‘Bloodless Revolution in the Gold Coast,’ *The Crisis,* March 1952, p. 172. [↑](#footnote-ref-375)
376. Derek Ker, ‘The New Trinidadian Parliament,’ *The Crisis,* January 1957, p. 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-376)
377. Anon, ‘Editorials,’ *The Crisis,* April 1953, pp. 228-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-377)
378. Roy Wilkins, ‘NAACP Resolution Hailing Ghana,’ *The Crisis,* April 1957, p. 208 (emphasis added). [↑](#footnote-ref-378)
379. George Padmore, ‘The Birth of a Nation,’ *The Crisis,* April 1957, p. 197. Although he linked the struggle for African independence with the American struggle for independence, Padmore still treated Ghanaian independence as an important inspiration for other African states, rather than for the diaspora more generally. [↑](#footnote-ref-379)
380. See also George Padmore, ’The Press Campaign Against Ghana,’ *The Crisis,* December 1957, pp. 607-12. In this article, Padmore argues that the British media is working in collusion with the colonial authorities to prevent further decolonisation of British Africa. Again the African anti-colonial movements were presented to readers as a source of inspiration, and something to be impressed by. [↑](#footnote-ref-380)
381. A small number moved prior to this, in the early 1950s. [↑](#footnote-ref-381)
382. This is true of both popular and academic publications. Looking at the number of articles published about his impact on Pan-Africanism, and the role that he played in the Pan-African Congresses, gives some indication of the importance placed on him in the historiography of Pan-Africanism. For example, see Daniel Walden, ‘Du Bois’ Pan-Africanism, a Reconsideration,’ *Negro American Literature Forum,* 8.4 (1974), pp. 260-262; Ben F. Rogers, ‘William E.B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, and Pan-Africa,’ *Journal of Negro History,* 40.2 (1955), pp. 154-165; Barbara Ransby, ‘Reflections on the Fiftieth Anniversary Commemoration of the Fifth Pan-African Congress,’ *Issue: A Journal of Opinion,* 24.2, African [Diaspora] Studies (1996), pp. 34-35. These three articles all tie Du Bois’ credibility and fame to his participation in the Pan-African Congresses. [↑](#footnote-ref-382)
383. P. Kiven Tunteng accurately describe the complex position that Padmore has come to hold in Pan-African studied: ‘This claim [that Padmore died the father of African emancipation] is both valid and startling; although Padmore undeniably worked for African liberation, his role has been something of an anomaly and has produced conflicting assessments. Was he a Marxian revolutionary fighter against imperialism and colonialism? Were his efforts directed towards African freedom in particular or blacks in general? In each case the answer is “yes” and it is this combination that makes Padmore’s career seem anomalous.’ P. Kiven Tunteng, ‘George Padmore’s Impact on Africa: A Critical Appraisal,’ *Phylon,* 35.1 (1974), p. 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-383)
384. Tony Martin, *Race First: The Ideological and Organizational Struggles of Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association* (London, 1976), pp. 18-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-384)
385. Although still a British colony, in 1951 the Gold Coast held elections for a new Legislative Assembly. The outright winning party was the Convention People’s Party, led by Kwame Nkrumah. The Cabinet that he established in the 1951-52 elections remained the same after 1957, when power was officially handed over from the British to Ghana. [↑](#footnote-ref-385)
386. Despite his lengthy career in US academia, this network of friends and colleagues was borne principally of the Pan-African Congresses and associated meetings, and because of this the new elite that emerged after 1947 (and the establishment of the Convention People’s Party) was particularly important to Du Bois. [↑](#footnote-ref-386)
387. David Levering Lewis, *W.E.B. Du Bois: the Fight for Equality in the American Century, 1919-1963,* pp.546-559 [↑](#footnote-ref-387)
388. Levering Lewis, *W.E.B. Du Bois,* p.554. [↑](#footnote-ref-388)
389. Daniel Chapman to St Clair Drake, 8 February 1957, Folder 11, Box 5, Sc MG 309, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library, New York. [↑](#footnote-ref-389)
390. Gerald Horne, *Black and Red: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Afro-American Response to the Cold War, 1944-1963* (Albany, NY., 1986), pp. 201-222. [↑](#footnote-ref-390)
391. Kwame Nkrumah to W.E.B. Du Bois, 27 May 1957, W.E.B. Du Bois Papers (MS 312), Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries [↑](#footnote-ref-391)
392. The role that George Padmore played in establishing and running the Bureau of African Affairs (BAA), Nkrumah’s Pan-African institute to support other African liberation movements, will be covered in more detail in a later chapter. The BAA offered a home to ‘political refugees,’ ideological training workshops, and financing for anti-colonial movements, especially in Southern Africa. [↑](#footnote-ref-392)
393. Robert E. Jones, ‘Garbled Voices from Africa: a Critical Study of Pan-African Spokesmen,’ *Political Communication,* 3.1 (1985), pp. 24-27. [↑](#footnote-ref-393)
394. Whilst he was best known in this period for his communist beliefs, it is worth noting that, prior to leaving Trinidad in 1925, he left instructions to his pregnant wife that, regardless of the sex, the child should be named after Edward Blyden. [↑](#footnote-ref-394)
395. Håvard Selvik Kruse, ‘The Boomerang Lesson: What Purity and What Parity? A Search for Pan-African traditions in the Black Atlantic and Pan-African Reflections of Edward Wilmot Blyden (1832-1912) and George Padmore (1902-1959),’ MA Thesis (University of Oslo, 2007), p. 58. [↑](#footnote-ref-395)
396. George Padmore, *The Life and Struggles of Negro Toilers* (London, 1931)*,* pp. 122-23; W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America,* pp.700-701. Though the two men were certainly aware of one another, the nature of their relationship at this stage is unclear. David Levering Lewis appears to suggest that Padmore was of little relevance to Du Bois until the mid-1940s, when their overlapping interest in Pan-Africanist organisation brought them into the same networks of associates. David Levering Lewis, *W.E.B. Du Bois: the Fight for Equality in the American Century, 1919-1963* (New York, 2000), pp.501-2. Despite this claim, though, Padmore does appear to have admired and respected Du Bois, and encouraged him to engage more directly with diaspora groups in Europe and Africa in the build up to the war. George Padmore to W.E.B. Du Bois, 17 February 1934, W. E. B. Du Bois Papers (MS 312), Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries. [↑](#footnote-ref-396)
397. James Ralph Hooker, *Black Revolutionary: George Padmore’s Path from Communism to Pan-Africanism* (London, 1967). [↑](#footnote-ref-397)
398. *Ibid.,* p. 29-34. [↑](#footnote-ref-398)
399. For more on this aspect of Padmore’s personal worldview, see Leslie James, *George Padmore and Decolonization from Below: Pan-Africanism, the Cold War, and the End of Empire* (Basingstoke, 2014). [↑](#footnote-ref-399)
400. *Ibid.,* p. 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-400)
401. George Padmore, *How Britain Rules Africa* (London, 1936), *Africa and World Peace* (London, 1937), *Hands off the Protectorates* (London, 1938). He was also editor of the IASB’s journal, *International African Opinion* from 1938 onwards. [↑](#footnote-ref-401)
402. Kwame Nkrumah, *Ghana: the Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (London, 1957), p. 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-402)
403. George Padmore, *Africa: Britain’s Third Empire* (London, 1949). [↑](#footnote-ref-403)
404. George Padmore to Kwame Nkrumah, 14 April 1953, Folder 20, Box 13, Michel Fabre Papers, MARBL, Emory. [↑](#footnote-ref-404)
405. George Padmore, *Pan-Africanism or Communism? The Coming Struggle for Africa* (London, 1956). [↑](#footnote-ref-405)
406. Adam Fairclough, *Horace Mann Bond and Julia W. Bond: The Star Creek Papers, Washington Parish and the Lynching of Jerome Wilson* (Athens, GA., 1997), pp. xxi-xxii. See also Rita Norton, ‘The Horace Mann Bond Papers: A Biography of Change,’ *Journal of Negro Education,* 53.1 (1984), pp. 30-1. [↑](#footnote-ref-406)
407. Wayne J. Urban, *Black Scholar: Horace Mann Bond, 1904-1972* (London, 1992), pp. 168-175. [↑](#footnote-ref-407)
408. Horace Mann Bond, *Education for Freedom: A History of Lincoln University* (Philadelphia, 1976). It is perhaps indicative of Bond’s interests that in this book he details the relatively large number of African students who passed through Lincoln. [↑](#footnote-ref-408)
409. Kwame Nkrumah, ‘Commencement Exercises speech, June 5th,‘Rare and Interesting Letters,’ Box 5, Horace Mann and Julia W. Bond Papers, MARBL, Emory. [↑](#footnote-ref-409)
410. Urban, *Black Scholar*, pp. 50-54. [↑](#footnote-ref-410)
411. Horace Mann Bond to Vernon McKay, 4 January 1962, ‘Africanist Convention,’ Box 4, Horace Mann and Julia W. Bond Papers, MARBL, Emory. [↑](#footnote-ref-411)
412. Horace Mann Bond to E.R. Alexander, 12 February 1948; W.E.B. Du Bois to Horace Mann Bond, 12 April 1961, W. E. B. Du Bois Papers (MS 312). Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries. [↑](#footnote-ref-412)
413. Bond, 'Observations on Education in British West Africa,’ Educational Record, 31 (April, 1950), p. 134, Box 20, Horace Mann and Julia W. Bond Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-413)
414. Norton, ‘The Horace Mann Bond Papers,’ p. 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-414)
415. *The Commission of Enquiry Ordinance Commission*, Office of the President, 15th December, 1960, Folder - Ghana, Committee on University of, Horace Mann and Julia Bond Papers, MARBL. [↑](#footnote-ref-415)
416. Horace Mann Bond to Kojo Botsio, 5 May, 1960, Ghana, Committee on University of, Horace Mann and Julia Bond Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-416)
417. Horace Mann Bond to Edward J. Foy, 13 March, 1960, Ghana, Committee on University of, Horace Mann and Julia Bond Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-417)
418. St. Clair Drake is best known for his work and activism in the Black Power Movement of the late 1960s and 1970s. [↑](#footnote-ref-418)
419. Harold Preece, ‘Letter to the Editor,’ *The Crisis*, April 1936, p.123. [↑](#footnote-ref-419)
420. This is demonstrated through his research. Though sometimes his writing is dry and academic, he shows a deep sensitivity towards those suffering, and an empathy with them. [↑](#footnote-ref-420)
421. St. Clair Drake, Horace R. Cayton, *Black Metropolis: A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City* (New York, 1946). In this edition, Drake and Cayton highlight the role that Trade Unions played, and had the potential to play, for African American advancement. Both authors placed economic uplift squarely at the heart of the issues facing African Americans in Chicago and beyond. Drake and Cayton, *Black Metropolis,* pp. 287-341. It is interesting to note that in the revised edition, published in 1961, an appendix was added considering what had changed in the interim. The revisions condemn the continued existence of an informal colour bar in industry, and the failure, to date, by unions, politicians and the courts, to effectively address the job ceiling. Drake and Cayton, *Black Metropolis: A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City, Volume 1* (New York, 1961), pp. xliii-xlix. [↑](#footnote-ref-421)
422. Gaines, *African Americans in Ghana,* pp. 44-47. Both Drake and Padmore used Communism as a dialectic to define and inform their beliefs with regard to the future of African Americans in the United States. Both of them likewise struggled to reconcile communist racial ideology with a growing racial self-awareness among African Americans in later years. [↑](#footnote-ref-422)
