

**Addis Ababa University**

**College of Social Science**

**Center for African Studies**

**Elitist Mystifications and the Vagueness of ‘Common  
Interest Perspective’ of the AU in the Global Order:**

**A Statement Reconsidered**

By:

Benyam Ephrem Betre-Work

May, 2013

Addis Ababa

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A Thesis Submitted to College of Social Science of Addis  
Ababa University in partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for  
the Degree of Masters of Art in African Studies

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Approved by the Examining Board

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# Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	i
List of Figures.....	iii
Acknowledgment.....	iv
Acronyms.....	v

## Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Abstract.....	1
1.1.1. Background of the problem.....	2
1.2.Statement of the Problem.....	6
1.3.Objectives of the Study.....	6
1.4.Significance of the Study.....	7
1.5.Limitation of the Study.....	8
1.6.Research Methodology.....	9
1.6.1. Type of the Study.....	9
1.6.2. Sources of Data.....	9
1.6.3. Data Gathering Strategies.....	9
1.6.4. Questionnaires.....	9
1.6.5. Data Gathering Procedures.....	9
1.6.6. Data Analysis.....	10

## Chapter 2: Premises of the Thesis's Arguments and Review of Literature

2.1. Do the People Know the AU?.....	11
2.1.1. When the new African Personality serves two different purposes.....	21
2.1.1.1. African Nationalism and the <i>provisionality</i> of African personality.....	21
2.1.1.2. Hermeneutics of African Personality and its <i>inadequacy</i> .....	27
2.1.1.3. African Personality and its <i>Partiality</i> .....	36
2.2. Do and will the People Recognize the AU?.....	38

2.2.1. The Conflict between Common Interest and Self-assertiveness in the Global Order.....	38
2.2.2. Why is Self-affirmation Growing Rapidly More than Ever?.....	40
2.2.3. Religious Fundamentalism.....	44
2.2.4. Ethnic Fundamentalism and Identity.....	46
Chapter 3: Modality.....	52
Chapter 4: Summary and Recommendation.....	56
Bibliography.....	60

List of Figures

Figure 1.1. A Matrix Chart on How the General Structure of this Study is Organized.....5

Figure 2.1. African Personality and its Relationship with Major Events.....13

Figure 2.2. The Path of Cultural Globalization Through Time.....39

Figure 2.3. Self-Assertiveness and Globalization.....43

## Acknowledgment

I know that It would not be easy to adequately confess my debts. Those persons who directly collaborate with me or interested scholars who influenced my thinking and tempt me to meditate upon those new arguments I explore in this study, all deserve my profound gratitude. ‘I can resist everything except temptation!’, said the great poet because temptation is from heaven. I, above all things, thank heaven for sending his spirit to tempt me with this idea that came to me like a wind and finished with a strange alacrity.

I am grateful to Dr. Getachew S. for introducing me the ‘forgotten hero’ Blyden and your unreserved advice; Dr. Getachew K. for showing me how a future intellectual of Africa should think(you are one of the very few); Dr. Setarg, Dr. Dagnachew, Dr. Bekele from my favorite Philosophy Department for all the books that you lend me and your encouragement so that I can say ‘*Cogito ergo sum*’-- ‘I think therefore I am’ not to deceive my self by claiming *Cogito cogito ergo cogito sum*— ‘I think that I think, therefore I think that I am’; Dr. Mohammed, I dare not to say anything but let the heaven send his blessings to you & your family, for you strongly believed that what ever his academic background is a man can be ‘an intellectual if he has the capacity to be fascinated by ideas, and has acquired the skill to handle some of them effectively’ as your favorite intellectual Mazrui once wrote it and I think I didn’t embarrass you. I thank those who sponsored me so that I wouldn’t worry about money, I’ll pay you back if I get a job before three months!(otherwise let God pay you back...). I also thank those who impost as if they deserve to be amongst the truest intellectuals but whose emptiness compel them to be senseless arrogant(I pitied them after I observed that they don’t know the very secret of their arrogance- their blankness).

My class mates and friends from other departments(you know who you are), I thank you all for the very reason that I sensed your love to me every moment you call my name.

## **Acronyms**

AU	African Union
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
ECOSOCC	Economic Social and Cultural Council
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
OAU	Organization of African Unity
PAC	Pan-African Congress
PAP	Pan-African Parliament
PSC	Peace and Security Council
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
SAP	Structural Adjustment Program
UN	United Nations
UNIA	United Negro Improvement Association
USA	United States of America

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## 1.1. Abstract

The AU is re-created out of its old body, the OAU, to be able to make the continent to effectively face the ‘multifaceted challenges’ posed by globalization<sup>1</sup>. However, contrary to the AU’s long established belief, the cultural assertiveness by many groups in Africa in response to many discontents of globalization is unnoticeably threatening the imagined unity of African countries.

This thesis demonstrated,

1. how such reactions to the new global order could affect the ‘common interest perspective’ of the AU and how the AU(ECOSOCC) would respond to this challenge.
2. how alternatives to such threatening scenarios offered by the AU like the ‘African personality’ which is wholly accepted as the unifying force among all African people are elitist and intellectual inventions which are what break the contract between African people and the AU(PAP).

The thesis ‘Elitist mystification and the vagueness of ‘common interest perspective’ of the AU in the Global Order’ will evaluate

1. How AU would respond to the increasing cultural assertiveness of societies in response to globalization respective of its threats in weakening inner affinity.
2. How alternatives like the century old ‘African personality’ are mystified which would do no good to the wider mass in creating the ‘common interest perspective’ and how the AU would respond to this argument.

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<sup>1</sup> Makinda, S. M., & Okumu, W. (2008). *The African Union: Challenges of globalization, security and governance*. New York: Routledge.

### **1.1.1. Background of the problem**

Unlike OAU, the AU seeks unity not only among the states but also among the people of Africa. Basic approaches to acquaint with the people lies principally in culture than politics and economics: the later two involve power and monetary exchange which are chiefly manipulated by individuals and specific organizations but the earlier one engages symbolic exchange which would genuinely make the wider mass an active agent. The AU's new features from its predecessor are believed to be incorporation of the right to interfere in member states and defend human rights of the people.

Eventual unifications which was passionately proclaimed in Accra in 2007 as United States of Africa already proposed to have a single monetary and military system. The AU again seems to like the idea of sticking on the century old discourses of politics and economics of the continent which does not necessarily seek the active participation of the mass but few elites to talk about them relentlessly. The AU, despite the change in the aforementioned names(from Charters to Constitutive Acts) and paradigms(from leaders to people), is awfully resembling with the OAU in its procedural structures.

The thesis is not taking a Parsonian position that culture rules the economy and polity. However, the Marxist sentiment of the economy rules and the politicians sentiment of politics rules are extensively tried in the history of Africa, especially since the 1960's. In the 70's -'self-sufficiency and democratic national development', in the 80's -'development and SAP through Brittonwood institutes', in the 90's -'good governance & decentralization', and in the 21<sup>st</sup> century the Neo-liberalism of the questionable NEPAD were and are greatly invested in polity and economy which barely gave and are giving space for public rituals whether to re-affirm or reject these embarrassingly unsuccessful policies, strategies and actions. In fact, the better way to win this debate is to assert that *set of arrangements in one arena can penetrate and modify arrangements in the others and their relative effectivity vary across history and geography*. However, due to the principal objective of the African Union and the historical experiences of Africa investing too much time in polity and economy, this must be the time to look for the people and their intricate traditional and cultural existence. This is not the time for individuals but the collectives and *collectivities are not embodied in quite the way that individuals are*. We

*have to be made to feel 'we'.<sup>2</sup>* . This thesis made its central emphasis on this claim. Otherwise, repeated accentuations on the monetary and military disregarding the equivalent representation of culture would be an 'internal colonization' by any internal or external agent *in which the steering systems of the economy and the polity invade the cultural arena of the life-world by means of monetarization and juridification.*<sup>3</sup>

Consequently, if it is agreed that the collectives should be the central targets, this study asks two very crucial questions regarding the necessary link that is apparently required between the collectives and the organization.

1. Do the people know the AU? not its existence(in fact there may be the possibility that many people've never heard its name before) but its goals and meanings of goals.
2. Do and will they recognize it? Respective of the thesis's argument that in the current global order cultural assertiveness is increasingly booming and the attempt to accommodate *common interest perspectives* would be too difficult to attain than usual since recognition comes after interest or to borrow Huntington's expression 'interest politics presupposes identity'<sup>4</sup>.

In other words, what the thesis re-affirmed is that the AU needs legitimacy of all the peoples of Africa especially in the first two decades of the twenty first century more than any other thing. Legitimacy, when it is traditional legitimacy, asks the above mentioned innocent, simple but too decisive questions than the intricate discourses of economics and politics.

The researcher chose a recent study which was commissioned by the executive council of the AU that its central target was to report on the potential benefits of an 'African federation' which of course is, for most its part, fetched from the Constitutive Acts of the AU, and among the stated goals of the AU, as noted in June 2006 'Study on the union government of Africa', is found the following important statement.

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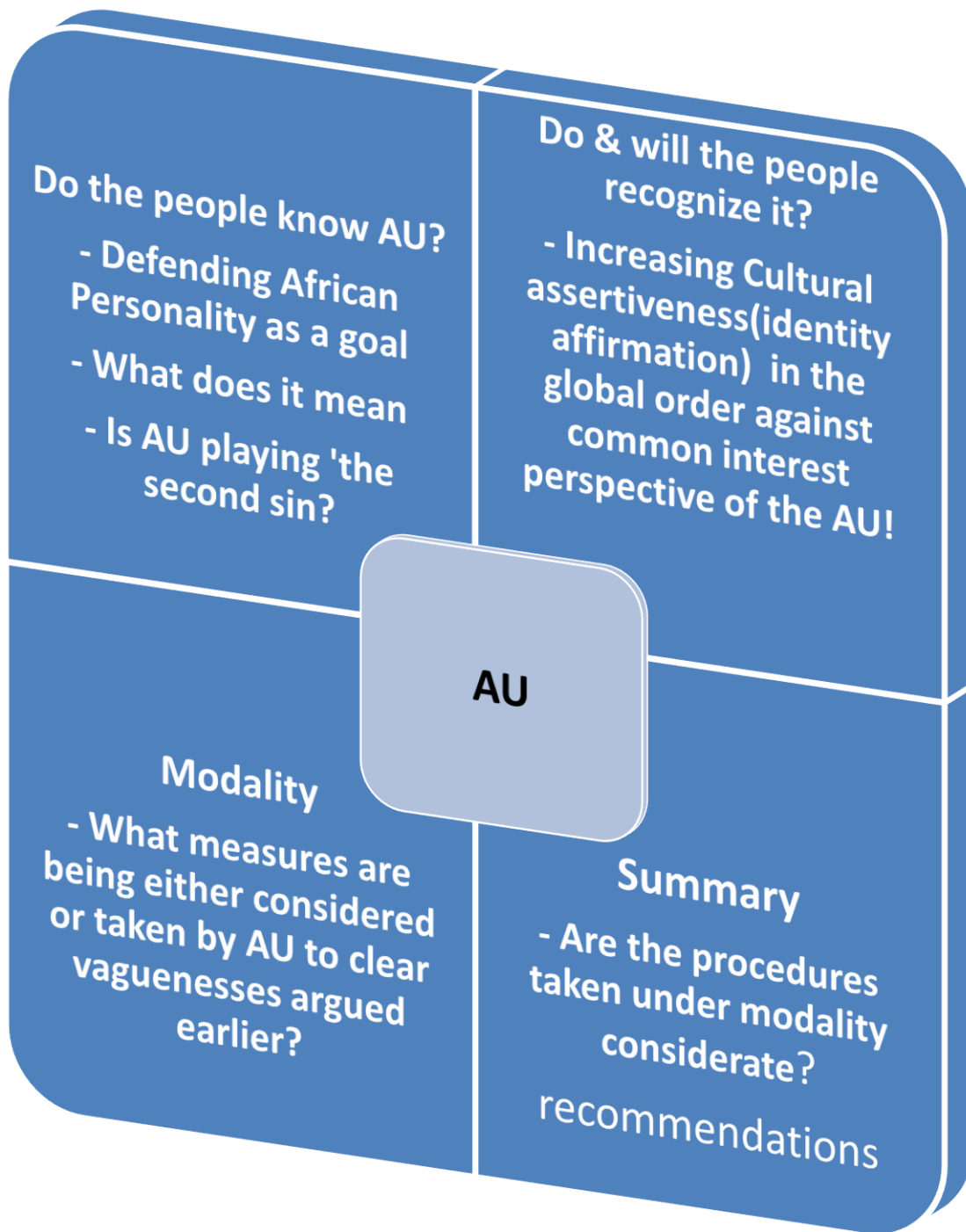
<sup>2</sup> Jenkins, R. (2008). *Social Identity*. NY: Routledge.

<sup>3</sup> Habermas. (1987.) One of its theories in internal colonization, retrieved from Waters, M. (2007). *Globalization*. NY: Routledge.

<sup>4</sup> Huntington, S. (2002). *The clash of Civilization and the remaking of world order*, Free Press.

*‘Thus, the goal in pursuing development through a common interest perspective is to bring about human progress in Africa; restore human dignity to the African people and give Africa a voice in the global order; promote progressive African social and political values and **defend the African personality**’.*

The researcher tried to reconsider two segments of this statement based on the aforementioned basic questions; *Do the people know the AU(goals and their meanings)?* and *Do and will the people recognize it(Does and will the AU provide a common interest perspective which’d certainly compel the mass to recognize it)?*



**Fig. 1.1. A matrix chart on how the general structure of this study is organized**

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Due to the intricacies of the situations in Africa and issues concerning socio-economic, political and cultural agendas regarding African people swiftly change as interests of different world powers change in the global power system. Accordingly, the problem of mystifying semantics as a problem of shadowing meanings of goals would not be an issue of a thesis a decade before, for the very reason that it is newly re-propagated by the new AU after half a century of its oblivion.

Not only Africa but the world is also trying to cop up with problems which sprang, in one way or another way, from the cultural assertiveness like ethnic fundamentalism and religious resurgences than before. Thus the study will answer the following questions:

- Will not the reaction to globalization, i.e., cultural assertiveness have a decisive role in shaping the future politics of Africa than the much said globalization?
- Looking the AU as an open community, does it have mechanisms to handle the complexities of different interest groups in Africa while respecting their interests to express their authorities in such a way?
- Provided that African personality is one alternative offered by the AU to guarantee the unity of African people, doesn't it a mere complication and mystification which blocked the mass from having a clear meaning of goals?
- How will the Pan African Parliament(PAP) respond to such dilemma?

## **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of the study is to find out how the AU devised mechanisms to cop up challenges of assertiveness of different societies of Africa in the global order and to show how dangerous mystifications were done and the problems of these lexical mystifications by an exclusionary group in locating a clear meaning of goal.

The specific objectives are;

- ❖ Assess the effects of the other side of globalization, cultural assertiveness, in creating a voice of African peoples in the global order.
- ❖ Examine the modalities or the procedures taken by the cultural council in considering such future challenges.
- ❖ Inspect to what extent are these elitist constructions and confusions tried to be simplified or even considered by the Pan-African Parliament.

## **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The study drives its significance from the fact that international institutions(Africans and ‘Externals’) like the UN, Britton-woods institutions, Donors, the G8 and ‘International communities’ which are organized to ‘sort out’ the problems of African continent have played their own role in complicating problems than before. The AU along with NEPAD took the place to resist such involvedness and sort problems ‘genuinely’ at the verge of twenty century and the commencement of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. NEPAD’s uneasy relationship with the AU is still questionable. It’s Neo-liberal policy framework is increasingly suspected as the continuation of the so-called Structural Adjustment Program by ‘Externals’ since the main targets are foreign donors like the G8.<sup>5</sup> Hence, such studies which scrutinize the meaning of goals and objectives set in one of these international organization i.e. the AU would be too much help in clearing suspicions, confusions and complication for the better of not only the organizations but also to a large extent the wider public. Thus, the study would hopefully have the following principal contributions.

- ✓ The study will clearly show how goals of the AU are mystified which will greatly help the concerned bodies in the organization to clarify such confusions so that they could narrow the

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<sup>5</sup> Bujra.(2004).

gap between the wider mass which simply means going half-way the road to the home of African people.

✓ It will address this core challenge for the organization especially the Pan-African Parliament in facilitating its goals to reach the people of Africa and the so-called civil societies.

✓ It will predict the future challenges of self-assertiveness against the much said unity which the AU will most likely face and show what preparations are undergoing to win over such challenges on behalf of the cultural council of the ECOSOCC.

✓ Researchers who will be interested to work on challenges of the African Union will acquire clear gnosis on conceptual mystifications and new cultural challenges which are *African personality* discourse and *cultural assertiveness* in the new global order respectively. Generally it shares key knowledge on such issues.

## **1.5 Limitation of the Study**

1. Due to the vastness of the subject matter while assessing the impacts of cultural assertiveness upon the unity of Africa (be it real or imagined) the study may not largely address language paradigms. Interested researchers who will make this study in the list of their archives are invited to broaden their views by considering this perspective.

2. The study initially targeted the ECOSOCC and the PAP of the AU to present questions and arguments and to get relevant response. However, since the PAP is found in Midrand, Johannesburg the researcher would be obliged to send his questionnaires via email.

## **1.6 Research Methodology**

### **1.6.1 Type of the Study**

The study is a descriptive study. It employs qualitative methods to gather data from the ECOSOCC. Since the study textual analysis and will not incorporate numerical data in its investigation in all stages it will only use qualitative methods.

### **1.6.2 Sources of Data**

Both primary and secondary data will be used to generate data needed by the study but the study will highly rely on secondary sources like relevant documents, books, journals, websites, etc.

### **1.6.3 Data Gathering Strategies**

After the textual analysis are done procedures and considerations by the organization will be evaluated from the data that will be gathered from concerned bodies from the ECOSOCC and the PAP.

The following data gathering instruments will be used in the study.

### **1.6.4 Questionnaires**

Open ended questionnaires will be used in English language to gather data. This instrument is used because open ended questionnaire provides greater depth than is possible with a totally structured questionnaire.

### **1.6.5 Data Gathering Procedures**

The researcher will distribute and collect questionnaires. Since the questionnaire is an open ended type and will be aided with discussions: the participants will not necessarily be given general guidelines on how best they could feel the questionnaire.

### **1.6. 6 Data Analysis**

The type of analysis used in this thesis will be Hermeneutical Analysis where meaning of event/text in context (historical, social, cultural etc.) will be carried out using interpretive technique in which the researcher's impression will be dominantly used but based on a very plausible argument driven from plausible materials and events. The data obtained from interviews held with concerned people in the organization will be treated qualitatively.

# Chapter 2: Premises of the Thesis's Arguments and Review of Literature

## 2.1. Do the People Know the AU?

### 1. Defending African Personality as a Goal and what does it really signify?

*/promote progressive African social and political values and defend the African personality./*  
*June 2006. AU*

This thesis makes its contemplation using a counter-narrative<sup>6</sup> first on the notion of African personality which was and still is prominent in the African intellectual history, and would reveal the *partiality, inadequacy* and *provisionality* of this grand-theory in the consecutive chapters.

African personality is generally a taken for granted concept which is believed to be a profound symbol of unity among Africans; this is why Nkrumah stated it as *a sense of oneness in that we are Africans*, and is the very reason that AU passionately proclaim itself as a defender of this concept from a profound interest of creating an organizational identity. What the thesis argued is that AU is not clearly known by the wider mass by presenting the dilemma of even the taken for granted term 'the African personality' as a microcosm for the puzzlement of many other terms, procedures, objectives, goals and statements of AU.

To clearly demystify this phrase, to evidently scrutinize its purposes through different courses and to make a precise judgment upon its contemporary use we should necessarily trace back to historical events and their respective discourses. To make things not boring and less complicated, beginning this analysis with the organized form of the Pan-African struggle would rather be a better option than simply incorporate the whole story of the struggle of the black race.

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<sup>6</sup> A term from Foucault, counter-narratives are ways of analyzing and critiquing dominant discourses by revealing the partiality, inadequacy and provisionality of overarching grand theories to make transparent the relations of power behind specific claims to truth. Ashcroft B., Griffiths G., and Tiffin H. (2007). Post-Colonial Studies. NY: Routledge.

One's endeavor to find the fundamental and the most dominant conception behind those scholarly organized Pan-African movements will eventually take him/her to the much said but tactfully mystified idea called African personality; subjected to many illusive renderings particularly when it comes to accomplish the needs of the elites and intellectuals of Africa; African nationalism and African union respectively of which only the earlier one had served at least its chief goal of temporal nationalism which never lasted long, and the later still struggling to make sense of its own zombie like existence for more than half a century.

The following graphical representation of African Personality with its respective discourses would further assist the reader to discern each of the major events and their relationship vis a vis African personality conception and accordingly offers a rather better and clearer picture to follow the evolving conceptions behind this African personality with the major changing events.