423. St. Clair Drake, ‘The Politics of Kwame Nkrumah: A Pan-African Interpretation,’ unpublished manuscript, Folder 38, Box 23, St. Clair Drake Papers, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library (hereafter St Clair Drake Papers). [↑](#footnote-ref-423)
424. Padmores *magnum opus* was a formal recantation of his Communist beliefs in favour of Pan-Africanism, and the process of argument that runs through the book is arguably a textual version of Drake’s ‘conversion’ as well. George Padmore, *Pan-Africanism or Communism* (London, 1958). See also Gaines, *American Africans in Ghana,* pp. 44-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-424)
425. David Brokensha, ‘St. Clair Drake: The African Years,’ 1-2, Folder 7, Box 52, St Clair Drake Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-425)
426. Horace Mann Bond to Kwame Nkrumah, 20 June 1954, Folder 19, Box 5, St Clair Drake Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-426)
427. Daniel Chapman to St. Clair Drake, 8 February 1957, Folder 11, Box 5, St Clair Drake Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-427)
428. Horace Mann Bond, to St. Clair Drake, 7 November 1963, Folder 19, Box 5, St Clair Drake Papers; St Clair Drake to Horace Mann Bond, 4 July 1965, Folder 19, Box 5, St Clair Drake Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-428)
429. There is an extensive literature on the Black Power Movement that emerged in the late 1960s. For discussions of the origins of this movement, see Roderick Bush, *We are not what we Seem: Black Nationalism and Class Struggle in the American Century* (New York, 1999); Timothy B. Tyson, ‘Robert F. Williams, “Black Power” and the Roots of the African American Freedom Movement,’ *Journal of American History,* 85.2 (1998), pp. 540-570. [↑](#footnote-ref-429)
430. Elizabeth Drake, ‘Letter to the Editor,’ *Palo Alto Times,* 16 March 1966, p.37, Folder 33, Box 70, St Clair Drake Papers; St. Clair Drake, ‘Where Nkrumah Stands: His “African Socialism” Defended against Communism,’ Letter to the Editor, *New York Times,* 30 July 1966, Folder 46, Box 70, St Clair Drake Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-430)
431. The work on Mayfield is relatively limited, though he does appear, as a background character almost, in several key works, including Gaines, *American Africans in Ghana*; Ronald W. Walters, *Pan-Africanism in the African Diaspora: an Analysis of Modern Afrocentric Political Movements* (Detroit, 1993), pp.89-126; Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power* (Chapel Hill, NC., 1999). [↑](#footnote-ref-431)
432. Julian Mayfield, *The Grand Parade* (London, 1961). [↑](#footnote-ref-432)
433. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-433)
434. *Ibid.* This is admittedly fictional, and can thus be characterised as a reflection of society’s attitudes towards these groups rather than necessarily a demonstration of Mayfield’s own beliefs, but it is still worthy of note that Mayfield chose to advance this perception. [↑](#footnote-ref-434)
435. Julian Mayfield, ‘What Africa Did on the “March” Day,’ *Muhammad Speaks,* 27th September, 1963, folder 9, box 36, Mayfield Papers. Julian Mayfield, ‘Afro-Americans Score Victory: Voting Rights Bill Passed,’ *The Daily Graphic,* 12th July, 1965, p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-435)
436. Precisely when Mayfield joined the NAACP is unknown, but it is likely that it was between 1955 and 1957, as by 1957 he was actively involved in several incidents involving the branch president. See Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie,* p. 147. [↑](#footnote-ref-436)
437. This policy was far more popular during the Black Power years of the ‘long civil rights movement.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-437)
438. Mayfield, cited in Tim Tyson, ‘Robert F. Williams, NAACP Warrior and Rebel,’ *The Crisis,* December 1997, p. 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-438)
439. The FBI had been watching Williams for several years prior to this, alleging that he was a communist. For further details of the events leading to the issuing of his arrest warrant, see Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie,* pp. 268-85. [↑](#footnote-ref-439)
440. Robert F. Williams to Berta Green, cited in Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie,* p. 224. [↑](#footnote-ref-440)
441. Maya Angelou, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (London, 1984)*, Gather Together in my Name* (London,1985)*, Singin’ and Swingin’ and Gettin’ Merry Like Christmas* (London, 1985), *The Heart of a Woman* (London, 1986), *All God’s Children need Travelling Shoes* (London, 1987), *A Song Flung up to Heaven* (London, 2002), *Mom and Me and Mom* (London, 2013). [↑](#footnote-ref-441)
442. Mary Jane Lupton, *Maya Angelou: a Critical Companion* (London, 1998), p. 119. [↑](#footnote-ref-442)
443. Maya Angelou, *The Heart of a Woman* (London, 1985), p. 217. [↑](#footnote-ref-443)
444. Angelou, *The Heart of a Woman,* p. 216. [↑](#footnote-ref-444)
445. *Ibid.,* p. 216. [↑](#footnote-ref-445)
446. *Ibid.,* p. 257. [↑](#footnote-ref-446)
447. Kwame Nkrumah, *Ghana: the Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (Edinburgh, 1957). [↑](#footnote-ref-447)
448. Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940: the Past of the Present* (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 49-51. [↑](#footnote-ref-448)
449. In 1954, Lord Rennell addressed the British House of Lords, stating that ‘The position in the Gold Coast is that we have had a Constitution which, on the whole, has been working most successfully. It has probably worked better than a great many people, including myself, thought it was going to work. That Constitution has now come to the end of its life and is to be replaced with one which carries yet a stage further… both the responsibilities of the Gold Coast Government and the degree of self-government of the Gold Coast. Nevertheless, to judge by what has happened, the change appears to be justified.’ Francis James Rennell Rodd, House of Lords Debate, HL Deb 01 April 1954 vol 186 cc945-72, *HANSARD,* <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1954/apr/01/the-gold-coast> [accessed 17/5/13] [↑](#footnote-ref-449)
450. Geoffrey Bing, *Reap the Whirlwind: An Account of Kwame Nkrumah’s Ghana from 1950 to 1966* (London, 1968), pp. 142-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-450)
451. Alan Lennox-Boyd, ‘Ghana Independence Bill,’ address to Parliament, 11 December 1956*, HANSARD,* <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1956/dec/11/ghana-independence-bill#S5CV0562P0_19561211_HOC_295>; [accessed 15/5/13] [↑](#footnote-ref-451)
452. Kwame Nkrumah, ‘African Prospects,’ *Foreign Affairs,* 37.1 (1958), pp. 46-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-452)
453. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-453)
454. Nkrumah, *Ghana: The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah*, pp. vii-xi. [↑](#footnote-ref-454)
455. W. Scott Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy, 1957-1966: Diplomacy, Ideology, and the New State* (Princeton, NJ, 1969), pp. 43-45. [↑](#footnote-ref-455)
456. The precise costs of the project were never clear, as they typically are in projects of this type, though Scott Thompson has placed the figure Nkrumah was seeking at $6 million (in 1958). *Ibid.,* p. 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-456)
457. This was most clearly spelled out later, in 1961, when Nkrumah announced the establishment of Ghana as a socialist state. Though socialism had arguably underpinned his economic policies in the years prior to this, it was in 1961 that it became State doctrine. This declaration, the Dawn Broadcast, is noteworthy in this study because Nkrumah’s turn to socialism was followed shortly after by his increased concern and focus on neo-colonialism. Neo-colonialism, as discussed below, became a key component of Nkrumah’s understanding of nationhood and Pan-Africanism. [↑](#footnote-ref-457)
458. Though Nigeria remained a British colony until 1960, the presence of large oil reserves and a number of other highly sought-after mineral deposits gave Nigeria greater importance and a stronger bargaining position in international affairs. For more on this topic, see Nicholas J. White, ‘The Business and the Politics of Decolonization: the British Experience in the Twentieth Century,’ *Economic History Review,* 53.3 (2000), pp. 544-564; David K. Fieldhouse, *Black Africa 1945-80: Economic Decolonization and Arrested Development* (London, 1986). [↑](#footnote-ref-458)
459. Anon, ‘Ghana, Member of Commonwealth: Plans for Independence Day,’ *Manchester Guardian*, 22 February 1957, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-459)
460. Diana Haag, ‘Mechanisms of Neo-Colonialism: Current French and British Influence in Cameroon and Ghana,’ International Catalan Institute for Peace, Working Paper No.2011/16 (April 2012), pp. 18-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-460)
461. Colin Legum, ‘1957 Turning Points in the Commonwealth,’ *The Observer,* 29 December 1957, p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-461)
462. This seemed strikingly apparent when dealing with Apartheid South Africa. Despite his many pronouncements on the need for complete continental independence, Nkrumah seemed willing to follow the British line on South Africa. At the Conference, Nkrumah was willing to talk with, and even socialise with, the South African representative, backing Britain’s position in relation to the international boycott. [↑](#footnote-ref-462)
463. M.S. Rajan, ‘Links Between the Old and the New Members,’ in W.B Hamilton, Kenneth Robinson, C.D.W. Goodwin (eds), *A Decade of the Commonwealth, 1955-1964* (Durham, NC., 1966), p. 163. [↑](#footnote-ref-463)
464. Non-Alignment was, like Pan-Africanism, open to interpretation. This interpretation had previously been driven by Nasser and Nehru, who both enjoyed international prestige and a reputation as statesmen and strong leaders. However, the situation that Nkrumah had to navigate at independence was markedly different, and as a result he chose to direct his own interpretation of non-alignment rather than follow the other two leaders. In doing so he established himself in international affairs beyond the shadows of Nehru and Nasser, and created an image of himself and Ghana that the British authorities found agreeable. [↑](#footnote-ref-464)
465. The origins of non-alignment could arguably be found in practices of neutralism in states such as the Republic of Ireland and Switzerland, though in its most clearly defined terms, it was a product of decolonisation and the emergence of a Third World group of nations. Its main proponent throughout the 1940s and 1950s was India, though Egypt would become a fierce advocate of the non-alignment movement around the time of Ghana’s independence. [↑](#footnote-ref-465)
466. Final Communiqué of the Asian-African conference of Bandung (24 April 1955), reprinted in G.H. Jansen, *Afro-Asia and Non-Alignment* (London, 1966), pp. 419-20. [↑](#footnote-ref-466)
467. Irene Brown, ‘Studies on Non-Alignment,’ *Journal of Modern African Studies,* 4.4 (1966), pp. 517-527. Though perhaps an older review of works on non-alignment, Brown’s overview highlights the key differences that existed between Third World leaders’ interpretations of the ideology. [↑](#footnote-ref-467)
468. *Ibid.* The Communique states on multiple occasions the primacy of the Asian and Arab struggles. This may reflect the fact that, in 1955, no African state had achieved independence, whereas a number of Arab and Asian states had. [↑](#footnote-ref-468)
469. Scott Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy,* pp. 42, 111. [↑](#footnote-ref-469)
470. Nkrumah wrote that ‘non-alignment…is based on co-operation with all States whether they be capitalist, socialist, or have a mixed economy.’ Nkrumah, *Neo-Colonialism: the Last Stage of Imperialism* (London, 1971), p. X. For more on the concept of non-alignment, see Muhammad Badiul Alam, ‘The Concept of Non-Alignment: A Critical Analysis,’ *World Affairs,* 140.2 (1977), pp. 166-185; Christopher J. Lee, *Making a World after Empire: The Bandung Moment and its Political Afterlives* (Athens, OH., 2010). [↑](#footnote-ref-470)
471. Colin Legum, *Pan-Africanism*, p. 42; Ama Biney, *The Political and Social Thought of Kwame Nkrumah* (New York, 2011), p. 124; Kwesi Armah, *Peace without Power: Ghana’s Foreign Policy 1957-1966* (Accra, 2004), p. 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-471)
472. Thomas Hovet, Jr., ‘The Role of Africa in the United Nations,’ in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* 354, Africa in Motion (1964), p. 124. [↑](#footnote-ref-472)
473. Their key concerns in the period prior to 1957 were the maintenance of state sovereignty and securing economic support through the UN. [↑](#footnote-ref-473)
474. For Nkrumah’s explanation of the ‘African personality,’ see Kwame Nkrumah, *I Speak of Freedom* (London, 1973), pp. 125-134 [↑](#footnote-ref-474)
475. Kwame Nkrumah, *Challenge of the Congo* (London, 1967), p. XIII. Nkrumah wrote ‘ the birth of the United Nations Organisation with its Declaration of Human Rights … brought new hope to the oppressed and colonised peoples of the world.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-475)
476. David A. Kay, ‘The Impact of the African States on the United Nations,’ *International Organization*, 23.1 (1969), p. 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-476)
477. John Karefa-Smart, ‘Africa and the United Nations,’ *International Organization,* 19.3, The Nations: Accomplishments and Prospects (1965), pp. 764-773. [↑](#footnote-ref-477)
478. A fine example of this is Israel. Israel had been quick to establish a diplomatic mission in Accra after independence, and the Israeli ambassador, name here, had built strong ties with the new government. Nkrumah was supportive of Israel, and spoke in defence of its actions in the Middle East. Despite this, the Ghana delegation at the UN was less supportive, and challenged Israel’s behaviour, at times being openly critical. The independence with which the Ghana delegation functioned stands in stark contrast to the established image of Nkrumah. Historians broadly characterise Nkrumah as all-controlling, dictating every move that his government made. The relationship between the UN delegation and the Prime Minister highlights that this characterisation is incorrect, at least in this early stage. As shall be discussed below, Nkrumah only gradually extended his personal control of the state apparatus. However, at this early stage, his concern for detail was limited. As a result, low-level political actors enjoyed significant freedom in presenting Ghana to the world. [↑](#footnote-ref-478)
479. Anwar el Sadat, the then-Minister of State, addressed the Conference, and stated: ‘today this people’s Conference of ours meets, partly in honour of the spirit of Bandung and as a reminder of the principles and ideals it stands for, and partly to push it a step forward. Anwar el Sadat, ‘Address Delivered by Mr Anwar el Sadat at the First Afro-Asian People’s Solidarity Conference,’ 26 December, 1957, *The First Afro-Asian People’s Solidarity Conference, 26 December 1957 to January 1, 1958* (2nd edn, Cairo, 1958), p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-479)
480. Anup Singh, cited in Homer A. Jack, ‘The Cairo Conference,’ *Africa Today,* 5.2 (1958), p. 5. Despite the claims to be in a similar vein or the natural follow on from the incredibly successful Bandung Conference, the Cairo meeting represented a far more radical agenda than Bandung. [↑](#footnote-ref-480)
481. GPRL/BAA/RLAA/367, ‘Report of the Ghana Delegation To Cairo To Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference, 26th December, 1957 – 2nd January, 1958,’ 1957 Reith Lecture by George Kennan: Speeches, Reports (AASO), Newspaper Clippings (International Affairs), pp. 2-3. The presence of the ‘Bandung Spirit’ was reiterated throughout the Cairo Conference, and the final communique of the Bandung Conference was referenced as the basis for the foundation of the AAPSO. [↑](#footnote-ref-481)
482. Anon, ‘Accra Resolution on Algeria: Conference Completes Discussion of Agenda,’ *Manchester Guardian,* 21 April 1958, p. 7; Edwin S. Morris, ‘Politics of African Unity: No Longer Tail to the Asian Dog,’ *Manchester Guardian,* 2 January 1959, p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-482)
483. Represented at the conference were Ghana, Liberia, Libya, Ethiopia, Morocco, the Sudan, Tunisia, and the United Arab Republic (Egypt and Syria). [↑](#footnote-ref-483)
484. Jeffrey Ahlman, ‘The Algerian Question in Nkrumah’s Ghana, 1958-1960: Debating “Violence” and “Nonviolence” in African Decolonization,’ *Africa Today,* 57.2 (2010), pp. 70-71. [↑](#footnote-ref-484)
485. Nkrumah, *Ghana*, p. 290. [↑](#footnote-ref-485)
486. Kwame Nkrumah, Speech to the Opening of the AAPC, ‘Africa: Africans Demand Liberation’ (1958) [film] (British Pathé, first Broadcast 15/12/1958), *British Pathé,* <http://www.britishpathe.com/video/africans-demand-liberation/query/africans+demand>[accessed 7/11/13]. [↑](#footnote-ref-486)
487. GPRL/BAA/RLAA/367. M.W. Kanyama Chiume, ‘Accra Impact,’ *Venture: Journal of the Fabian Commonwealth Bureau,* May 1959, p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-487)
488. George M. Houser, ‘A Report on the All-African People’s Conference held in Accra, Ghana, December 8-13, 1958,’ *African Activist Archive*, <http://africanactivist.msu.edu/document_metadata.php?objectid=32-130-D84> [accessed 19/7/13]. The American Committee on Africa (ACA) was a national American organisation established to support liberation movements in Africa, focussing primarily on South Africa and the ANC, although working to help all colonised peoples across the continent. The ACA offered training to labour and student activists, and raised funds for legal expenses and so forth. [↑](#footnote-ref-488)
489. The sheer number of representatives at the AAPC that went on to become post-Independence leaders was truly remarkable. Among the many future Presidents and Prime Ministers was Nelson Mandela. [↑](#footnote-ref-489)
490. Again, the nature of this Pan-African unity was rarely elaborated upon, thus making it almost impossible to ascertain the full extent to which these representative groups actually supported Nkrumah’s vision for African governance. [↑](#footnote-ref-490)
491. Kwame Botwe-Asamoah, *Kwame Nkrumah’s Politico-Cultural Thought and Politics: an African-Centered Paradigm for the Second Phase of the African Revolution* (New York, 2005), p. 109. [↑](#footnote-ref-491)
492. Tom Mboya, cited in Kwesi Armah, *Peace without Power: Ghana’s Foreign Policy 1957-1966* (Accra, 2004), p. 58. Armah has noted that at the 1964 AAPC, held in Cairo, the issue of armed rebellion was brought up directly by the Algerian delegation, in reference to the ongoing struggle there. [↑](#footnote-ref-492)
493. All-African People’s Conference, ‘Resolutions on Imperialism and Colonialism,’ reproduced in *All African People’s Conference News Bulletin,* 1.4 (Accra, 1959). [↑](#footnote-ref-493)
494. The phrase ‘freedom fighter’ was a relatively new phrase, but at the AAPC it gained increasing popularity, and can be seen to replace the more moderate sounding ‘nationalist.’ This linguistic shift can be seen as symptomatic of the radicalisation, not just of Nkrumah, but also of the African Revolution, that was moving towards its more violent phase. [↑](#footnote-ref-494)
495. Liberia and Ghana’s relations were already under pressure at this time, as Liberian President William V.S. Tubman was suspicious of Ghana’s intentions in West Africa. Nkrumah’s commitment to African unity threatened Liberian sovereignty. [↑](#footnote-ref-495)
496. As Scott Thompson has noted, problems of representation began even before the conference, when political parties and groups that demonstrated policies more favourable to Nkrumah’s outlook were invited to attend on behalf of their country, when those who appeared likely to challenge Nkrumah were not. For example, the Liberian Pan-Africanist Unificationist Organization had been invited, but the party of President Tubman, the True Whigs, were not until a month before the conference. Scott Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy,* pp. 62-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-496)
497. The promulgation of foreign policy was incredibly complex even at this early stage, as there were several branches of government all intended to work on the same area, each with a slightly different remit. There was the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the African Affairs Secretariat, and Padmore’s Office of the Advisor to the Prime Minister on African Affairs. The distinctions between the three branches were blurry at best, and often conflict between the three frustrated the practice of governing. [↑](#footnote-ref-497)
498. Nathaniel Welbeck, a moderate within the CPP leadership, was appointed Chairman, whilst Nkrumah took on the role of Director. Welbeck encouraged diplomacy in African affairs, limiting the role of the BAA to supporting refugees in Ghana. [↑](#footnote-ref-498)
499. Scott Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy,* pp. 449. [↑](#footnote-ref-499)
500. *Ibid.;* Jeffrey Ahlman, ‘Road to Ghana: Nkrumah, Southern Africa and the Eclipse of a Decolonizing Africa,’ *Kronos,* 37 (2011), pp. 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-500)
501. Ahlman, ‘Road to Ghana,’ pp. 30-31. [↑](#footnote-ref-501)
502. The literature on the ANC and the PAC, and their struggles over violent and non-violent opposition to Apartheid, is extensive. See, for example, Stephen Ellis, ‘The Genesis of the ANC’s Armed Struggle in South Africa, 1948-1961,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies,* 37.4 (2011), pp. 657-676; Kwandiwe Kondlo, *In the Twilight of the Revolution: the Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania (South Africa), 1959-1994* (Basel, 2009). [↑](#footnote-ref-502)
503. GPL/BAA. Personal Correspondence, Director, Chairman. Francis S.B. Mphepoh to Secretary, BAA, 25 March 1961; GPRL/BAA. Personal Matters. S. Shabalala to ‘Son of Africa,’ undated; E.L. Ntloedire to ‘Daughter of Africa,’ 20 March 1964; Unknown to E.L. Ntloedire, 31 March 1964. [↑](#footnote-ref-503)
504. GPRL/BAA, Office of the Advisor to the Prime Minister on African Affairs, Anon, ‘Ghana Official’s Secret Talks with Refugees,’ *The World,* 14 May 1960. [↑](#footnote-ref-504)
505. Ahlman, ‘Road to Ghana,’ p. 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-505)
506. *An Address to the National Assembly on African Affairs by Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, President of Ghana, August 8, 1960*. [↑](#footnote-ref-506)
507. Radical Pan-Africanism was not simply ‘radical’ in a Cold War capitalism/communism understanding of the phrase. Rather, it was a radicalism in relation to the extent of Pan-African organisation the proponent believed or supported. Nkrumah’s later interpretations of Pan-Africanism could be described as radical as he sought a single continental government and the submission of national sovereignty to continental unity. In contrast with this, one might argue that the Pan-Africanism of the Organisation of African Unity, which will be discussed below, was moderate, as its organisers sought unity of action but the maintenance of national sovereignty. [↑](#footnote-ref-507)
508. Scott Thompson has noted that Nkrumah used the Tunis Conference to further marginalise and weaken the AAPSO, because of ‘AAPSO’s external concerns and its completion with [the AAPC].’ Scott Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy,* p. 101. The second AAPC was significant inasmuch as freedom fighters were continuing their representations through the conference and its organisation, but this would be the last time. After Tunis, the organisation was effectively obsolete, and what was left was absorbed into the now-expanding BAA. [↑](#footnote-ref-508)