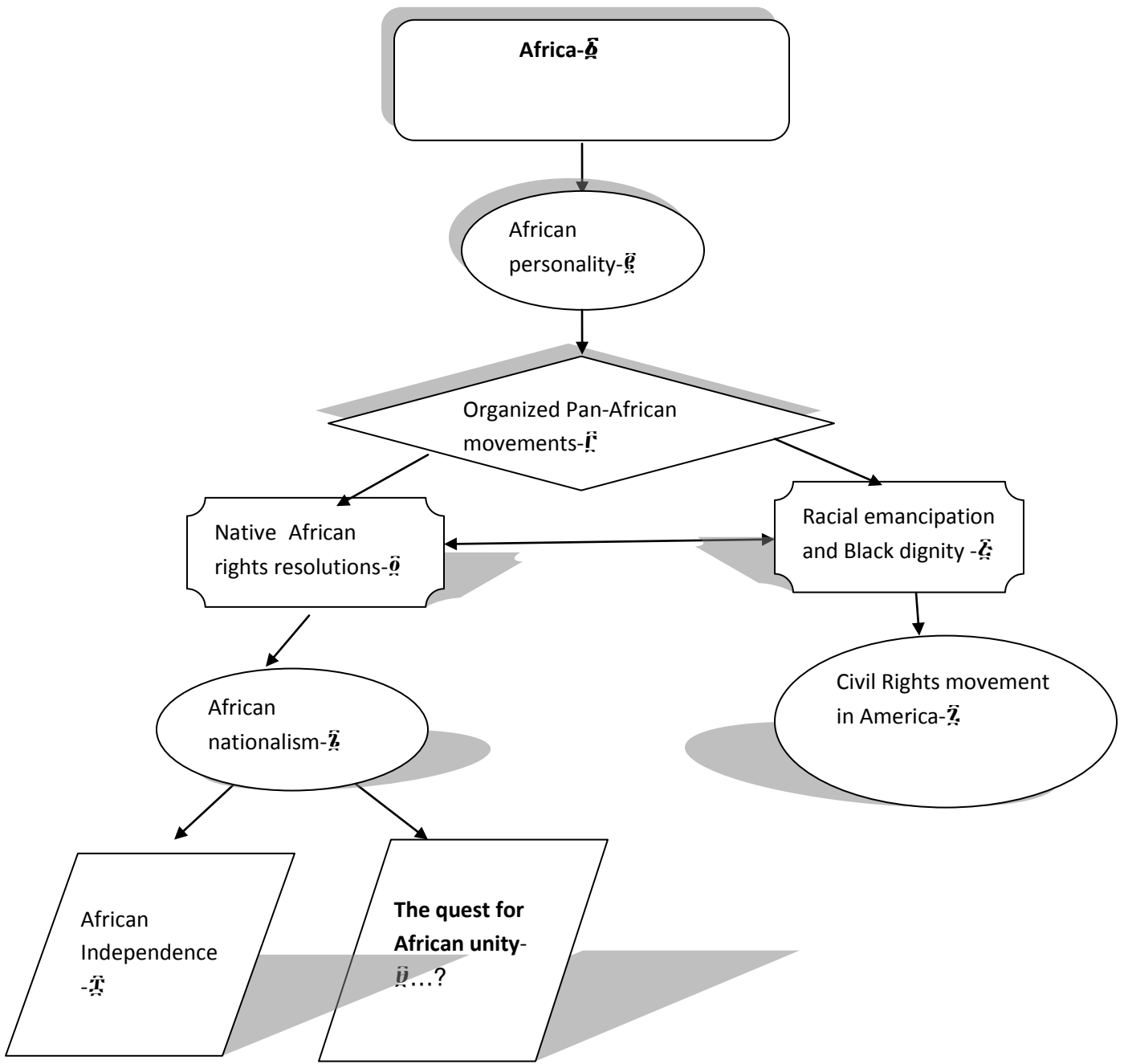


Fig. 2.1. African personality and its relationship with major events

## **6. Africa**

Since the landing of the first ship of slaves on the shores of Africa there was a bitter struggle for self-definition, mostly from the point of view of the other. Many accounts of slaves are testimonies for such claims and the one which was written by Olaudah Equiano imparts as the best experience in its own way.<sup>7</sup> When he (Equiano) looked round the ship, black people chained together, their faces with a clear expression of 'dejection and sorrow' he no longer doubted his severe fate; not only felt this fear deep down inside but he, for the first time made a struggle with himself for a new realm of definition. He tried to define the 'hollow looking ship, the death like face of white people and the shrieking, groaning and dying black people who possessed similar physiognomic structure with him.

Not only Equiano but every other slave who was part of such a tragic event of humankind dared to ask the most basic question a man can ask, 'who am I?', intermingled with it, there was a feeling of the dehumanizing alienation he was subjected to and many other intricacies of slavery. Alienation now instigates the questions of 'self', home and 'the other' which compelled him to make distinctions between his owner and himself. The first thing that came to his mind was color. Color became the imaginary line which divided between the oppressed and the oppressor and surely made sense of questions of self and home. Subsequently, he felt a bitter homesickness which mercilessly troubled his innocent heart: here home was perceived as the place for his ultimate redemption, his earth heaven, the distant land where he would be his own owner and his land, et cetera, et cetera. Then, some day, he must've heard the strange name of that far away land called Africa from his owners (the word Africa itself was alien to Africans. It is a Roman name for Carthage or the current day Tunisia<sup>8</sup>) and hence he apparently identified himself as an African. Pan-Africanism was then generally accepted as the sum total of such feelings!

Nobody knew the name Pan-Africanism for the next 300 years from that very first day of the beginning of European slave trade but the aforementioned articulation about the outlooks of slaves could offer us a strong illustration that Pan-Africanism's central notions were in their existence long before the conceptions of the twenty century Pan African meetings and movements. Sooner or later, it is necessary to have in mind this historical construction of the

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<sup>7</sup> Equiano O. (1789). The interesting life of Gustavus Vasa or Olaudah Equiano, The African.

<sup>8</sup> Abdelmadji Retrieved in 2012 from the [www.coogal.com](http://www.coogal.com)

term Africa itself which, according to Abdellmadji, is only an ‘inter-subjective’ existence of Africa, in which to talk about Africa requires that ‘we situate ourselves in relations to a shared reality’; slavery and colonialism. However, every political, social, economical and cultural discourses were and are founded on this wrong presumption of Africa as a unit system.

The origin of Africanism is purely African but clearly Africans from the outside; Carribeans and African Americans. That is why Bankie passionately wrote that;

*The Black had neither knowledge nor concrete links with the African continent other than the colour of their skin. Hence the birth of what is called ‘Africanism’ based on their African descent – but only with Black Africa in mind.*<sup>9</sup>

## **§. African Personality**

Blyden saw the aforementioned gaps. The search for the imagined missing link which could connect and unify all the souls of African people is then started. The earliest recordings concerning this African Personality terminology are found in the works of Wilmont Edward Blyden: “If you surrender your personality, you have nothing to give the world”.<sup>10</sup> He is considered as the root cause which marked him, in Robert W. July's words, ‘a leading early African nationalist and the most articulate exponent of the philosophy of African nationalism.’<sup>11</sup> After his profound experience in Africa his impressions are changed from Christian Abolitionist view, a mere belief that the sons of Ham(the natives of Africa) should absorb Christianity in order to reconstruct their continent, to a Nativist and promulgator of African Personality in which Africans have their own culture and religion which is capable of plausible reconstructions in a much difficult and not affirming way. Readings of his life would give us the right picture why he endeavored to make strong attempts of self-definition, in fact not from the point of view of the other but from the point of view of the self; realizing the fact that the familiar Eurocentric

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<sup>9</sup> B.F Bankie, Short Story of Pan-African movement, 2010.

<sup>10</sup> Lynch Hollis, Black Spokesman Selected Published Writings of Edward Wilmot Blyden,1971. In Viera P. Vilhanova

<sup>11</sup> Robert W. July, —Nineteenth-Century Negritude: Edward W. Blyden, *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (1964), 74. In Travel and Pan-African Imaginations.

discourses of race distinction could be counter argued through his new paradigms. His first argument was that race is not simply a biological construct but also a construct of other essential characteristics mainly of culture and religion. So Blyden needed to provide justifications for his new contention by proclaiming a new terminology which propagated the idea that each major races have a peculiar type of humanity; so do Africans and called this African personality. The lack of the awareness of this African personality, Blyden preached, made the Negro race

*'to unconsciously imbibe the conviction that to be a great man, he must be like the white man. He is not brought up—however he may desire it—to be the companion, the equal, the comrade of the white man, but his imitator, his ape, his parasite. To be himself in a country where everything ridicules him, is to be nothing—less, worse than nothing. To be as [much] like the white man as possible—to copy his outward appearance, his peculiarities, his manners, the arrangement of his toilet, that is the aim of the Christian Negro—that is his aspiration'.<sup>12</sup>*

His attempts embraced self-definition with a strong sense of self pride and many more critiques on the deteriorating Christian culture. However, not only Blyden but also many other scholars and intellectuals could not clearly define the African personality or at least persuasively described it (this will be widely discussed later under Hermeneutics of African personality and its purpose of unity.) What might be called a better, cautious and more summarized but more general notion of the intricate African Personality is found in Blyden's letter to Booker T. Washington as

*'...the supple, yielding, conciliatory, obedient, gentle, patient, musical spirit that is not full of offensive resistance - how sadly the white man needs it!...'*

Such an escapist definition of the characteristics of African Personality is what made the idea a subject of either mystifications or too many incoherent definitions but still vaguely hold a place not as one of but as the most important pillar of African unity. No doubt that it greatly influenced prominent personalities of the Caribbean and African American intellectuals and Pan Africanists

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<sup>12</sup> Blyden, E. W., (1967). *Christianity, Islam and the Negro race*. Edinburgh: University Press.

that all their works in one way or another way incorporated his basic thoughts, and with some of them he even had a close intimacy like Alexander Crummell and Booker T. Washington, and some other Pan-Africanists witnessed his speeches in New York and other American states. Some cases can be pin pointed:

1. Marcus Garvey's famous slogans 'Back to Africa' and 'Africa for Africans' were often used by Blyden in his stay in the United States. In the book 'Philosophy and opinions of Marcus Garvey' every reader encounters the very idea of Blyden's African personality thesis. While Garvey tried to depict the reason for the difference between the strong and the weak race he held the believe that it is largely because the strong race seem to know themselves; seem to discover themselves; seem to realize and know fully themselves.<sup>13</sup> In case somebody here asks what is really the thing to know as a part of that particular race then he will be stunned when he found out that Garvey's answers were remarkably similar with Blyden's perceptions. The following statement by Garvey affirm this assumption: "I believe that all races have their peculiar characteristics so did the Negro"! Garvey claimed that a man will do a great work in his "race's uplift"(to use his own phrase) if he knows his race's *peculiar endowments*.

2. Blyden's colleague Alexander Crummell who was one of the dominant figures in the struggle for the occurrence of Pan-African spirit was also influenced by Blyden. Most of the sermons that Alexander Crummell make have essences of Blyden's perceptions and in Wilson Jermiah's work<sup>14</sup> one could get an evidence of how other young African American intellectuals were in turn influenced by Alexander Crummell, among them Du Bois was the aforementioned one.

3. Du Bois- We all know that Du Bois is a personality who relentlessly worked for Africa and organized the first Pan African congress in 1919. In Ghana he made a famous speech which mentioned that the task of Africans was the struggle for personality.

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<sup>13</sup> Garvey, E. J. (2004). Philosophy and opinions of Marcus Garvey, PP.57.

<sup>14</sup> Moses, W. J. Creative Conflict in African American Thought: Frederick Douglass, Alexander Crummell, Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Du Bois, and Marcus Garvey. Cambridge University Press.

Du Bois in his interesting book “The souls of black folk” opulently wrote about the baffling ‘twoness’ of African Americans as

*It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this 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. One ever feels his two-ness,—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.*<sup>15</sup>

All the double consciousness, all the two-nesses, all the un-reconciled strivings can very simply be deciphered by the key concept of Blyden’s African personality concept: Man of a negro race is a man who has his own peculiar characters but who is sadly subjected to look this unique personality through the glasses of the other race’s peculiar qualities.

This can simply be a good evidence how this African historian and thinker was a true instigator of the concept of Pan-Africanism and influenced those Pan-Africanists. This is one of the reasons why scholars agreed that ‘much of the literature asserted in the Pan-African’ movement is initiated outside Africa;<sup>16</sup> starting from Blyden himself who was from small Danish Island in the Caribbean to Alexander Crummell, Du Bois, Garvey, Washington, etc.

## **᠙- Organized Pan-Africanism**

Despite its questionability, Many scholars agreed that the term Pan-Africanism entered in the formal political lexicon by a Trinidadian man called H. Sylvester Williams.<sup>17</sup> This is a man who organized the first historical meeting of Pan-African Conference in 1900 which called for the ending of racial discriminations and the undue land stealing pursued by colonizers on the native Africans. This meeting is believed to be the pre-cursor of the following consecutive Pan-African

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<sup>15</sup> Du Bois. W. E. (2007). *The Souls of Black Folk*. NY: Oxford University Press.

<sup>16</sup> Te’ a, T. (2010). *Issues in the Historiography of Africa*. Mentioning Ajala 1982, Drake 1958, Legum 1962, Shepperson 1960.