509. Anon, ‘Ghana Deports Journalist,’ *Manchester Guardian,* 1 August 1957, p. 7; Anon, ‘Kumasi, Centre of the Ghana Opposition, *Manchester Guardian,* 9 September 1957, p. 7; Anon, ‘Dr Nkrumah, Cabinet-Maker,’ *The Guardian,* 5 November 1959, p. 9; Anon, ‘Ghana Not to be Slandered,’ *The Guardian,* 22 June 1959, p. 7; Anon, ‘”Political Vendetta” in Ghana,’ *The Guardian,* 2 January 1960, p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-509)
510. It had been apparent very early on that Britain would be unable to provide investment in Ghana’s industrialisation, but there had been hope in Ghana’s political circles that the US would be able and willing to invest. Though there seems to have been little indication from the American government that this was a guarantee, Louis Edgar Detwiler, colleague of Horace Mann Bond, lobbied on behalf of Ghana (for his own corporation’s interests), and encouraged the continuation of US involvement in the project. However, this reconsideration did not result in either a grant or loan to begin the projects, but rather a survey of the proposals with a promise to reconsider the proposals in light of the surveys. Whether these were stalling tactics or not is impossible to tell, but the outcome was a sense that this would not result in the funding that Nkrumah had hoped for in the beginning. [↑](#footnote-ref-510)
511. Scott Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy,* p. 60. For a brief discussion of continental Pan-Africanism and racial Pan-Africanism, see Daryl Zizwe Poe, *Kwame Nkrumah’s Contribution to Pan-Africanism: an Afrocentric Analysis* (New York, 2003), pp.48-55. [↑](#footnote-ref-511)
512. *Ibid.,* p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-512)
513. For more on the establishment of the United Arab Republic, see J.S.F. Parker, ‘The United Arab Republic,’ *International Affairs,* 38.1 (1962), pp. 15-28; James Jankowski, *Nasser’s Egypt, Arab Nationalism, and the United Arab Republic* (Boulder, CO., 2002). [↑](#footnote-ref-513)
514. As it accepted the increasingly adamant demands of African nationalist, the French government began working with its colonies to build the French Union, a commonwealth-style association that would, in effect, provide a continuation for French economic control over the independent states. Guinea, led by Ahmed Sékou Touré and the *Rassemblement Démocratique Africain* (RDA), voted no in the referendum, the only French African colony to vote instead for immediate independence. Independence was granted, but France followed through on the threat to withhold loans and end preferential trading relations. This left Guinea extremely vulnerable. [↑](#footnote-ref-514)
515. GPRL/BAA/RLAA, 18, “Articles on Africa by Claude A. Barnett, Director, Associated Negro Press, 1958”: Articles (Associated Negro Press), Claude A. Barnett, Alvis Lee Tinnin, ‘Sékou Touré Faces Problems Confronting the New Republic of Guinea, World’s 94th Nation, pp. 8-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-515)
516. The Congo Crisis has received a great deal of academic attention, though foremost among these is Ludo de Witte, *The Assassination of Lumumba* (London, 2001). See also Conor Cruise O’Brien, *To Katanga and Back: a UN Case Study* (New York, 1962). [↑](#footnote-ref-516)
517. For traditionalist histories of the Congo, see Colin Legum, *Congo Disaster* (London, 1961); L.J. Lewis, ‘Education and Political Independence in Africa,’ *Comparative Education Review,* 5.1 (1961), pp. 39-49. For more recent scholarship on the issue, see Jermaine O. McCalpin, ‘Historicity of a Crisis: the Origins of the Congo War,’ in John F. Clark, *The African Stakes of the Congo War* (New York, 2002), pp.33-50; Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: a People’s History* (London, 2002), pp.61-121. [↑](#footnote-ref-517)
518. For more on the Katangese secession, see Conor Cruise O’Brien, *To Katanga and Back;* Jules Gerard-Libois, *Katanga Secession* (Madison, WI., 1966). [↑](#footnote-ref-518)
519. Throughout the Ghanaian deployment in the Congo, the *Evening News* published letters from troops stationed there which proclaimed their joy and pride at being able to serve both their country and Africa. See *Evening News,* 1961*, passim.* [↑](#footnote-ref-519)
520. Madeleine G. Kalb, *The Congo Cables: the Cold War in Africa – From Eisenhower to Kennedy* (New York, 1982), pp. 12-16. [↑](#footnote-ref-520)
521. Catherine Hoskyns, *The Congo since Independence, January 1960 – December 1961* (Oxford, 1965), p. 205; For Nkrumah’s perspective on the whole Crisis, see Kwame Nkrumah, *Challenge of the Congo* (London, 1967). [↑](#footnote-ref-521)
522. Michael Franc Wright, ‘Lumumba, Ten Years After,’ *The Black Scholar,* 2.7, Pan-Africanism II (1971), p. 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-522)
523. Guinea (2 October, 1958), Cameroon (1 January, 1960), Togo (27 April, 1960), Mali (20 June, 1960), Senegal (20 June 1960), Madagascar (26 June, 1960), and British Somaliland (26 June, 1960) all gained independence prior to Ghana’s intervention in the Congo. By December 1960, another ten colonies had also achieved independence. [↑](#footnote-ref-523)
524. Catherine Hoskyns, *The Congo Since Independence*, p. 80. [↑](#footnote-ref-524)
525. GPRL/BAA/RLAA/370, “Correspondence with the President, 1960”: BAA Reports, Correspondence (Nkrumah, Nationalist Organisations), A.K. Barden, ‘Report on the Activities of the Bureau – January to December, 1960,’ Bureau of African Affairs Papers, GPRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-525)
526. Elizabeth Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa: From the Cold War to the War on Terror* (Cambridge, 2013), pp.58-59. [↑](#footnote-ref-526)
527. In his book *Neo-Colonialism* (1965)*,* Nkrumah would later spell out in full the nature of neo-colonialism, though it is clear that this opinion began to form around the events in the Congo, and the UN’s misuse of Ghanaian troops to effectively support the Belgian and international position on Lumumba and other radical activists in the country. [↑](#footnote-ref-527)
528. Nkrumah, *Challenge of the Congo*, p. xvi. [↑](#footnote-ref-528)
529. Kalb, *The Congo Cables,* p. 225-27. Kalb states that, after the death of Lumumba was announced, ‘a wall of suspicion now existed between the Afro-Asians and the Western powers. It was hard for even the moderate Africans not to suspect that the United States had conspired in Lumumba’s murder.’ See also, de Witte, *The Assassination of Lumumba,* p. 148. [↑](#footnote-ref-529)
530. de Witte, *The Assassination of Lumumba,* pp. xxiii-xxiv. [↑](#footnote-ref-530)
531. Nkrumah, *Challenge of the Congo,* pp. 99-100. Nkrumah does not include the date when he wrote this letter, though he does include a description of Lumumba in prison, thus suggesting that the letter was written between mid-September and December 1960. [↑](#footnote-ref-531)
532. *Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, 1 July 1960* (Accra, 1960). [↑](#footnote-ref-532)
533. These positions were both very powerful, giving Adamafio control over the Party and the Government message. Though he did not have free reign over what that message was, he was in a position to advance the arguments and positions of his friends and allies, and ultimately to dismiss and ignore his rivals. In such a position, it is little wonder that he garnered the ill-will of so many within the political machinery. [↑](#footnote-ref-533)
534. Henry L. Bretton, *The Rise and Fall of Kwame Nkrumah: a Study of Personal Politics in Africa* (London, 1966),p. 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-534)
535. This attack was primarily used against the United Nations Security Council, which was comprised largely of capitalist states who were prepared to follow the Western position. The General Assembly did provide a forum for challenging the ambivalent position of the Security Council and several African states established the *Organisations des Nations Unies au Congo* within the General Assembly to vocalise and formalise their support for Lumumba’s government.Scott Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy,* p. 152. [↑](#footnote-ref-535)
536. Scott Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy*, p. 148; Colin Legum, *Pan-Africanism* (London, 1965), pp. 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-536)
537. Legum, *Pan-Africanism,* pp. 50-52. [↑](#footnote-ref-537)
538. *Ibid.,* p. 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-538)
539. Scott Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy,* p. 152. Antoine Gizenga had established a government in Stanleyville (Kisangani) in Lumumba’s name in late 1960. By February 1961, despite international recognition of the Kasavubu-Mobutu government in Leopoldville, over twenty African and Asian states had recognised it as the true government of the Congo. [↑](#footnote-ref-539)
540. *Ibid.,* pp. 153-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-540)
541. Kwame Nkrumah, *Challenge of the Congo,* pp. 104-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-541)
542. Nkrumah, in exchange for support for ONUC and the UN mission in the Congo, reversed his position on Morocco’s claim to Mauritania, and made a major change in his position on Israel. Where they had, as discussed above, been remarkably close, the conference resulted in Nkrumah backing Nasser’s position, and reducing Ghana’s ties with Israel, instead developing closer economic links with Egypt. [↑](#footnote-ref-542)
543. Declaration of the Casablanca Group, as quoted in Nkrumah, *Challenge of the Congo,* pp. 105-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-543)
544. The Charter states: ‘We solemnly reaffirm our unshakeable adherence to the United Nations Charter and to the Declaration of the Afro-Asian Conference held in Bandung, with the aim of promoting co-operation among all the peoples of the world and of consolidating international peace.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-544)
545. African Charter of Casablanca, 7 January 1961, as reproduced in Nkrumah, *The Challenge of the Congo,* p. 106. [↑](#footnote-ref-545)
546. Relations between Ghana and Cote d’Ivoire were very poor, with rumours already circulating that Nkrumah was plotting with Olympio’s enemies to over the government there. Ghana’s relations with Nigeria had never been particularly strong, despite the impressive historical similarities between Azikiwe and Nkrumah. The Nigerian government had tended to side with Britain and the USA in international issues, and concerns over Nkrumah’s intentions, specifically in West Africa, were increasing in both regularity and volume. [↑](#footnote-ref-546)
547. Scott Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy,* p. 200. [↑](#footnote-ref-547)
548. The Monrovia Group was made up of Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo-Brazzaville, Congo (Kinshasa), Cote d’Ivoire, Dahomey (Benin), Ethiopia, Gabon, Liberia, Madagascar, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Togo, Tunisia, and Upper Volta. [↑](#footnote-ref-548)
549. *West African Pilot,* 18 May, 1961. In the *Ghanaian Times* a report was carried about the *Liberian Age,* a popular Monrovia newspaper, in which an editorial had been highly critical of the Casablanca Group and the Ghana-Guinea-Mali Union for their non-attendance. Anon, ‘Liberian Paper Attacks Three Presidents,’ *Ghanaian Times,* 16 May 1963, p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-549)
550. Joe Appiah, cited in Scott Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy,* p. 200. The United Party was established in 1957. The Avoidance of Discrimination Act banned all parties from discrimination on racial, ethnic and religious grounds. As a result, the Muslim Association, the Northern People’s Party and the National Liberation Movement, among others, were effectively outlawed. Under the leadership of Kofi Busia, the United Party brought together the remnants of these parties. [↑](#footnote-ref-550)
551. Scott Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy*, p. 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-551)
552. GPRL/BAA/RLAA/400, Treason Trial, 1965, Anon, ’Gbedemah Embezzled your £10m.’ *Ghanaian Times,* 18 November 1964; Anon, ‘Gbedemah Headed Plot Against the Nation,’ *Daily Graphic,* 20 November 1964. [↑](#footnote-ref-552)
553. T. Peter Omari, *Kwame Nkrumah: the Anatomy of a Dictatorship* (Accra, 2000),p. 94. [↑](#footnote-ref-553)
554. Adamafio had been in charge of the incredibly powerful Ghana Youth movement, the youth branch of the Party, and had held the position of Party Secretary prior to that. Ako-Adjei had attended Lincoln University at the same time as Nkrumah, and it was he who recommended Nkrumah to Danquah for the post of Secretary of the UGCC. Coffie-Crabbe, like Adamafio, had at one time been Executive Secretary of the CPP, and was a close associate of Adamafio. [↑](#footnote-ref-554)
555. F.E. Tachie-Mason to Accra Assembly, 6 September 1962, cited in Omari, *Kwame Nkrumah,* p. 94. [↑](#footnote-ref-555)
556. GPRL BAA/RLAA/1001, Treason Trial Vol.2, Anon, ‘Adamafio’s Clique Aimed at Ousting Nkrumah – Swanzy,’ *Ghanaian Times,* 26 October 1963; Anon, ‘Tawia was the Prime Mover of Subversion – Swanzy,’ *Ghanaian Times,* 28 October 1963. [↑](#footnote-ref-556)
557. In the second bombing, on 2 September 1962, there was one fatality and dozens injured. This was not the first bombing in Accra, but following shortly after the assassination attempt, the two were linked. [↑](#footnote-ref-557)
558. Geoffrey Bing, *Reap the Whirlwind: An Account of Kwame Nkrumah’s Ghana from 1950 to 1966* (London, 1968),pp. 411-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-558)
559. GPRL BAA/RLAA/1001, Anon, ‘Adamafio’s Clique Aimed at Ousting Nkrumah – Swanzy,’ *Ghanaian Times,* 26 October, 1963. [↑](#footnote-ref-559)
560. GPRL BAA/RLAA/1001, Kwame Nkrumah, quoted in Anon, ‘Judge, O Ye People!,’ *Evening News*, 10 December, 1963. [↑](#footnote-ref-560)
561. GPRL BAA/RLAA/1002, Macneill Stewart, ‘The Party, Fourteen Years After,’ Evening News, 21 June, 1963. [↑](#footnote-ref-561)
562. Hella Pick, ‘Dr Nkrumah Tightens his Grip,’ *The Guardian,* 29 March 1962; Anon, ‘Ghana Becomes One-Party State,’ *The Guardian,* 22 February 1964 (why this article was published in 1964 is unclear, as it makes references to the events of 1962). [↑](#footnote-ref-562)
563. Nkrumah, *Work and Happiness: Broadcast Talk by Osagyefo the President on 5th May, 1962* (Accra, 1962). [↑](#footnote-ref-563)
564. ‘Ghana is on the Road to a Progressive One-Party State, *The Party,* No.23, April 1962, p. 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-564)
565. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-565)
566. This internal criticism was never made public knowledge, except in cases where it was used against Party members to provide a public scapegoat for government failings, or to oust them from their positions. By 1962, most of the moderate element of the CPP had been marginalised and effectively silenced, thereby reducing the level of criticism Nkrumah faced within the party. [↑](#footnote-ref-566)
567. Whilst undertaking a lecture tour of Europe, he was informed that an arrest warrant had been issued for him, and chose to stay away from Ghana. He attempted to gain support for the opposition parties, and remained on the periphery of Ghanaian politics. [↑](#footnote-ref-567)
568. Komla Gbedemah, *It Will Not be Work and Happiness for All!* [emphasis in original] [↑](#footnote-ref-568)
569. Nkrumah, *Work and Happiness: Broadcast Talk by Osagyefo the President on 5th May, 1962*. In this the initial broadcast, Nkrumah couched the changes in the language of the nation, making political decisions on behalf of the nation, of the people. After the events at Kulungugu, and the police investigation got underway, the emphasis was shifted from the will of the people and intimations of an African personality or tradition, and towards state security on behalf of the people. [↑](#footnote-ref-569)
570. For example, see images attached to reports: Anon, ‘Judgment that Angered Ghana,’ *Evening* News, 13 December 1963, p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-570)
571. The establishment of a separate branch of the judicial system to deal specifically with cases of treason and sedition had been backed by the judges, perhaps because although its establishment was directed by Nkrumah, neither he nor the government appeared to intervene directly in any cases. [↑](#footnote-ref-571)
572. GPRL BAA/RLAA/1001, Anon, ‘SHAME! The Masses Know they are Guilty,’ *Ghanaian Times,* 12 September 1963. [↑](#footnote-ref-572)
573. In part, the animosity that existed between Ghana and Togo and Cote d’Ivoire was a practical issue, not just an ideological one. The presence of refugees from the two French states in Ghana at the BAA-run African Affairs Centre, specifically set up to train and protect political refugees from across Africa, was an issue for the governments, both of whom believed that they were there to receive training in sabotage and subversion. [↑](#footnote-ref-573)
574. Ghana contended that her neighbours were harbouring the Ghanaian opposition, allowing them to organise against Nkrumah. During the Kulungugu trials, it was reported that Busia and Gbedemah had both fled to Togo, and were plotting against the government there. [↑](#footnote-ref-574)
575. Colin Legum, ‘The Organisation of African Unity – Success or Failure?’ *International Affairs,* 51.2 (1975), pp. 208-219. [↑](#footnote-ref-575)
576. Charter of the Organisation of African Unity, 479 U.N.T.S. 39, *entered into force* Sept. 13, 1963. [↑](#footnote-ref-576)
577. Article II, 1(C), Charter of the Organisation of African Unity. [↑](#footnote-ref-577)
578. Scott Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy,* p. 305. [↑](#footnote-ref-578)
579. This mirrored the efforts of Guinea and Ethiopia to develop links between the rival blocs, but by this point, the efforts of the latter two states had been far more successful across the entire continent. [↑](#footnote-ref-579)
580. Sekou Touré to United Nations General Assembly, 9 October 1962, cited in Scott Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy,* p. 307. [↑](#footnote-ref-580)
581. Haile Selassie I, ‘Towards African Unity,’ *Journal of Modern African Studies,* 1.3 (1963), pp. 281-291. This reproduction of the Ethiopian leader’s address was published here in the same year. [↑](#footnote-ref-581)
582. Kwame Nkrumah, ‘Address Delivered by His Excellency Osagyefo Dr Kwame Nkrumah President of the Republic of Ghana, 1963,’ At *African Union,* [*http://summits.au.int/en/21stsummit/speeches/address-delivered-he-osagyefo-dr-kwame-nkrumah-president-republic-ghana*](http://summits.au.int/en/21stsummit/speeches/address-delivered-he-osagyefo-dr-kwame-nkrumah-president-republic-ghana)[accessed 10/2/14]. [↑](#footnote-ref-582)
583. Haile Selassie I, ‘Towards African Unity,’ *Journal of Modern African Studies,* 1.3 (1963), pp. 281-291. In the opening lines of his address, Selassie states ‘we stand today on the stage of world affairs, before the audience of world opinion. We come together to assert our role in the direction of world affairs and to discharge our duty to the great continent…’ [↑](#footnote-ref-583)
584. *Ibid.,* pp. 287-88. [↑](#footnote-ref-584)
585. Kwame Nkrumah, *Unity Now: Speech delivered by Osagyefo Dr Kwame Nkrumah, President of the Republic of Ghana, on May 24, 1963 at the Summit Conference of Heads of African States held at Addis Ababa from May 22, 1963-May 26, 1963* (Accra, 1963). [↑](#footnote-ref-585)
586. Scott Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy*, pp. 306-8, 321-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-586)
587. Charter of the Organisation of African Unity, 479 U.N.T.S. 39, *entered into force* Sept. 13, 1963. Article III of the Charter spelled out clearly the importance that its writers placed on the territorial sovereignty of all states, yet also promised support for nationalist movements in dependent territories, with no explanation as to how these two apparently contradictory principles would work in practice. [↑](#footnote-ref-587)
588. *Ibid.,* opening statement. [↑](#footnote-ref-588)
589. GPRL/BAA/RLAA/1002, Anon, ‘Osagyefo’s 14th Anniversary Message Urges: Know What the Party Stands For,’ *The People’s Vanguard,* 12 June 1963. [↑](#footnote-ref-589)
590. In 1963, these concerns were kept relatively quiet, and it was primarily individual member states that challenged Nkrumah, Ghana and the BAA. However, by the end of 1964 and throughout 1965, the OAU was increasingly used to collectivise complaints against the government and challenge Nkrumah to answer to the accusations. For example, Cote d’Ivoire voiced its concerns over Ghana’s involvement in the assassination of Togolese President Sylvanus Olympio in January 1963, but the nature of Ghana’s activities were not explored by the OAU until 1965. The Nouakchott Meeting of the French Union members in February 1965 publically criticised Nkrumah, especially for his involvement (rumoured or real) in the domestic affairs of independent African states, with Ghanaian press responding in kind, claiming that the meeting was being run by external powers to subvert African Unity. Anon, ‘Ghana not “Centre of Subversion”,’ *The Guardian,* 20 February 1965, p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-590)
591. Anon, ‘OAU Asks Ghana to Explain,’ *Manchester Guardian,* 11 June 1965, p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-591)
592. Meredith Terretta, ‘Cameroonian Nationalists go Global: from Forest *Maquis* to a Pan-African Accra,’ *Journal of African* History, 51 (2010), p.192. [↑](#footnote-ref-592)
593. The publication in Ghana of the ‘Togo Note,’ a document used to indict Gbedemah, Ako-Adjei and others, in the 1962 treason trial, had fundamentally weakened any hope of the two countries improving their diplomatic relationship. The sparing between the two governments and presses continued on until 1966. [↑](#footnote-ref-593)
594. Anon, ‘Ghana Rejects Lagos Charge, “No Subversion”,’ *The Guardian,* 14 June 1962; Anon, ‘Ghana “not Centre of Subversion”,’ *The Guardian,* 20 February 1965. The *Guardian* reported that the newspaper had gone on to state that ‘the recent spate of treasonable acts against Ghana were plotted at varying times in the republics of Togo and the Ivory Coast in particular, and that countries such as Nigeria, Upper Volta, and Niger, have at various times permitted the use of their territories by Ghanaian refugees for subversive activities against Ghana.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-594)
595. See, for example, GPRL/BAA, Correspondence with African Affairs Centre, Residents of the African Affairs Centre from the 1st August-31st August 1964. This file lists the name of each student sponsored by the BAA, and staying at the Centre for African Affairs, nationality, their political party, and their ‘designation’ as Freedom Fighter or Student. This type of list is found throughout the Bureau archives. [↑](#footnote-ref-595)
596. The independent government of Niger repeatedly complained to the OAU about Nkrumah’s support for the Sawaba Movement, which was accused of plotting to overthrow the Niger government. Klaas van Walraven has noted that the leader of Sawaba, Djibo Bakary, was a ‘left-leaning charismatic nationalist,’ who was marginalised in Niger politics by French intervention in the independence referendum. Klaas van Walraven, ‘Decolonization by Referendum: the Anomaly of Niger and the Fall of Sawaba, 1958-1959,’ *Journal of African History,* 50.2 (2009), pp. 269-292. [↑](#footnote-ref-596)
597. Bretton, *The Rise and Fall of Kwame Nkrumah,* pp. 5-7*.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-597)
598. *Ibid.,* p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-598)