<sup>17</sup> Bankie, B. F. (2010). *A Short Story of Pan-African Movement*. Sithole N. (1958). *African Nationalism*. Kwame Nkrumah, K. (1963). *Africa must Unite*.

Congress meetings, and hence all the next Pan-African congresses are marked by a continuum of the same spirit of Pan-Africanism engrossed with ‘a continental demand of racial equality and exploitation of personnel’: such can be confirmed by the resolutions which are passed in each of the meetings, to pin point:

A. The 1919 resolution demanded the natives of Africa and the people of African descent be governed according to ‘principles’ stated under land, capital, labor, education and the state categories, which begged for the same Pan-African assertions of fighting the Western idea of the ‘human-lessness’ of Africans and the ‘Negro’ race in general. Again the resolutions adopted by the 1921, the 1923 and the 1927 Pan-African Congress meetings are almost similar in their essences<sup>18</sup> except that in the meeting of 1921 Marcus Garvey’s ‘Declaration Of Human rights’ was tactfully incorporated in the so called ‘London Manifesto’. There can be no other rationale to offer than it was because the general interest of the participants of the meeting was highly influenced by Garvey’s UNIA movement which reached its climax in 1920. This, accordingly, could give us details about ‘the original theme’ of Pan-Africanism or any other Africanism movements which are initiated by Blacks outside Africa as a reaction against the racial discrimination through Africanism as a means of reviving Black man’s dignity and freedom and eventually return to their roots. Similar meetings were held in 1921, 1923 and 1927 with similar agendas.

B. The 1945 Manchester Pan-African Congress is believed to be the most significant congress ever, ‘considering the manner in which it addressed the question of colonialism and set the independence movement in first gear.’<sup>19</sup> This can be right, provided that it considered the principal problem of Africa, independence, which is the central figure in the discourse of Pan-Africanism. Yet this completely shifted the gear of Pan-Africanism which was perpetuated for centuries to another intensity. This is the ideal imaginary line that divided the principal interest of African Americans and Afro-Caribbean from their ‘native’ African brothers. Drained from its principal interest and the original essence of Pan-Africanism, in this case racial emancipation and dignity for the black race of the world, the notion became subjected to many different renderings and exploitations: central ideas and central figures took different paths, both perhaps for better.

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<sup>18</sup> Legum, C. (1975). In: Readings in African Political thought.

<sup>19</sup> Bankie, B. F. (2010). A Short Story of Pan-African Movement.

Nonetheless, one big phrase behind it was deliberately mystified by the African elites and intellectuals for the advantages of their dreams, which was partly their peoples' also, and which still follows the same tradition in the African union; African Personality. It was this time where it took a newer phase.

In the graphical representation (page 3), it clearly shows how the central figure and the central idea followed two distinctive paths. Take a look at  $\bar{I}$ , it showed what two major resolutions the organized pan African movement provided; racial emancipation and right for native Africans. The two boxes,  $\bar{Q}$  and  $\bar{Z}$  are connected by a double arrow line to explain how both were indispensable to each other: racial emancipation needs self definition and self-definition, clearly then, seeks to find a persuasive justification of its racial pride which in turn leads to self-affirmations to ones root or a process of looking back, and in this process of looking back the ultimate picture to look at would be Africa. The Pan-Africanists (The African Americans and the Afro-Caribbean) knew this truth, devoid of questions about this ultimate picture, Africa, the whole space in the movement would have been frighteningly masqueraded with vacuity, would miss the initial definition disgustingly, i.e the peculiarity of the Negro race and consequently its African Personality. This was inevitably a must and hence those people did it carefully. Therefore, despite many different attempts are made to define it and there had been no universally accepted definition of Pan-Africanism. All these can be summoned through Ezedibe's affirming definition as a political and cultural phenomenon that regarded Africans and their descendants abroad as a unit.

However, subsequently phase  $\bar{Q}$  and  $\bar{Z}$  took different passages; African Personality culminated at one end and rejuvenated at the other, one accomplished a prominent victory through its American Civil Rights movement ( $\bar{Z}$ ) and the other achieved freedom ( $\bar{Q}$ ) but failed to answer its ambitious goal of unity, one not only was geographically but spiritually alienated from the other, and the other no more needed one's assistance because what was left was 'a home work'. The home work was democracy and prosperity to the people and it was a complete failure. The other home work was unity, it also seems a failure! In fact, only the later one is the concern of this paper; why it seems a failure and the lameness of 'the newly formulated' African Personality which seemed strong when it comes to create 'African nationalism' but impotent towards creating any kind of unity.

## **2.1.1 When the new African Personality serves two different purposes ( $\bar{\mathcal{T}}$ and $\bar{\mathcal{U}}$ )**

### 2.1.1.1 African Nationalism and the *provisionality* of African personality

The Post-Colonial studies key guide mentioned Timothy Bernal's expression of the history of nationalism from Bhaba as follows;

*'Even though [nationalism] as an ideology . . . came out of the imperialist countries, these countries were not able to formulate their own national aspirations until the age of exploration. The markets made possible by European imperial penetration motivated the construction of the nation-state at home. European nationalism was motivated by what Europe was doing in its far-flung dominions. The 'national idea', in other words, flourished in the soil of foreign conquest.(Bhabha 1990: 59)'*

African nationalism is more than a debatable issue. Nationalism is a foreign lexicon which coined its origin in Europe and then imitated by Caribbean Africans and African American nationalists who used it as a major political strategy in order to put certain influences in the white dominated world before it took a root in Africa. Many of the dominant figures in early African nationalism, such as Alexander Crummell, were ex-slaves or the children of slaves who had their ideas of nationalism formed in the struggle for African-American freedom.<sup>20</sup>

The formation of 'nation-states' is also a notion which came from outside. Colonialism itself is a force which unified different ethnic groups together to form one state. This colonialism was taken unanimously as a kind of "'sentiment' as Mazrui wrote it mentioning Nyrere's position.

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<sup>20</sup> Ashcroft B., Griffiths G., and Tiffin H. (2007). Post-Colonial Studies. NY: Routledge.

*‘One need not go into the history of colonisation of Africa, but that colonisation had one significant result. A sentiment was created on the African continent—a sentiment of oneness.’*

That is why, writers affirmed ‘Without colonialism, the Ewe, Yoruba, Kikuyu, and Chagga, among others, would have maintained their ethnic identities, but they would not have become Ghanaians, Nigerians, Kenyans or Tanzanians, respectively.’<sup>21</sup>

But when this sentiment was over conflicts became inevitable. The nationalism which was there at the struggle against colonialism was a state-based nationalism. But the states were not only constructed by grouping disparate ethnic groups but also by dividing many ethnic groups into different several states and thus disrupted the structures of these ethnic groups which resulted and are still resulting intense socio-political instability. The formation of states in Africa could be the transplantation of the ‘neo-Westphalian’ institution of state sovereignty into Africa in which political leaders commanded a lot of power because they were thought to have been ordained by God.<sup>22</sup>

In the African case, the people struggled for independence but It was on the hands political leaders where sovereignty is vested because they used other forms of divination to make their power mystical which this study address it as ‘elitist mystification’ using their cosmopolitan academic erudition.

African nationalism could trace its sense of existence back again to Blyden;

*‘My heart is in Liberia, and longs for the welfare of Africa. An African nationality is the great desire of my soul. I believe nationality to be an ordinance of nature; and no people can rise to an influential position among the nations without a distinct and efficient nationality. Cosmopolitanism has never effected any thing, and never will,*

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<sup>21</sup> Makinda, S. M., & Okumu, W. (2008). *The African Union: Challenges of globalization, security and governance*. New York: Routledge.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid

*perhaps till the millennium. God has 'made of one blood all nations of men,' but he has also 'determined the bounds of their habitation.'*<sup>23</sup>

And this, greatly influenced most of the elites of the liberation period Africa. Such nationalism is cultural nationalism which presupposes that there is a culture which is characteristically African, *a part of Blyden's African Personality discourse*, and which indeed was the starting point of modern African political thought.<sup>24</sup> It was not a self-justified conception which made its basis upon a logic of intrinsic value rather a counter formation. It was self-affirmation to ones own culture in order to show that Africans were not human-less creatures; an answer prepared for 'the civilized Christian' world not of course for the African. The thing that the Cultural nationalists did was to equally lecture the concept of African nationalism based on cultural peculiarity of the African, which also again is African personality, to both parties; the colonized illiterate people and the colonizer literate one: with a presupposition that the earlier would give them his life for the anti-colonial struggle and the later his trust on their ability to provide him different but plausible nation formation thesis. Indeed, victory came; the colonized fought and liberated his country but it took little time for him(not more than a decade in most cases) to realize that the nationalists' sentiment other than the anti-colonial victory it achieved is suppressing and denying his minority voice. He, then, waged war against the nationalists and became a new self-appointed elite who stacked at the idea of ethnic identity. The only thing he accepted was the idea of African unity and no body asked what makes him so generous when it comes to accepting African unity.

At the time of struggle for liberation most African elites(particularly most West African elites) were busy of searching similar ideologies in order to create such nationalist feelings on their people. Starting from the 1900 Pan-African Conference to the formation of the Organization of African Union nationalism was pursuing its evolution from Negro/Black nationalism to African nationalism but time and time again what was renounced was the Negro's/Black's/African possession of a unique personality which is a unifying chemistry of the Black race of the world, even including those who live in the Fiji Islands.

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<sup>23</sup> Blyden, E. W., (1862). *Liberia's Offering: Being Addresses, Sermons, Etc.* New York: John A. Gray, Printer, Stereotype, and Binder. In: Mudimbe, 1988.

<sup>24</sup> Mutiso G. C. M. , and Rohio SW. (1975) *Readings in African Political Thought*, Lusaka: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.

Consequently, the OAU whose main interest was liberation and territorial integrity hold its historical place on May 25, 1965 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Nkrumah's transnational unity was cleverly out of favor and the collective efforts made by many elites and intellectuals to redefine African Personality so as to create a unitary Africa was dumped. Fear of coup de'tats and internal and trans-territorial struggle for power and other intricacies made the OAU to be much concerned for the leaders welfare than the people. Disguised itself with a flunky model of sovereignty, it perpetuated the idea of 'non-interference in the internal affairs of other states' even when the leaders slaughter their own people for 39 years.

OAU was mocked as a mutual preservation club<sup>25</sup> and totally forgot its pledge to coordinate and strengthen cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for the people of Africa, and the promotion of international cooperation having due regard for the Universal Declaration of Human Right. Too many people died due to controllable diseases, poverty devastated their lives, bad governance and corruption rule the whole continent and the mass was no more in the agenda of the OAU in its practical sense of the word.

*Despite broad rhetorical support for unity, Pan-Africanism was not the dominant discourse at the formation of the OAU.*<sup>26</sup>

African personality and the old Pan-Africanism discourses were arrested in those years as if they never served those elites to initiate their fellow country women and men for the so-called nationalism and eventually succumb to their discourses of liberation.

So the melting of the OAU did not only create the crystallized AU in 2002, it rejuvenated the African Personality and Pan-Africanism lexicons. It is a conceptual paradigmatic change too; to reach to the wider people of Africa, to rename the legacy of its predecessor and to challenge again the global politics of the post cold-war world. It looks like the contemporary of the earlier Pan-Africanism movement which made a clash against the universal ordination of the West's cultural and racial superiority. The people are needed now and unity is called again, but of course

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<sup>25</sup> Makinda, S. M. & Okumu, F. W. (2008) *The African Union: Challenges of globalization, security and governance*, NY: Routledge.

<sup>26</sup> Sturman, K. (2007). 'New growth on deep roots' Prospects for an African Union government.

via this same African personality discourse. Such approach seems a giant step towards the people<sup>27</sup> but it still reverse that same mutual preservation club and complicate any effort to increase the participation of the wider public in many activities of the AU.

Since the type of nationalism was widely on the basis of Pan-African nationalism<sup>28</sup> or at least the people who piloted the liberation struggle are geared with it, the African personality discourse, very circuitously, well served its goal: it brought indirectly liberation though the feeling of nationalism which never lasted long. This is the *provisional* character of African personality in which its implication in one way or another way served its goal temporarily.

The seemingly tough question that could be asked here may be how could African nationalism which was obliquely nurtured by African personality thesis brought independence along with many other reasons which brought liberation but not a truer nationalism and then continental unity?

Supposition 1. African nationalism which made its basis on cultural nationalism was often a good enough logic for the people to wage war against the colonizer and create unity among African people. Starting from Blyden to Ephrem Casey Hyford, Nkrumah, Senghor, Kenyatta, N.Azikwe, etc the African identity, African personality, Pan-Africanism, Pan-negro nationalism of Africa, etc contributed a general consensus on colonization among the mind of the mass 'as a process of falsification and *depersonalization of Africans* and by criticizing imperialism as a means of exploitation'.<sup>29</sup> Such thesis waged wars intrinsically in the heart of the ordinary agent of independence before waging practical wars against the colonizer since the bottom line is made

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<sup>27</sup> The 1960s continental unity via the African personality was doomed after the failure of Nkrumah with the Monrovia group and consequently the OAU's vision became exclusive of the direct importance of the people, unlike African personality which calls attention for the mass. In the 70s 'self-sufficiency and democratic national development', in the 80s 'development and SAP through Brittonwood institution', in the 90s 'good governance & decentralization' were the visions of OAU which were done by the elites without active participation of the people before their implementations. The new vision of defending the African personality is a paradigmatic change which seems to leave a considerable space for the people but the study rises questions on the ambiguous lucidity of this goal upon creating a profound common 'Africanism'.

<sup>28</sup> Kwame Nantambu defines Pan-African Nationalism as "the national, unified struggle and resistance of African peoples against all forms of foreign aggression and invasion. The primary goal of Pan-African Nationalism is the total liberation and unification of all Africans and people of African descent under African communalism. In: Stephen Okhonmina, *The African Union: Pan-Africanist Aspirations and the Challenge of African Unity*, December 2009. *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, vol.3.

<sup>29</sup> Mudimbe, V. Y. (1988.) *The invention of Africa*. London: Indiana University Press.

upon racial or color-line irreconcilable ideologies. Now the meaning of the goal is clear when those theories of propaganda came to the discourse of independence: every black man had to fight against every white man. He(The ordinary African) didn't even discern what nationalism signifies when he was fighting for liberty but he at least had this very clear message along with too many inscrutable hypothesis he could not comprehend; and then he picked the above-mentioned non-confusing message and make himself an active agent of the struggle.

Supposition 2. Liberation is obviously the most profound idea than any other discourse in the world. The colonized would, therefore, preferred to fight for a better and common cause or compelled to shout 'liberty first' and mimic the elite's 'seek ya first the political kingdom' than inquiring a totally incomprehensible or a quasi-perceivable concept. On the way to liberation a sense of oneness and unity which could be suspiciously called temporal nationalism is created. Or otherwise as Fannon wrote,

*'The practice of violence binds them together as a whole, since each individual forms a violent link in the great chain, a part of the great organism of violence which has surged upward in reaction to the settler's violence in the beginning. The groups recognize each other and the future nation is already indivisible. The armed struggle mobilizes the people; that is to say, it throws them in one way and in one direction.'*<sup>30</sup>

Supposition 3. Mass mobilization which followed certain political ideologies might not necessarily need empirical foundations like disciplines of social studies. What Mazrui depicted in his 'Towards a Pax-Africana: A Study of Ideology and ambition'; using Nyerere's the "sentiment of colonization" as a sense which created oneness can be a good impression.

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<sup>30</sup> Fannon, F. (1963). The wretched of the earth. NY: Grove Press.

## African Unity

The definite question here is, from analyzing historical reassertions of African personality, could African Personality bring African people, not their leaders, to unity? It is already mentioned that it is wise to honor the effort that's been made by the new AU to incorporate the African Personality after forty years of its oblivion and such effort is a considerable sign of the AU's goal to embrace the people. Nevertheless, defending an incomprehensive African personality so that it could be simply used to incorporate the mass would genuinely lack not only wit but also innocence.

### 2.1.1.2 Hermeneutics of African Personality and its *inadequacy*

Racial emancipation and independence are characteristically similar in that both are liberation movements and both are natural and their main purpose essentially was struggle against the white world for racial equality and the same white world for liberation. That was why the African personality which lacks clear definition of detailed commonality questions well served these two prominent movements. But, unity is rather a very different story, it needs a clear definition not mystification, needs not only empirical reasons but also clear answers about what makes those 'agents of unity' think that Africa is one.

For years what was happening was to persuade the mass that Africans are one through this African personality fascination and on the way fill the gap of 'the lack of national feeling' among Africans; killing two birds with one stone. It is already mentioned that a temporal national feeling brought independence but not unity, let alone at the continental level but at a national level which exhibited too many ethnic conflicts and civil wars.

The first attempt to transpose the concept of African Personality to a new and magic like ideal which is a manifestation of the 'undeniable' African unity was done by Kwame Nkrumah in his speech of the 1958's conference of independent African States which was held in Accra. He said;

*'Our earnest and passionate desire is to exert through our African personality whatever influence we can to bring on the side of peace in the hope of persuading the two main power blocks to come together to find a peaceful and permanent solutions to their out siding differences within the framework of the charter of the United nations'*

Elites and men of letters, all used African Personality discourse to argue that African unity is a taken for granted concept. They knew they should not bring back old definitions of African personality to a new discourse of African unity because in the discourse of the later the question is not about racial emancipation but being one. Now it seeks persuasive reasoning to explain what inner affinity is there so as to assert that Africans are one beyond their black skin, geographical proximity, common history of slavery and colonialism. So it, in the mind of the plebian citizen, unwittingly takes a shape of a more profound academic question than a simple sentiment of Africanism: ‘Are we really one this way?’ What the elites and ‘Philosopher-presidents’ did was a complete mystification of this ‘sanctified’ word, African Personality, and baffled their people. It sometimes seemed they had a hidden belief that sanctifying a word would create fear in the mind of their ‘illiterate’ people and consequently hush their doubt; a feeling which sprang from a foreign labeling of Africans as child-like, fetishismo and superstitious creatures. It will be more than enough to meditate on the following descriptions of African personality which was done by the 1950’s and 60’s elites and Intellectuals of Africa so as to witness how the mystification was done;

1/. Alex quaison sacky in 1960 wrote that African personality is ‘... *in brief, both a concept and a force; as a concept it is defined by those very cultural movements, in which, as a force, it is embodied. It is a revolutionary philosophical concept- an ideal- and it is best realized in action*’ again on the same book the author stated that ‘*In other words, the concept of the African personality is extremely active and ideal, it is in fact an ideal and like any ideal it is difficult both to define and to realize for it is subject to various interpretations*’.

Yet in another place it is affirmed in a slightly altered but more controversial statement; ‘*But that is(African personality) simply a measure of the African’s dedication: He is(The African) completely committed to embodying his political ideas in action in order both to create and re-create the integral African character.*’<sup>31</sup> This is an appeal to a falsely presupposed ‘common belief of people’ which has no persuasive basis at all and which, in any sense, is not a definition but a bad argument. He couldn’t tell us how a concept that ones was a complete ideal because of its total incomprehensibility not because of its intricacy could be consciously created and re-

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<sup>31</sup> Sackey, A. Q. (1963). Africa Unbound. London: Duetsch Ltd. In: Mutiso G. C. M. , and Rohio SW. (1975) Readings in African Political Thought, Lusaka: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.

created. The researcher strongly believes that the definition of a text which is not capable of comprehension is mystified so that descriptions of its creation and re-creation are also dubious in that they would not be conceivable.

2/. One of the quality or peculiarity of the African(African personality), according to Blyden, is servitude. His theological belief which was deeply and inferiorizingly rooted in his soul, in particular before he made his extensive travel through East-West Africa. This compelled him to passionately regard suffering and servitude as a ‘calling’ of the whole race. He passionately ‘rewarded’ his Negro race such attributes to merely relate them to what he called the ‘Captain of our salvation’, Christ. *Islam, Christianity and the Negro race* imparts us the following valuable confirmation:

*Thus, Ethiopia and Ethiopians, having always served, will continue to serve the world. The Negro is at this moment, the Opposite of the Anglo-Saxon. Those every where serve; these everywhere govern the world. ...And In the light of the ultimate good of the universe I do not see why the calling of the one should be considered the result of the a curse, and the calling of the other the result of a special favor. The one fulfills its mission by domination, the other by submission. The one serves mankind by ruling; the other serves mankind by serving.*

Some notions of African personality thesis made by African Scholars and elites were direct contemporaries of ‘innocent’ arguments of Blyden’s himself which glorified defeatist attitudes as a pleasing excellence of the African. Joseph Ki Zerbo in his work *Pan-Africanism reconsidered* described African personality as

*A great economic Asset, which can, fore example, be translated through human investment, it’s a great political asset consisting of a readiness to share the joys and sorrows of the entire world, to accept others, be they of same race or not, be they of same tribe or not.*<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Ki Zerbo, Joseph. In: <sup>32</sup> Mutiso G. C. M. , and Rohio SW. (1975) *Readings in African Political Thought*, Lusaka: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.

What Ki Zerbo implied as ‘human investment’ and ‘a readiness to share the joys and sorrows of the entire world’ are, to sum up, Blyden’s *servitude* and *suffering* in their very essence in that order.

Blyden’s or Ki Zerbo’s definitions of African personality are way subjective than what a scholarly man can think of and they could and would not create unity in their very implications. To the contrary, however, this shows how the elites of Africa could not create a re-conceptualized version of Blyden’s personality discourse while they were using it for a different purpose, in our case African unity, even some fifty or sixty years later.

Those who could not mystify it or knew how to mystify it but were not interested or those who tried to offer new approaches to this phrase restated Blyden’s original contentions by merely changing words and phrases like revealed above.

3/. Nkrumah who is claimed to be the man who tried to re-define the African personality and gave it a ‘modern’ connotation<sup>33</sup> has done the same attempt that others did by playing his own role at mystifying the subject.

*It is not our colonial past, said Nkrumah, or the fact that we have aims in common, it is something which goes far deeper. I can best describe it as a sense of oneness in that we are Africans.*

Nkrumah, a contemporary of Blyden, admit the difficulties in the multifariousness of the African culture which includes religion and language chiefly. He affirmed this as;

*‘It is true that we have for centuries divided. The territorial boundaries dividing us were fixed long ago, often quite arbitrarily by the colonial powers. Some of us are Moslems, some of us Christians, many believe in traditional tribal gods, some of us speak French, some English, some Portuguese, not to mention the millions who speak only one of the hundreds of different African languages. We have acquired cultural differences which affect our outlook and condition our political development.’*

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<sup>33</sup> Sackey, A. Q. (1963). Africa unbound.

Yet again he used the African personality as a means of unity despite all these differences which is merely an escapist way of choking the many-faced cultural experiences of Africa into a single character, African personality, as follows.