599. For a detailed account of the OAU’s relationship with Ghana and Nkrumah, and the concerns the organisation expressed over the ‘subversive activities’ of the BAA, see Zdenek Červenka, *The Unfinished Quest for Unity: Africa and the OAU* (London, 1977), pp. 4-6, 74-78. [↑](#footnote-ref-599)
600. Opoku Agyeman, *Nkrumah’s Ghana and East Africa: Pan-Africanism and African Interstate Relations* (London, 1992), pp. 101-115. [↑](#footnote-ref-600)
601. In 1961, Nkrumah had made clear his position on Angola and the war for Independence which had begun there, claiming that the United Nations must take decisive action to end the suffering of Africans in forced labour. Kwame Nkrumah, *Tragedy in Angola: An Address by Osagyefo the President to the National Assembly of Ghana* (Accra, 1961). However, by 1964, the BAA, presumably acting under Nkrumah’s direction if not approval, had begun directing support to Angolan rebels. [↑](#footnote-ref-601)
602. *Call for Action in Southern Rhodesia*, p.1, GPRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-602)
603. Červenka, *The Unfinished Quest for Unity: Africa and the OAU,* pp. 74-77. [↑](#footnote-ref-603)
604. General A.A. Afrifa, *The Ghana Coup, 24th February 1966* (London, 1967), pp. 35-37. [↑](#footnote-ref-604)
605. Robert M. Price, ‘Neo-Colonialism and Ghana’s Economic Decline: A Critical Assessment,’ *Canadian Journal of African Studies,* 18.1 (1984), pp. 164-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-605)
606. A.K. Appiah, ‘The Development of the Monetary and Financial System of Ghana, 1950-1964,’ Ph.D. thesis (University of Leeds, 1967), pp. ii-iv. [↑](#footnote-ref-606)
607. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-607)
608. Kate Skinner, ‘Who know the Minds of the People? Specialist Knowledge and Developmentatlist Authoritarianism in Postcolonial Ghana,’ *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History,* 39.2 (2011), pp.297-98. Skinner’s article goes into much greater depth on the nature of public opinion on the declining economy, and how this was presented to the central government. [↑](#footnote-ref-608)
609. See, for example, *Our Destiny in Our Hands: News Commentaries from Radio Ghana (February 24, 1966),* GPRL*;* B.A. Bentum, *Trade Unions in Chains: How Kwame Nkrumah Destroyed Free Trade Union Movement in Ghana and Attempted to Extend this on the African Continent* (Accra, 1966). This book includes details of Ghana’s expenditure on other African states, such as a monthly stipend to the Uganda Federation of Labour in order to challenge the larger Ugandan trade union, the ICFTU-backed Uganda Trade Union Congress.  [↑](#footnote-ref-609)
610. *1964 Christmas and New Year Messages by Osagyefo the President,* pp. 2-3. The Message also clarifies Nkrumah’s position on economic development and the continued reliance on foreign imports. This was, Nkrumah suggested, a result of both the capitalist monopoly creating a reliance and encouraging debt in African states, and greed and weakness in Ghana. [↑](#footnote-ref-610)
611. Bretton, *The Rise and Fall of Kwame Nkrumah*, p. 111; Scott Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy,* p. 107. Scott Thompson describes Barden as ‘an ex-serviceman and ex-shorthand instructor, without ideological conviction, but with a love of money and power.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-611)
612. *Statement by the Government on the Recent Conspiracy, Monday 11th December, 1961* (Accra, 1961) [↑](#footnote-ref-612)
613. Bretton, *The Rise and Fall of Kwame Nkrumah*, p.77 [↑](#footnote-ref-613)
614. Bentum, *Trade Unions in Chains*. [↑](#footnote-ref-614)
615. GPRL/BAA/RLAA/440, Treason Trial, 1965, Anon, ‘Kwame was my Target – says Ametewee’, *Daily Graphic,* 3 April 1964; Anon, ‘Why I did not Shoot the Accused,’ *Daily Graphic,* 4 April 1964. [↑](#footnote-ref-615)
616. GPRL /BAA/RLAA/440, ‘The Man who Betrayed his own Country – For Money, Serial Number One,’ *Evening News¸*19 November 1964; ‘The Man who Betrayed his own Country – For Money, Serial Number Two,’ *Evening News,* 21 November 1964. The *Ghanaian Times* in particular referred to the failure of the Kulungugu trials to secure prison sentences for three of the accused and the popular protests that occurred in the aftermath of the 1963 judgements to reiterate the importance of a guilty verdict in the 1964-65 treason trials. See, for example, GPRL/BAA/RLAA/440, ‘The Public would have Mobbed them – Swanzy tells Fatogun,’ *Ghanaian Times,* 5 June 1965, ‘Judgement was Messed up by Outside Influence,’ *Ghanaian Times,* 2 June 1965, ‘Herold Came here to Subvert,’ *Ghanaian Times,* 18 November 1965. [↑](#footnote-ref-616)
617. Kwame Nkrumah, *Sessional Address to the National Assembly, February 1966.* [↑](#footnote-ref-617)
618. Scott Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy,* p. 409. [↑](#footnote-ref-618)
619. Ali A. Mazrui, ‘Nkrumah, Obote and Vietnam,’ *Transition*, 43 (1973), p. 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-619)
620. *Ibid.*, pp. 36-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-620)
621. Qiang Zhai, ‘Opposing Negotiations: China and the Vietnam Peace Talks, 1965-1968,’ *Pacific Historical Review,* 68.1 (1999), pp.27-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-621)
622. Bretton, *The Rise and Fall of Kwame Nkrumah,* p. 171. [↑](#footnote-ref-622)
623. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-623)
624. Colonel Emmanuel Kwasi Kotoka, ‘Broadcast to the Nation,’ reproduced in *Our Destiny in Our Hands: News Commentaries from Radio Ghana (February 24, 1966).* [↑](#footnote-ref-624)
625. General A.A. Afrifa, *The Ghana Coup, 24th February 1966* (London, 1967), pp. 35-37. [↑](#footnote-ref-625)
626. Kwame Nkrumah, *Dark Days in Ghana* (London, 1973), pp. 20-26. [↑](#footnote-ref-626)
627. ‘Our Revolution has Popular Support,’ reproduced in *Our Destiny in Our Hands: News Commentaries from Radio Ghana (February 24, 1966),* p. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-627)
628. *Ibid.,* pp. 7-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-628)
629. Kevin Gaines, ‘From Black Power to Civil Rights: Julian Mayfield and African American Expatriates in Nkrumah’s Ghana, 1957-1966,’ in Christian G. Appy (ed.), *Cold War Constructions: the Political Culture of United States Imperialism, 1945-1966* (Amherst, Ma., 2000) p. 261. [↑](#footnote-ref-629)
630. These public discourses were primarily centred on two issues. The first was African American affairs and the direction of the civil rights movement, and the second was the Cold War and ideological freedom in the United States. [↑](#footnote-ref-630)
631. As discussed in Chapter 1, the popularity of Africa in the African American psyche had reached a peak in the 1920s. After that it had been in decline, but remained on the margins of popular discourses as a potential source of inspiration. As independence and anti-colonial movements appeared across the continent, the image of Africa regained a degree of its former popularity, especially among marginalised radical groups. [↑](#footnote-ref-631)
632. Kwame Nkrumah provided his own explanation of the African Personality, an idea he referenced perhaps most famously in his Independence Day speech. The African personality was, Nkrumah argued, an assertion of pride in Africa at an international level, and the desire to work for the betterment and defence of the continent, rather than simply following the leadership of either the East or the West. Drawing on a history of African agency, artistic heritage and cultural pride, the African Personality was to be the driving force behind African representations to the wider world. Kwame Nkrumah, *I Speak of Freedom* (London, 1973), pp. 125-134. [↑](#footnote-ref-632)
633. Timothy B. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power* (Chapel Hill, NC., 1999), p. 191. The language of ‘freedom struggles’ highlights an early attempt to distinguish radical activists from moderates in terms of the scope of the campaign for equality in the USA. [↑](#footnote-ref-633)
634. Robert F. Williams, ‘Go Awaken my People,’ cited in *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70. [↑](#footnote-ref-634)
635. The model that many perceived to be the correct one was that inspired by Gandhi’s form of protest. [↑](#footnote-ref-635)
636. Earlier émigrés included, most notably, Richard Wright, whose book, *Black Power,* documented his travels through the Gold Coast in 1953. Though in his work he problematised the notion that Africa was a homeland for the diaspora, the title goes some way to demonstrating the importance that was placed on ‘Africa’ as a source of legitimacy and pride for African Americans. Richard Wright, *Black Power* (London, 1954). [↑](#footnote-ref-636)
637. Rita Norton, ‘The Horace Mann Bond Papers: a Biography of Change,’ Journal of Negro Education, 53.1 (1984), p. 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-637)
638. L. Edgar Detwiler to Isaac Tetteh Okine, 31 March 1953, Box 5, Horace Mann and Julia W. Bond Papers, MARBL. Wayne J. Urban, *Black Scholar,* p. 152. Detwiler was president of the United American Management Corporation, and throughout the 1950s and 1960s he was active in mineral extraction, construction, and financing across Africa. [↑](#footnote-ref-638)
639. Horace Mann Bond, ‘African-American Relations, 1752-1961: or, How to Lose a Cold War’ Founders Day Speech, 1961, Box 8, Folder 1, Horace Mann and Julia W. Bond Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-639)
640. Horace Mann Bond to Samuel Z. Westerfield, 15 July 1960, ‘African Business Report, Box 4, Horace Mann and Julia W. Bond Papers. See also, Wayne J. Urban, *Black Scholar: Horace Mann Bond, 1904-1972* (Athens, GA., 1992), pp. 146-147. [↑](#footnote-ref-640)
641. Daniel Chapman to St. Clair Drake, 8 February 1957, Folder 11, Box 5, St. Clair Drake Papers. Thurgood Marshall was the Chief Counsel for the NAACP, and went on to become the first African American Associate Justice of the Supreme Court in 1967. A. Philip Randolph was a leading African American trade unionist, and early civil rights activist and organiser of the March on Washington Movement. Willard Townsend was a co-founder of the Brotherhood of Railway Depot, Bus Terminal, Airport and Dock Red Caps, Attendants and Porters, and a high-profile CIO organiser and civil rights activist. [↑](#footnote-ref-641)
642. St Clair Drake, ‘Ghana Notes,’ Box 70, Folder 26, St Clair Drake Papers. The Drakes never settled in Ghana, but did spend extended periods of time in the country. In 1950, he was awarded a Ford Foundation Area Training Grant, and so undertook research in the Gold Coast for the first time. [↑](#footnote-ref-642)
643. Prior to this, he had focussed his research on the struggles facing working class urban African American communities. After his return to the USA, this was reflected throughout the 1960s and 1970s. [↑](#footnote-ref-643)
644. St Clair Drake, ‘An Interview with W. Arthur Lewis, 12 September, 1954,’ Folder 22, Box 67, St Clair Drake Papers; ‘Mass Communication Survey, 1958,’ Folder 8, Box 66, St Clair Drake Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-644)
645. Julian Mayfield, ‘The Lonely Warrior,’ p. 6, Folder 14, Box 13, Julian Mayfield Papers, Sc MG 339, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library (hereafter Julian Mayfield Papers). [↑](#footnote-ref-645)
646. Angus Cameron to Ruth Aley, 24 October 1967, Folder 14, Box 13, Julian Mayfield Papers.  [↑](#footnote-ref-646)
647. Maya Angelou, *All God’s Children Need Travelling Shoes* (London, 1987), p. 18. The group that Angelou refers to was a small collection of African Americans who all identified with similar political ideologies. The group included Mayfield’s wife, Ana Livia, a doctor, sociologists Sylvia Boone and Leslie Lacy, painter Ted Pointiflet, among others. Maya Angelou was quickly adopted into this group, referring to them as the ‘Revolutionary Returnees.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-647)