*‘Yet in spite of these, I am convinced that the forces making for unity far outweigh those which divide us ...In practical terms, this deep rooted unity has shown itself in the development of Pan-Africanism, and, more recently, in the projection of the what has been called the African Personality in world affairs.’<sup>34</sup>*

Nkrumah never explained what forces of unity are there which can eclipse forces of division, and the phrase ‘this deep rooted unity has shown itself in the development of Pan-Africanism...’ is an expression which concealed a dubious claim in it. The thesis already argued under the title African nationalism that the unity was temporarily attained because of different reasons than what Nkrumah avowed.

4/. One can easily see how the illusive African personality was a subject of an exploitation of a sugar-coated quasi-corroborative poetic definition of what Africans or Black people mean. Senghor who testified that his Negritude is greatly influenced by Blyden’s African personality<sup>35</sup>, perpetuated the same portrayal of Africans and the Negro race in general as a unit life form, and his Negritude as a manifestation of a collective soul of black people of the world could be considered as an exact parallel of African personality; personality of the African with the soul of the African in particular and the Negro race in general.

*We could assimilate mathematics or the French language, but we could never strip of our black skins or root out black souls. And so we set out on a fervent quest for the ‘holy grail’: our collective soul.’<sup>36</sup>*

Such statement is written with an innocent presupposition which is simulated from Blyden’s African personality and refined through the French political ideology. It is illusive much more than the African personality thesis for it incorporated a seemingly racial self-pride fetched from

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<sup>34</sup>Nkrumah, K. (1963). African Must Unite. In: Mutiso G. C. M. , and Rohio SW. (1975) Readings in African Political Thought, Lusaka: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.

<sup>35</sup> ‘Léopold Sédar Senghor, the father of négritude, called him the foremost precursor both of Négritude and of the African Personality.’ -Senghor’s forward to Lynch mentioned in Viera P. VILHANOV(1988).

<sup>36</sup> Senghor, L.S. (Oct. 1961). What is Negritud? (Excerpts from a speech)

its predecessor, African personality, and self-denial of this same race poisoned with French assimilation theory.

Now one can tell you what kind of conception could be created and re-created from another incomprehensible idea and an intellect which accepted its 'awesome' inferiority; Negritude! It is dangerous, too advantageously exploitive and embarrassing when you pursue such use of your 'greater cosmopolitan knowledge and language' and your political power to take advantage of innocent and 'illiterate' people down the streets. That was why C. A. Diop once said 'Frequently, Negroes of great intellectual capacity remain victims of this alienation, going so far as to try to codify Nazi ideas about a presumed duality of a Negro (sensitive emotive, creator of art) and the white man (above, a creature of rationality). So is it all sincerity that an African Negro poet, L.S.Senghor composed this admirable line of verse 'Emotion est Negre et la raison Hellene'?'<sup>37</sup>,

Vincent Mudimbe while defending Senghor's Negritude thesis mentioned Soyinka's and Towa's accusation of Senghor for his promotion of 'a detestable model for a division of vocations between Africa and Europe, between African and European.'<sup>38</sup> It is no doubt that Mudimbe's sympathy towards Senghor sprang from Sartrean existential sentiment and influence on Negritude that 'I am what I have decided to be' irrespective of its nature of concoction based on vitiated consciousness which excludes the mass. Devoid of the humility of the mass such wrong perceptions of African elites compelled them to first claim the Eurocentric 'I am what I decided to be' and then added their own versions of 'you are what I decided to be' megalomaniac insights. That is the usual mistake done by the intellectuals; trying to tell the people emulate their personalities as if they themselves are the milestones of their peoples' personality. This way, existentialistic discourses will be dangerous specially in a social atomization where individualism has a trivial place. That is why Sartre himself who was the advocate of Negritude later wrote 'Negritude is dedicated itself for its own destruction' and Fannon affirm in despair

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<sup>37</sup> Diop, C. A. (1955). Nations, Negres et Cultures. In: Mutiso G. C. M. , and Rohio SW. (1975) Readings in African Political Thought, Lusaka: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.

<sup>38</sup> Mudimbe, V.Y. (1988). The invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy and the order of knowledge. London: Indiana University Press.

that ‘*There will never be such a thing as black culture*’ and ‘*The passion with which native intellectuals defend the existence of their national culture may be a source of amazement...*’<sup>39</sup>

Those obsessive dangerous summaries on canonizing African personality play a kind of reductionist role and deny the very diverse multicultural nature of the continent and sacrifice this reality for a mere obsession of not only unity but deliberate complications of being an African. In one way or another way one can see how the elite, the scholar, men of letters or generally the definers and the appropriators of this term could not *adequately* define this theory.

Works which question this African personality are too hard to find or only boom once in very long time. His biographer, Lynch wrote many books on Blyden which is mostly a descriptive, as is expected, rather than a critical one. Abiola Irele invested much praise for Blyden’s African personality in 1981, and Vincent Mudimbe’s *The invention of Africa*, first published in 1988, incorporated an exemplary committed work to analyze E.W. Blyden’s legacy particularly to interpret his works based on their significance and limitations as Mudimbe put it in his book. Blyden’s personality thesis, according to Mudimbe, is *invented* to oppose racist mythologies that was why ‘he focused on ‘the virtues of black civilization’ and promoted the concepts of ‘blackness’ and ‘Negro personality’. But, these virtues for Mudimbe are inventions of new myths about race and black personality. Finally he suggested that’ this approach(the African personality thesis as a critical preliminary to unity) must question all discourses interpreting Africans and their cultures.’<sup>40</sup>

A much recent work upon Blyden’s African personality is found in Getachew Sahlemariam’s essay, ‘The search for meaning’, where he seriously argued the very concept of Africanity itself. His view of African personality(except Blyden’s) is stated as ‘an ideological rubric that has been drugging the African political and cultural thoughts and activities into a backward looking emotional sanctuary where creative interaction between cultures and cross fertilization of political ideas appear to be difficult, if not impossible’<sup>41</sup>. He wrote that(mentioning Lynch) Blyden’s convictions ‘to foster Africanity in cultural affairs was based on the belief that cultural

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<sup>39</sup> Fannon, F. (1963). *The wretched of the earth*. NY: Grove Press.

<sup>40</sup> Mudimbe, V.Y. (1988). *The invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy and the order of knowledge*. London: Indiana University Press

<sup>41</sup> Getachew, S. (2006). *A search for meaning*, Addis Ababa: AAU Press.

assertions furnishes the necessary prerequisite for political independence.’ And consequently regarded Blyden’s versions of African personality for what it was not ‘a mystical sanctuary where a comfortable retreat could be staged’. This thesis already provided the ambiguous hermeneutics of African personality, including Blyden’s own thesis.

To add a little affirmation to the argument already provided one can cautiously re-read Blyden’s Christianity, Islam and the Negro race. Every time one reads Christianity Islam and the Negro race there is a great difficulty of handling the confusions and contradictions made by Blyden. While mentioning the effect of slave trade, referring Fulah, Temne, Eboe, Fante, Ahante, congo, etc he used not a cultural methodology but again an edgy racial dichotomy and denoted them that they ‘differ widely in degrees of intelligence and capacity, in original bent and susceptibility.’ Intelligence and capacity are the siblings of racial hypothesis than cultural discourse. Moreover, in his details of paganism, Mohammedanism and Christianity he formulated a clear hierarchy in which the pagan is depicted as a stubborn superstitious and yet in another place seemed sentimental to the ‘pagan’.

*‘when we consider how large tribes . . . are kept in subordination, and fulfill many a national function without any knowledge of letters or written revelation, it must appear that there is something in the Paganism of Africa as in the Paganism of other lands-some subtle, indefinable, inappreciable influence.’<sup>42</sup>*

Even if he passionately underscored that “We want the eye and ear of the Negro to be trained by culture that he may see more clearly what he does see, and hear more distinctly what he does hear”, his mistrust of ‘pagans’ and his contempt on their fetishism, rather than scrutinizing the intricacies of traditional Africa induced him to ‘present a formula’ which can easily ‘summarize’ the multifaceted nature of Africa into a reduced symbol called African personality which help him out a lot in antagonizing the Eurocentric racial thesis.

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<sup>42</sup> Blyden, E. W. (1967). Christianity and the Negro race, London: Edinburgh University Press.

Other ambiguity of Blyden's cultural ideology is his "faith in the ultimate usefulness of the pagan and Mohammedan natives, through Christian influence"<sup>43</sup> but at the same time he described his disinterest in 'bastard Christianity' as 'deteriorates' and other times in his letters he wrote about his belief that 'Islam is to be reformed' and 'if Christians understood the system (Islamic systems) it might be utilized in the Christianization of Africa'. In any of the ways, Blyden needed either Jesus or Mohamed to sort things out in the awkwardness of African paganism. He had never inclined in his works to mention the weight of traditional religions which kicked him out of the field as a defender of culture but as a defender of race despite his noticeable work on lives and customs of Africans. He generally have very dubious stances upon culture, means of civilization and independence from emerging colonial powers except his racial thesis since the problem of the twenty century was the problem of color line as Dubois stated it.

Mudimbe's claim that African personality as an 'empirical equivalent of Negritude' seems to be supported by the following assertion made by Getachew that it (Negritude) is completely nostalgic which is '... invested in African personality ideological resources which had little tie or relevance to any existing society.' Nevertheless, the empiricity of African personality itself is not supported by a concrete evidence except that Blyden's sojourn in Africa gave him a wide range of *information* of different cultures of Africa that made his thesis even more difficult so as to bracket them in a single African personality idiom.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Mudimbe, V.Y. (1988). *The invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy and the order of knowledge*. London: Indiana University Press

<sup>44</sup> Such criticism do not, in any meaningful sense, deny the contributions that those hardworking intellectuals, Men of letters and elites made. They devoted their lives trying to make sense of the world around them through their own experiences and consciousness which was quartered by the cruelty of slavery and colonialism. Some of them were slain by the Sphinx while trying to solve her riddle, some of them unwittingly kill the Sphinx without even having any meaningful answer for her riddle (another riddle of Africa), et cetera. It is a kind of 'tolerant skepticism' that is being used in this thesis to evaluate the theories of these respected Africans not of their ethics. The researcher believes that It is not only dangerous *to use ethical criteria of one generation as a permanent standard of the coming*, as Azikwe wrote it 44 years before, but it is also unethical to evaluate the past using the contemporary ethical criteria which simply would be meditating upon the socio-political mood of the past with the wit of our time.

### 2.1.1.3 African Personality and its *Partiality*

The continuation of the 1945 Pan-African Congress was held in Tanzania from June 19-27, 1974 where there were thirty delegates from independent African states and from Canada, The Caribbean, USA, Britain, etc. *The Congress however was bedeviled by the absence of a number of leading Caribbean Pan-Africanists who were not happy with the role assumed by the governments, some of which were anti-people and inherently reactionary.*<sup>45</sup>

The seventh PAC was held in Uganda, Kampala in 1994 and the eighth Pan-African Congress was to convene in Harare in 2000 which didn't happen. In January 2010, there was an initiative to convene the 8<sup>th</sup> PAC in Johannesburg where the consensus was to exclude Arabia/North Africa from the Pan-African Movement. This consensus simply is very genuine which looked at the true essence of Pan-Africanism considering the fact that its founding ideology which is African personality essentially is color based reaction which never cared to take account of North Africans or Arab Africans. So the discourse of Pan-Africanism genuinely is partial which favors only the Sub-Saharan Africans.