648. Angelou, *All God’s Children*, pp. 18-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-648)
649. Kevin Gaines, ‘Julian Mayfield and African American Expatriates,’ in Christian G. Appy (ed.), *Cold War Constructions: the Political Culture of U.S. Imperialism, 1945-1966* (Amherst, 2000), p. 258. [↑](#footnote-ref-649)
650. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-650)
651. Julian Mayfield, ‘Tales from the Lido,’ Box 14, Folder 11, “Tales from the Lido”: Second Completed Draft, Julian Mayfield Papers. ‘Tales from the Lido’ was Mayfield’s unpublished memoirs, and focused a great deal of attention on his time in Ghana. [↑](#footnote-ref-651)
652. Within this new generation, Du Bois was regarded with respect, though also characterised as out of touch with younger generations, and a cultural elitist with little interest in engaging the masses. In Rudwick’s 1960 study of Du Bois, he concluded that Du Bois had done admirable work in early attempts to organise African American advocacy, and his work in publicising African American issues, and his own views, was remarkable. By 1945, however, his ability to lead was seriously weak, and he no longer provided a model of leadership or organisation that could be replicated. As such, he was an antecedent of the civil rights movement, but not a part of it. Elliott M. Rudwick, *W.E.B. Du Bois: a Study in Minority Group Leadership* (Philadelphia, 1960). [↑](#footnote-ref-652)
653. Nkrumah, *Ghana: the Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (London, 1957), p. 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-653)
654. Nkrumah repeatedly requested Du Bois’ presence in Ghana, and regularly voiced his disappointment that the elderly activist was absent from Ghanaian political life. Kwame Nkrumah to W.E.B. Du Bois, 4 April 1957, Kwame Nkrumah to W.E.B. Du Bois, 27 May 1957, Kwame Nkrumah to W.E.B. Du Bois, 5 February 1958, W.E.B. Du Bois Papers (MS 312), Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries. [↑](#footnote-ref-654)
655. A brief review of Du Bois’ bibliography will make it clear that the vast majority of his published works were concerning the U.S. and the treatment of African Americans. See W.E.B. Du Bois, ‘The Study of the NegroProblems,’ *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences,* 11(1898), pp. 1-23, *The Negro in Business* (1899), *Efforts for Social Betterment among Negro African* (1909), and *Black Reconstruction in America* (1935). [↑](#footnote-ref-655)
656. Telegram from President of Ghana to W. E. B. Du Bois, 15 February, 1961. W. E. B. Du Bois Papers (MS 312), Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries. [↑](#footnote-ref-656)
657. *Speech by Osagyefo the President at the Opening Session of the First Meeting of the Editorial Board of the Encyclopaedia Africana, 24 September, 1964*, GPRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-657)
658. W.E.B. Du Bois to President of Ghana*,* 4 January, 1961,Letter from W. E. B. Du Bois to President of Ghana, March 7 1961, Letter from W. E. B. Du Bois to President of the Republic of Ghana, October 10 1960. (MS 312), Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries. [↑](#footnote-ref-658)
659. Maya Angelou, *All God’s Children,* pp. 4-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-659)
660. *Ibid.,* p. 18 [↑](#footnote-ref-660)
661. *Ibid.,* p. 16 [↑](#footnote-ref-661)
662. *Ibid.,* pp. 20-21. [↑](#footnote-ref-662)
663. Ann Reed, ‘Gateway to Africa: the Pilgrimage Tourism of Diaspora Africans to Ghana’ Ph.D. thesis (Indiana University, 2006). Though the thesis focuses primarily on the tourism industry surrounding the slave trade history in Ghana, material included covers the relationship between émigrés and Ghanaians , and the language of the ‘returnee’ is shared in both tourism and emigration motivations. [↑](#footnote-ref-663)
664. Angelou, *All God’s Children*, p. 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-664)
665. *Statement on Development by the Prime Minister of Ghana, the Hon. Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, LL.D., M.P., 20 February, 1958*, GPRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-665)
666. Angelou, *All God’s Children*, p. 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-666)
667. The Academy of Science and Knowledge was the body through which funding and support for the *Encyclopaedia Africana* was channelled. Originally the Association for Science under the Colonial rule, it was rebranded in 1957 and brought under the control of the Prime Minister. [↑](#footnote-ref-667)
668. Kevin Gaines, ‘From Black Power to Civil Rights,’ pp. 262-66. [↑](#footnote-ref-668)
669. See Martin Luther King to K.A. Gbedemah, 4 May 1959, *Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute,* <http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/primarydocuments/Vol5/4May1959_ToK.A.Gbedemah.pdf> [accessed 20/10/13]. [↑](#footnote-ref-669)
670. Anon, ‘Foreign Relations: From Segregation to Breakfast,’ *Time,* 21 October 1957. [↑](#footnote-ref-670)
671. W.H. Lawrence, ‘Ghanan [sic] is Served White House Meal,’ *New York Times,* 11 October 1957. [↑](#footnote-ref-671)
672. For more on the Volta River Project, see W. Scott Thompson, *Ghana’s Foreign Policy 1957-1966: Diplomacy, Ideology, and the New State* (Princeton, NJ., 1969); Ebere Nwaubani, ‘Eisenhower, Nkrumah and the Congo Crisis,’ in *Journal of Contemporary History,* Vol.36, No.4 (October, 2001), pp.601-2; Thomas J. Noer, ‘The New Frontier and African Neutralism: Kennedy, Nkrumah, and the Volta River Project,’ *Diplomatic History,* 8.1 (1984), pp. 61-79. [↑](#footnote-ref-672)
673. Nwaubani, ‘Eisenhower, Nkrumah, and the Congo Crisis,’ p. 602. [↑](#footnote-ref-673)
674. Gaines, ‘From Black Power to Civil Rights,’ pp. 257-69. [↑](#footnote-ref-674)
675. Angelou, *All Gods Children,* p. 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-675)
676. Daniel Chapman to St. Clair Drake, February 8th, 1957, Folder 11, Box 5, St Clair Drake Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-676)
677. ‘Tema,’ Box 69, St Clair Drake Papers. Other surveys that Drake conducted in Ghana included a survey of media use and political attitudes, and a school survey about attitudes towards politics and ethnic identities among High School age students. ‘Ghana – School Survey,’ Box 67, Folder 22, St Clair Drake Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-677)
678. *Statement on Development by the Prime Minister of Ghana, the Hon. Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, LL.D., M.P., 20 February, 1958,* GPRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-678)
679. His most famous work, first published in 1946, focused on the social consequences of African American urbanisation and the pressures of life in a modern, industrial and urban, setting. St Clair Drake, Horace R. Cayton, *Black Metropolis: a Study of Negro Life in a Northern City* (New York, 1946). [↑](#footnote-ref-679)
680. Kwame Nkrumah, *Gateway to Ghana: Speech by Osagyefo the President on the Occasion of the official opening of the Tema Harbour, 10 February, 1962*, GPRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-680)
681. Horace Mann Bond, 'Observations on Education in British West Africa,*’ Educational Record,* 31 (April, 1950), Box 20, Horace Mann and Julia W. Bond Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-681)
682. Urban, *Black Scholar,* p. 167. [↑](#footnote-ref-682)
683. Wayne J. Urban, *Black Scholar: Horace Mann Bond, 1904-1972* (London, 1992), pp. 147. [↑](#footnote-ref-683)
684. Horace Mann Bond, ‘African-American Relations, 1752-1961: or, How to Lose a Cold War,’ 1961, Box 4, Founders Day Speech – American and Africa, Horace Mann and Julia W. Bond Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-684)
685. Urban, *Black Scholar,* pp. 146-47. [↑](#footnote-ref-685)
686. L. Edgar Detwiler to Kwame Nkrumah, 25March 1953; L. Edgar Detwiler to Isaac Tetteh Okine, 31 March 1953, Box 5, Transcripts, Lincoln University, Rare and Interesting Letters, Horace Mann and Julia W. Bond Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-686)
687. Horace Mann Bond to Samuel Z. Westerfield, 15 July 1960, Box 4, ‘African Business Report,’ Horace and Julia Bond Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-687)
688. Horace Mann Bond, ‘Inaugural Address of Horace Mann Bond as the Fifth President of Lincoln University,’ 4 June, 1946, Folder 10, Box 57, Horace Mann and Julia W. Bond Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-688)
689. D.D. Carmichael to Horace Mann Bond, 14 October, 1960, ‘Ghana, Committee on University of,’ Box 4, Horace Mann and Julia W. Bond Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-689)
690. Though the purpose of non-alignment was to ensure that participating states did not have to align with East or West in the Cold War, in the earlier years of independence, Nkrumah had appeared to court US investment rather than Soviet. Thus, although the shift in focus to the East was not a departure from the principal of nonalignment, it was still noted in American circles with a degree of concern. [↑](#footnote-ref-690)
691. Ebere Nwaubani, ‘Eisenhower, Nkrumah and the Congo Crisis,’ pp. 599-605. Nwaubani also notes that the Eurocentricity and ‘Europe first’ foreign policy approach of the USA ultimately contributed towards the declining support for the US by feeding into Nkrumah’s anti-colonial, Afrocentric ideological position. [↑](#footnote-ref-691)
692. Study Mission to Africa, November-December 1960: Report by Senators Frank Church, Gale W. McGee, and Frank E. Moss to the Committee on Foreign Relations, Committee on Appropriations, and Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, United States Senate, February 12, 1961, 87th Congress, 1st Session (Washington DC, 1961), p. 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-692)
693. Julian Mayfield, ‘Tales from the Lido*,*’Box 13, Folder 14, Julian Mayfield Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-693)
694. Angelou, *All God’s Children,* pp. 18-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-694)
695. Mayfield wrote three manuscripts documenting his life overseas, though none was published. These include ‘Ghana in Perspective*,*’ ‘The Living Ghana,’and ‘When Ghana was Ghana,’all held in the Julian Mayfield Papers, Schomburg Center. [↑](#footnote-ref-695)
696. Julian Mayfield, ‘Ghana in Perspective,’ unpublished manuscript, Box 13, Folder 14, Julian Mayfield Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-696)
697. The separation of government jobs and branches, as well as the ‘grey area’ that Mayfield appears to have worked in were in part a consequence of increased personal control over government apparatus by Nkrumah, which shall be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter. [↑](#footnote-ref-697)
698. Julian Mayfield, quoted in Anon, ‘Afro-Americans Challenge Jack on Racism: Accra Joins,’ *Ghanaian Times,* 28 August 1963. [↑](#footnote-ref-698)
699. Julian Mayfield, ‘What has Driven the Blacks into Rebellion: Race Riots in U.S.A. – a Picture Story,’ *The Ghanaian Times,* 13 August, 1964, p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-699)
700. Mayfield, ‘What has Driven the Blacks into Rebellion,’ p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-700)
701. T.D. Baffoe, ‘Editorial,’ *Ghanaian Times,* 30 May 1964. [↑](#footnote-ref-701)
702. Julian Mayfield, ‘Malcolm X: a Tragic Lost,’ *The Ghanaian Times,* 24 February 1965, p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-702)
703. Penny von Eschen, ‘Who’s the Real Ambassador? Exploding Cold War Racial Ideology,’ in Christian G. Appy (ed.), *Cold War Constructions: the Political Culture of United States Imperialism, 1945-1966* (Amherst, MA., 2000)*,* pp. 110-131. Von Eschen has demonstrated the use of race in US propaganda campaigns, highlighting the function of African American celebrities such as Louis ‘Satchmo’ Armstrong to ‘symboliz[e] the superiority of American life to Western Europe and embodying racial harmony for Ghanaian and other African audiences.’, p. 110. See Also, Penny von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge, MA., 2006). [↑](#footnote-ref-703)