If the AU would incorporate the North-African or Arab Africans under the umbrella of the African personality thesis then it should probably reduce all the 'philosophies' of African personality in to historical commonality of colonialism which would practically lessen the efforts made to define and re-define the thesis by those prominent personalities into humdrum and banal work and which pretty much throw the reliability of Pan-African unity into further questions and complications, and would even have less power than the mystified African personality.

Hence, if meanings like African personality could not be deciphered with even such an endeavor and failed to fulfill the three requirements in the counter-narrative of this study as *provisional, inadequate and partial* then the truth behind the conceptualization or re-conceptualization of African personality is to a large extent exploited with power. So eventually one could see how the assumption which placed the African personality at the center of the narrative of African

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<sup>45</sup> Bankie, B. F. (2010). The Short Story of Pan-Africanism.

unity is too weak to be trusted before defending it as a goal. It is merely a trial for re-presentation of African people in a single term which would knowingly or unknowingly block the chances of 'delivered presence' of the African people: the re-presentation killed the presence of the African people.

### **Questions that Follow**

The question now would be 'is the whole purpose of the goal about defending such vacuity, such inscrutable re-invention, such nothingness? What is the meaning of the goal that AU is trying to defend for African people practically? African union, especially the PAP which is organized to narrow the gap between the people and the organization should have answers for such questions. Otherwise such inconceivable ideas are still isolating the elite from the mass. The wider mass is either strange to it or baffled by such elitist conceptual avalanche which always comes from the upper stratum of power to make him forget his own experiences and believe in big lies (this is exactly what the colonial powers do at the commencement of their colonization). However, if the AU believes in the a-historic essence of the African personality and its cautious remodeling, it should very recently stage a 'public ritual' so that the people should re-affirm and consecrate to this ascribed identity of the organization for them. These rituals help the transmission of meanings from the central source to the wider mass. Other wise, ascribed identities by organization upon the members, the people in this case, would be too precarious that when people no longer recognize such identity constructs the organization may one day, not in the long future, use overt resistance on the people to make them believe on it.

## 2.2 Do and will the People Recognize the AU?

### 2.2.1. The Conflict between Common Interest and Self-assertiveness in the Global Order

*/Thus, the goal in pursuing development through a common interest perspective is to bring about human progress in Africa/ ... June 2006 AU*

Factors that contributed to the emergence of the AU include the end of the Cold War, recognition of the power of globalization, the preeminence of the neo-liberal economic ideology, increasing demands for respect of human rights and for transparency by civil society organizations, the growing popularity of liberal democratic principles, and personal rivalries among some African political leaders.<sup>46</sup> Globalization next to colonialism is believed to bring many discontents to the continent Africa. Twenty years ago Ali Mazrui depicted Africans' role in the globalization process as a continent that only involved in a painful process of cultural westernization without technical modernization.<sup>47</sup> Many other literatures are found on the same notion that globalization has many adverse effects for Africa, and the AU founders saw the Union as a tool for the continent to face the “multifaceted challenges” posed by globalization<sup>48</sup> since globalization is believed almost in its entirety that it is wholly manifested by global idealism and reflexive individuations.

Hence, it would be a great help if some notions about Globalization is discussed before bumping into the arguments.

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<sup>46</sup> Makinda, S. M. & Okumu, F. W. (2008) *The African Union: Challenges of globalization, security and governance*, NY: Routledge.

<sup>47</sup> Ali Mazrui In: Huntington, S. (2002). *The clash of Civilization and the remaking of world order*, Free Press.

<sup>48</sup> Makinda, S. M. & Okumu, F. W. (2008) *The African Union: Challenges of globalization, security and governance*, NY: Routledge.

Malcom waters mentioning Robertson claimed that globalization was not recognized as academically significant until the early or possibly the mid-1980s but thereafter its use has become globalized.<sup>49</sup>

One can find many definitions on globalization as its academic recognition is very new and embeded with many controversies. However, for this study Robertson’s definition is rather used since he *is the key figure in the formalization and specification of the concept of globalization* and his definition could go along with the main locus of this study.

Robertson’s definition of globalization runs as follows:

*Globalization as a concept refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole . . . both concrete global interdependence and consciousness of the global whole.*<sup>50</sup>

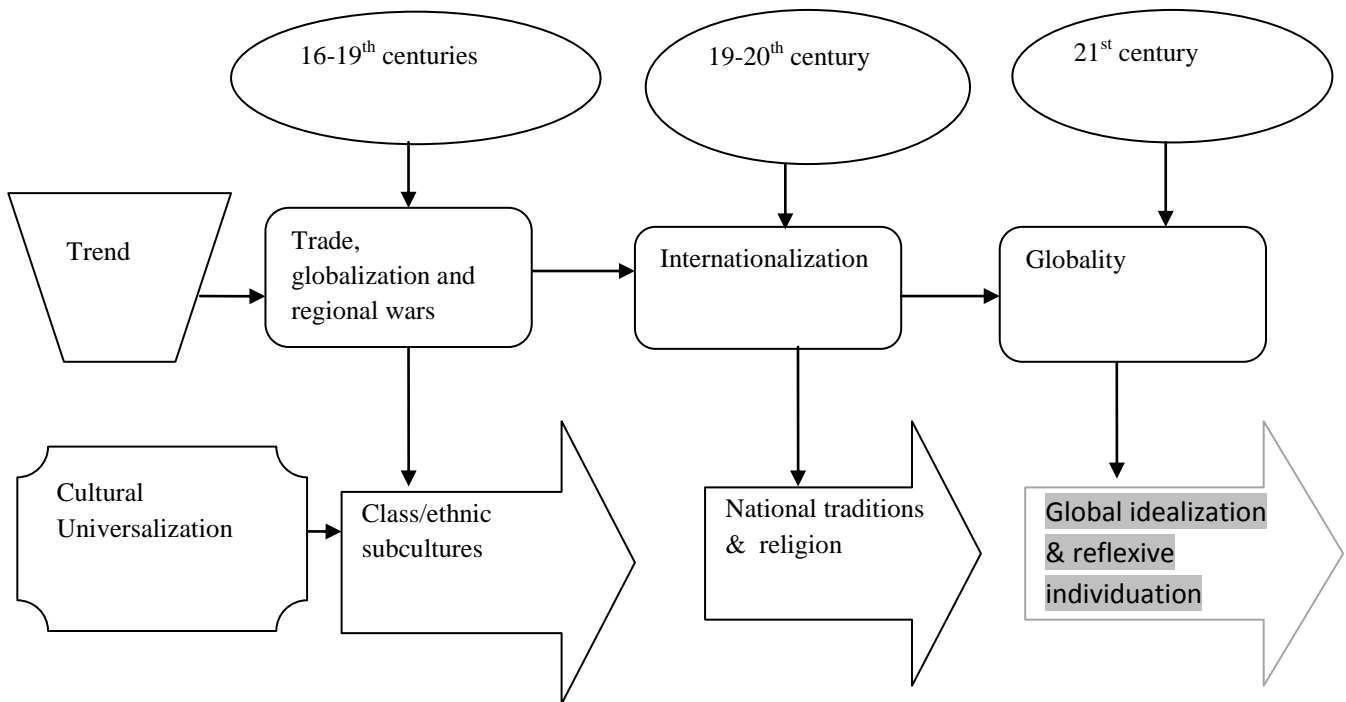


Fig. 2.2. The path of cultural globalization through time<sup>51</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Robertson. In: Waters M. (2001). Globalization, Second edition, Routledge.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

However, This thesis made its focal point on different angle. It claimed that the goal of African Union to pursue development through *a common interest perspective* of African people<sup>52</sup> needs to consider many future threats from possible resistances of the increasing self-assertiveness of different societies against the discontents of globalization. In other words, the thesis argued that for the next unknown years people will begin to re-affirm more than ever upon their values so as to balance the homogenization process and the western hegemony of globalization. This in turn would be a threat for the AU itself that many diverse interests would soon be constructed and common interest perspectives(if there are any) would remain void in the new global order, and every time the AU discards thousands of these self-affirmations its apparent implication is that it is losing the peoples' recognition.

### 2.2.2. Why is Self-affirmation growing rapidly more than ever?

The thesis shared two alternate perspectives to assert the aforementioned view point.

1. *The sense of difference . . . lies at the heart of people's awareness of their culture and, indeed, makes it appropriate for ethnographers to designate as 'cultures' such arenas of distinctiveness . . . people become aware of their culture when they stand at its boundaries.*<sup>53</sup>

Culture would not be easily withered by forces of globalization; in fact it could not be irrational to claim that Macdonaldization, Coca-colization, Neo-Fordism and other global consumerisms with media and web techs which are highly suspected by the East as agents of Western imperialism are profoundly affecting different cultures of the world.

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<sup>51</sup> This figure is an excerpt from a more complex figure of the evolution of globalization which includes not only cultural universalization but also economic marketization with political liberalization and democratization by Malcom Waters in 2001. The thesis takes only the cultural range in order not to deviate from the central objective of its scope.

<sup>52</sup> Article 3(i) of the Constitutive Act of AU refers to the promotion and defense of Africa's "common position on issues of interest to the continent and its people."

<sup>53</sup> Cohen in Jenkins R. (2008). Social Identity. London: Routledge.

It is almost an accepted truth that people are now becoming increasingly conscious about global events. But this does not always mean that this increasing exposure is making them vulnerably weak to global discontents. The twenty first century seems to be a period that different societies are standing at the boundaries of their cultures and their being on the verge compels them, in one way or another way, to look inward. Their struggle seemed to hide.

This can be affirmed clearly that

*'The globalized mental picture by looking the visible and obvious flows of cultural objects believes in the homogenization of culture but the struggle against such homogenizations are concealed and given many other pictures by medias which eludes this mental pictures. therefore confirm that the current accelerated phase of globalization does not refer to the triumph and sovereign domination of any one state or superpower or of any one civilizational 'meta-narrative' but rather to their dissipation.'*

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Some evidences concerning such assertions could be offered on the basis of the characteristics of globalization which incorporates typicalities of modernization and post-modernization. This two events which characteristically happened in the west greatly shaped globalization.

*Modernization tends to disrupt the solidarity of meaning systems because it isolates individuals and families, rends communities and denies the relevance of the sacred and of substantive values.*

*Post-modernism, generally speaking, puts into question modernism's confidence in rationality, principles, and systematic thinking. Many post-moderns think that there cannot be universal knowledge or ethics. Fundamentalist religious and ethnic movements thus respond to these hyper-differentiating tendencies of post-modernization.<sup>55</sup>*

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<sup>54</sup> Waters, M. (2001). Globalization, Second edition, Routledge.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid(2001).

In this global order religions, ethnic beliefs, customs, etc seem to propose their own definitions of modernity by traditionalizing it. Jenkins asserted that Individuals and groups will assert their own sense of who and what they are. They may not always be successful, but that's not the point.

These flows give a globalized culture a particular shape. Previously encapsulated and formerly homogeneous cultural niches will be forced to relativize themselves to others. This relativization can take the form of a reflexive self-examination in which fundamental principles are reasserted in the face of threatening alternatives.<sup>56</sup> This is the chief cause for fundamentalism.

The second alternate perspective is- *Collective identification*

2. *'In this new world(Post cold war world), Local politics is the politics of ethnicity and global politics is the politics of civilization... The rivalry between super powers is replaced by the clash of civilizations.'*<sup>57</sup>

There is no doubt that *to a certain unproved extent there exist localization and relativization where decisions at the community level should be referenced against the global scapes.* However, the counter argument which is recently growing is the increasing self assertion of this communities against such relativizations. This is characteristically manifested in collective identification and this collective identification revolved around core civilizations.