704. Henry L. Bretton, *The Rise and Fall of Kwame Nkrumah: a Study in Personal Rule in Africa* (London, 1967), p. 70. [↑](#footnote-ref-704)
705. *Ibid.,* pp. 109-11, 129-133. [↑](#footnote-ref-705)
706. T. Peter Omari, *Kwame Nkrumah: the Anatomy of an African Dictator* (Accra, 2000), pp. 119-20. [↑](#footnote-ref-706)
707. ‘Minutes of the Fourth Meeting of the Editors Review Committee held on the 16th April 1963,’ Press Committee on African Affairs, Bureau of African Affairs Papers, George Padmore Library, Accra. [↑](#footnote-ref-707)
708. Julian Mayfield ‘Give Afro-Americans Civil Rights, *Ghanaian Times,* 29th August, 1963, p. 2, ‘What has Driven the Blacks into Rebellion,’ *Ghanaian Times*, 13th August, 1964, p. 5, folder 9, box 36, Mayfield Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-708)
709. Mayfield’s work as a journalist was in conjunction with his work for the President’s Office of Information. That he wrote for the state-owned newspaper was no coincidence. [↑](#footnote-ref-709)
710. ‘Editorial: Spirit of African Unity in Action: The Great Freedom March is On,’ *Evening News,* 28 August 1963, p. 3. Box 36, Folder 8, Miscellaneous Documents and Printed Materials, Julian Mayfield Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-710)
711. Julian Mayfield, ‘Kwame Nkrumah: The Afro-American and Kwame Nkrumah,’ *Labour Monthly,* date unknown, Box 36, Folder 8, Julian Mayfield Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-711)
712. *An Address to the National Assembly on African Affairs by Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, President of Ghana, 8 August, 1960*, GPRL. [↑](#footnote-ref-712)
713. GPRL BAA/RLAA/424, ‘Anti-Neo-Colonialist Demonstration,’ ‘Minutes of Meeting: 13 August, 1962, 10 a.m. Chairman: Mr. A.K. Barden.’ This demonstration was in part an extension of Nkrumah’s anti-neo-colonialism campaign, but coincided with both Ghana’s ongoing activities in the Congo and an assassination attempt on the President’s life. [↑](#footnote-ref-713)
714. Julian Mayfield, ‘Ghana in Perspective,’ unpublished manuscript, Box 13, Folder 14, Julian Mayfield Papers. He stated that ‘I produced mostly unsigned material for broadcasting and reproduction in the national newspapers.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-714)
715. The attainment of the One Party State, the establishment of Ghana as a Republic, and the increased personal control of government and quasi-governmental offices and departments all increased his personal control over Ghanaian politics directly. In addition to this, throughout the 1960s, Nkrumah’s cult of personality continued to grow almost unabated, thus expanding his personal rule well beyond the political system. [↑](#footnote-ref-715)
716. Julian Mayfield, ‘Ghana in Perspective.’ This manuscript was written after 1966 and the coup, and as such constituted a reflection on Mayfield’s experiences there, but it is unclear exactly when it was penned. [↑](#footnote-ref-716)
717. Julian Mayfield, ‘A Letter from Esther,’ unpublished manuscript, Box 13, Folder 4, Julian Mayfield Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-717)
718. A simple overview of his writings, both published and unpublished, demonstrates Mayfield’s desire for Africans in Ghana and African Americans in the USA to make the same connection, and it can be argued that one reason why he so consistently wrote about American affairs was to encourage the support of Ghanaian audiences for African American struggles. Likewise, his reasons for writing manuscripts on Ghana even after his return to the US may have been because he sought to cement the relationship for African Americans. [↑](#footnote-ref-718)
719. For an explanation of internal colonialism as Mayfield saw it, see Robert Blauner, *Racial Oppression in America* (New York, 1972), ‘Internal Colonialism and Ghetto Revolt,’ *Social Problems,* 16.4 (1969), pp.393-408; Robert L. Allen, *A Guide to Black Power in America: an Historical Analysis* (London, 1970), pp.7-17. Allen explicitly draws on the case of Ghana, and Nkrumah’s downfall, as evidence of the subversive and perfidious nature of colonialism. See also, Ramon A. Gutierrez, ‘Internal Colonialism: an American Theory of Race,’ *Du Bois Review,* 1.2 (2004), pp.281-295 [↑](#footnote-ref-719)
720. Mayfield, ‘The Afro-American and Kwame Nkrumah,’ *Labour Monthly*. [↑](#footnote-ref-720)
721. For more on the Black power movement, see Nico Slate (ed.), *Black Power Beyond Borders: the Global Dimensions of the Black Power Movement* (New York, 2012); Peniel E. Joseph, ‘Black Liberation without Apology: Reconceptualizing the Black Power Movement,' *The Black Scholar*, 31.3/4 (2001), pp. 2-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-721)
722. Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge, MA., 1981), p. 215. [↑](#footnote-ref-722)
723. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie*; Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Rising Wind: Black Americans and US Foreign Affairs, 1935-1960* (Chapel Hill, NC., 1996). [↑](#footnote-ref-723)
724. This characterisation was established through the creation of binary oppositions between the two movements. As they were identified as distinct from one another, the comparisons became easier – where the civil rights movement had been peaceful, targeted on the South, and educated, the black power movement was seen to be violent, northern, urban and representative of a generational divide. [↑](#footnote-ref-724)
725. See, for example, Peniel E. Joseph, *The Black Power Movement: Rethinking the Civil Rights-Black Power Era* (London, 2006). [↑](#footnote-ref-725)
726. For a summary of the views and aims of early SNCC activists, see Charles E. McDew, ‘“Tomorrow is Today” an Open Letter to Members of Congress from the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee,’ 30 December 1960, Box 2, Folder 10, Constance W. Curry Papers, MARBL, Emory University. [↑](#footnote-ref-726)
727. John Lewis, cited in Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s*, pp. 93-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-727)
728. SNCC, ‘Student Non-Violent Co-ordinating Committee Position Paper: The Basis of Black Power’ (1966), *The Sixties Project,* <http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML_docs/Resources/Primary/Manifestos/SNCC_black_power.html>[accessed 20/7/14]. [↑](#footnote-ref-728)
729. SNCC, ‘Student Non-Violent Co-ordinating Committee Position Paper: The Basis of Black Power’ (1966). [↑](#footnote-ref-729)
730. Stokely Carmichael, ‘Power and Racism,’ Box 3, Folder 1, Constance W. Curry Papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-730)
731. Stokely Carmichael, Ekwueme Michael Thelwell, *Ready for Revolution: the Life and Struggles of Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture)* (New York, 2003), pp. 101-102. See also Stokely Carmichael, ‘Pan-Africanism,’ speech delivered at Morehouse College, Atlanta, April 1970, in Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture), *Stokely Speaks: From Black Power to Pan-Africanism* (Chicago, 2007), pp. 183-220. [↑](#footnote-ref-731)
732. Anon, ‘Editorial: Du Bois, Da Yie!,’ *Ghana Evening News,* 28 August 1963, p. 2 [emphasis in original]. Although this piece was published anonymously, there is significant similarity in writing style between this and other articles which he signed. [↑](#footnote-ref-732)
733. Julian Mayfield, ‘Kwame Nkrumah: “Don’t Mourn for Me; Learn From Me”,’ *Guyana Sunday Chronicle*, 30 April, 1972, p. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-733)
734. Angelou, *All God’s Children,* p. 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-734)
735. *Ibid.,* p. 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-735)
736. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-736)
737. Angelou, *All God’s Children,* pp. 128-140. In her description of Malcolm X’s visit to Ghana in 1964 highlights Angelou’s considerations of what it meant to be African American. The differences between being American and being African are given a lot of coverage in this section, suggesting that for Angelou, this was an important issue that required analysis and understanding. [↑](#footnote-ref-737)
738. She wrote that, in late-1964 or early 1965, ‘I needed to get away from Africa and its cache of subtle promises and at least second-hand memories. I blamed that entire continent and history for my malaise when the real reason was more pointedly specific and as a personal as a migraine.’ Angelou, *All God’s Children,* p. 148. [↑](#footnote-ref-738)
739. Even when considering the contributions that African Americans could make to Ghana, Angelou considered ‘Black American insouciance’ key among them. Angelou, *All God’s Children,* p. 158. [↑](#footnote-ref-739)
740. The importance of Frantz Fanon and his conceptualisation of the colonised mind was of great importance to the Black Power movement, whose leaders incorporated ideas of mental decolonisation and armed liberation into existing notions of group politics and personal liberation. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (London, 1965). For a discussion of the ideological development of Stokely Carmichael, see Donald J. McCormack, ‘Stokely Carmichael and Pan-Africanism: Back to Black Power,’ *Journal of Politics*, 3.2 (1973), pp. 386-409. [↑](#footnote-ref-740)
741. Consider the debates between Du Bois and Garvey, and it becomes possible to see the longevity of this particular aspect of the study of Pan-Africanism. Bretton, for example, makes this error, relying on a Machiavellian characterisation of Nkrumah to explain his changing politics and failing to adequately locate and understand his Pan-Africanism within his governing decisions. Bretton, *The Rise and Fall of Kwame Nkrumah*, pp. 19-39. [↑](#footnote-ref-741)
742. The study of black global history has made great efforts recently to highloight the international contexts of African American history – finish this ref! [↑](#footnote-ref-742)
743. See, for example, Elliot Rudwick, *W.E.B. Du Bois: a Study in Minority Group Leadership* (Surrey, PA, 1960); David Rooney, *Kwame Nkrumah: the Political Kingdom in the Third World* (London, 1988); Ama Biney, *The Political and Social Thought of Kwame Nkrumah* (New York, 2011). [↑](#footnote-ref-743)
744. Patrick S. Washburn has made a valuable contribution in this regard, examining the history of the African American press from its origins through to the 1970s. Examining this longer period allows Washburn to highlight the changes that the press underwent, and how it responded to the wider changes in American and international affairs. Patrick S. Washburn, *The African American Newspaper: Voice of Freedom* (Evanston, Ill., 2006). [↑](#footnote-ref-744)
745. There is a growing body of literature on newspapers and print culture in West Africa, which moves beyond the confines of literary or political content to examine the social and cultural histories of print culture. See, for example, Karin Barber, ‘I.B. Akinyele and early Yoruba Print Culture,’ in Derek Peterson and Giacomo Macolo (eds), *Recasting the Past: History, Writing and Political Work in Twentieth Century Africa* (Athens, OH., 2009) pp. 31-49; Carl Patrick Burrowes, *Power and Press Freedom in Liberia, 1830-1970: the Impact of Globalization and Civil Society on Media-Government Relations* (Trenton, NJ., 2004); Stephanie Newell, *Literary Culture in Colonial Ghana: ‘How to Play the Game of Life’* (Manchester, 2002); Stephanie Newell, ‘Articulating Empire: Newspaper Readerships in Colonial West Africa,’ *New Formations,* 73 (2011), pp. 26-43; Skinner, ‘Reading, Writing and Rallies: the Politics of “Freedom” in Southern British Togoland, 1953-1956,’ *Journal of African History,* 48.1 (2007), pp. 123-147. [↑](#footnote-ref-745)