Jenkins said *Collective identification, on the other hand, evokes powerful imagery of people who are in some respect(s) apparently similar to each other. People must have something inter-subjectively significant in common.* Economic and politics can not be strong units of common interest perspectives of African people. Identities specially religious and ethnic identities matter a lot. Because in common interest perspective collectivity plays uncompromising role, and collectivity in social anthropology is generally accepted as or at least according to Jenkins *a plurality of individuals who either see themselves as similar or have a common behavior and circumstances.* What the researcher is claiming is that globalization(because it is presumed as a

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<sup>56</sup> Featherstone In: Waters, M. ( 2001).

<sup>57</sup> Huntington, S. (2002). *The clash of Civilization and the remaking of world order*, Free Press.

homogenizing process) affects collectivities by compelling them being relativized but the reaction to it dangerously affects not only relativising the collectivity but also relativising the relationship between different collectivities. The following simple figure could help the reader to comprehend the abovementioned belief.

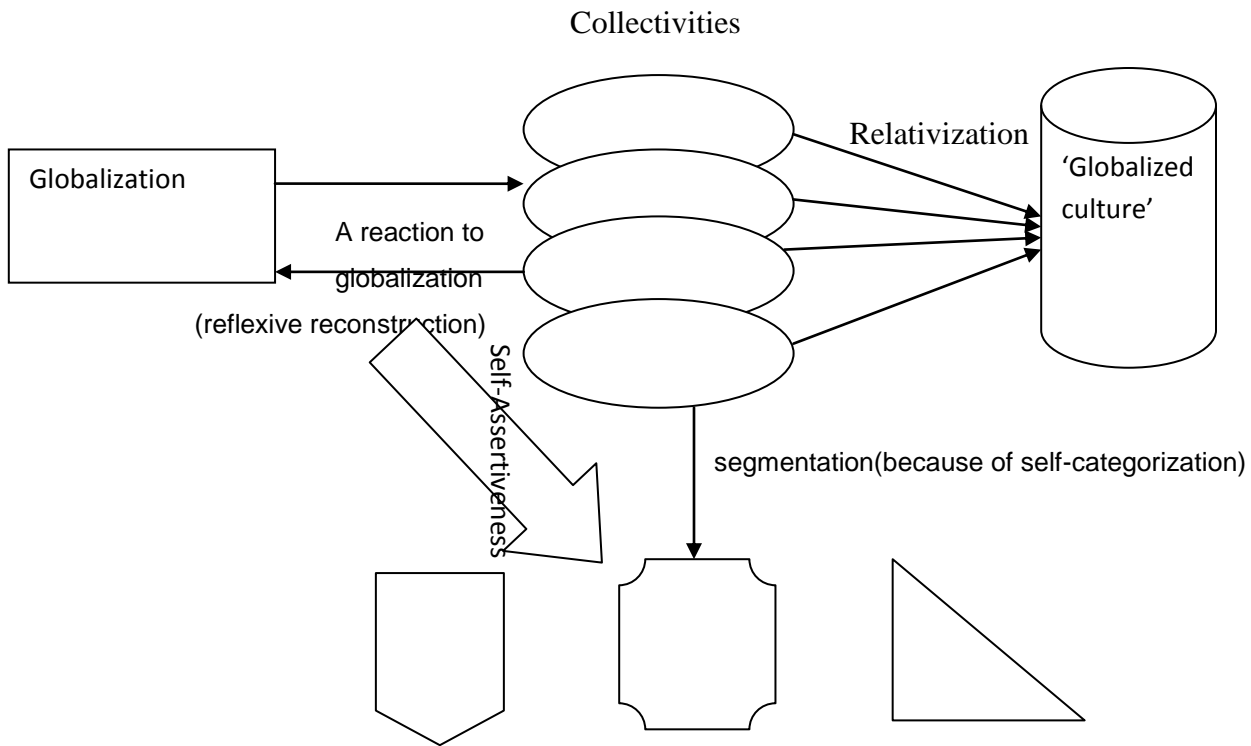


Fig. 2.3. Self-Assertiveness and globalization

**Conformity and Conformism** - In conventional social psychology two motivations inspire conforming behavior: the desire to be correct and the desire to remain in the good graces of others. But now conformity is further localized through self-categorization. Self-categorization theory is *when comparison and evaluation between groups generically bound up with the establishment and maintenance of in-group distinctiveness, in an interplay of internal similarity and external difference. Groups distinguish themselves from, and discriminate against, other groups in order to promote their own positive social evaluation and collective self-esteem.*<sup>58</sup>

Any endeavor to strengthen such self-categorizations breached interests in conformity. The desire to remain in the good graces of others will soon be replaced by the desire to shelter in ones own self-interest. Common interests will easily be left aside for a mere purpose of self-promotion. This is what this thesis called self-assertion.

#### **2.2.4. Religious fundamentalism**

Global idealizations and reflexive individuations are believed to be the current global trend in the fields of peoples' values, beliefs, customs, ideas, etc. However, some scholars have doubted that the establishment of these values, beliefs, customs and ideas *while claiming the appeal of universality, could not individually manage to generate sufficient appeal to become globally dominant and universal. These idea systems took two main forms: universal religions that managed to missionize and proselytize so successfully that they were able to overwhelm or at least to syncretize local and native religious expression; and political ideologies that sought to unify diverse collectivities of people in the pursuit of common goals.*<sup>59</sup>

This is why we say the world-wide development of fundamentalism is triggered directly or indirectly by Globalization, and this Globalization which strongly embedded with the discontents of modernization and post-modernization is a compelling force of relativization to religious traditions. Fighting against the relativization process will eventually take the form of a rejective search for original traditions.

Post-modernization is believed to grip firmly nihilism and secularization theory which perpetuates that the 'irrational' characteristic of religion on societies would gradually reduce.

However, to the contrary the world is not experiencing this. After the end of the cold-war 'failure of socialist ideology created ideological vacuum in Africa, Latin America and Asia.' Huntington depicted that 'IMF, World Bank, attempt to fill this gap using a neo-orthodox economics and

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<sup>58</sup> Turner In: Jenkins R. (2008). Social Identity.

<sup>59</sup> Waters, M. (2001). Globalization, Second edition, Routledge.

democratic politics. But people see communism as the last secular god to have failed. Religion takes over ideology...’<sup>60</sup>

The AU’s regional communities are based on similar types of political and economic integration(especially the later one) which leaves no space for the people’s interest. ‘Regions are basics for cooperation among the states only if geography coincides with culture.’ Huntington mentioned how CARICOM (Despite their historical commonality)failed to overcome cultural difference which made its member states to look outside their region for help and support; Orientation towards USA, France, England, Spain and others.

Caribbean countries can be the exact parallels of African regional cooperation. Their inward affinity is challenged by the overwhelming orientation of the states to their colonial fathers. Religious bandwagoning will be common with such conditions. Christian Western, Central, Eastern and Southern African countries have religious and language(English, French, Spanish and Portuguese) affinities with the West. Each of these Western countries are always ready to manipulate their kin states from regional cooperation areas. The states loyalty would be more to their affinity nations than their neighboring countries. North African countries already recognized themselves as Arab-Africans so they would bandwagon with their Arab brothers. The historical rivalry between the west and Islam and the increasing Islamic assertiveness also made integrations complicated when one looks things this way. Even if regional integrations get stable, inter regional integration which the AU eventually expected is unlikely to happen.

The AU is assuming regional economic communities as a means to establish the ultimate union either by creating new regional groups or by invigorating the existing groups.<sup>61</sup> The deepening of the OAU/AU relations with RECs was pursued with vigor from the 1990’s, especially after African leaders concluded that the challenges of persistent conflict, underdevelopment, poverty, and globalization could best be addressed through integration. Accordingly, the formation of the AU was propelled by an understanding that peace, security, and stability were necessary

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<sup>60</sup> Huntington, S. (2002). *The clash of Civilization and the remaking of world order*, Free Press.

<sup>61</sup> As part of the continuing efforts to deepen OAU/AU relations with RECs, the July 2001 OAU summit in Lusaka adopted a resolution that reaffirmed the status of RECs as the building blocks of the AU.

conditions for the implementation of the development and integration agenda. However, its assumption that trade, economic integration and tourism will generate commonality is very problematic or at least unproven. Huntington again in his Clash of Civilizations asserted, analysis done in the 1990's affirmed that increasing levels of trade may be a highly divisive force mentioning David M. Rowe's work 'the trade and security paradox in international politics'.

Now one can see how the AU's common interest which provided the African personality to answer the question of unit identification of the whole continent would increasingly be incapable of answering the identity questions when such segmentations are occurred. For such kind of identity questions religion and ethnicity can provide compelling answers and because of the aforementioned new reactions against globalization these answers are and would increasingly be localized and the segments would re-install strict institutions. The Christian Nigerian would become more Christian, The Malian Islam would be more Islam, the Nigerian Yoruba would become more Yoruba, the not famous Ethiopian Christian- Islam conflict is also now gaining momentum in its own way.

The failures of the OAU and other regional, national and continental organizations compel masses to prefer their own choice of self-affirmation to their identities which would provide them material, if not emotional and social support.

#### **2.2.5. Ethnic Fundamentalism and identity**

A second aspect of social life which might equally be regarded as threatening and irrational in modernism and post-modernism is ethnicity. Just as in the case of religion, the current acceleration of globalization might be seen as destabilizing in relation to ethnicity. It introduces possibilities for new ethnic identities to appear from 'nowhere'.

Jenkins wrote that while considering matters about identity non sociological meanings are worth considering. The Oxford English Dictionary offers a Latin root – *identitas*, from *idem*, ‘the same’.

- *the sameness of objects, as in A1 is identical to A2 but not to B1;*
- *the consistency or continuity over time that is the basis for establishing and grasping the definiteness and distinctiveness of something.*

*From either angle, the notion of identity involves two criteria of comparison between persons or things: similarity and difference.*<sup>62</sup>

Ethnic identities can be affected by many variables. In the case of Africa colonialism, post-colonial nation state formation, Democratization and development deeply affected ethnic groups. Globalization in the 21<sup>st</sup> century also equivalently affected these groups but all the time, as we can understand from history there are intense resistances to this variables and the future would be greatly marked by profound reaction against globalization. This would make the African people to go back to its pre-colonial state structure where there was nothing called Africanism and African nationalism and which would in turn threaten the unification process.

In the African case the grand reason for ethnic instability is colonialism; its violent domination and a trial for unification to establish some order, merely for managing the labor and the land, which was never considerate enough of the traditional socio-political structures of different ethnic groups.

*Its forceful ecumenicism only reinforced its delegitimation by making it even more threatening and helping to drive its subjects to traditional solidarity groups, especially ethnic groups. These became centres of resistance, means of self-affirmation against the colonizers' aggressive deculturing of the 'natives', and also networks of survival strategies.*<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Jenkins, C. (2008). Social Identity.

<sup>63</sup> Ake, C. (1993). What is the Problem of Ethnicity in Africa?.

So the self-assertiveness is not entirely new for African ethnic groups for they already rehearsed it long before globalization created the discontents of homogenization. The nationalists who came in power in the post-colonialism period ‘inherited’ those colonial states and never seriously considered the precarious effects of those legacies upon different ethnic groups of their countries since the means of transformations were pretty much on imported political(ideological) thesis.

Here this research is not considering ethnicity just as a figment of human imagination or a complete construct(as Barth or Cohen or others stated it)<sup>64</sup> which simply made them ‘objects’ always ready to be exploited by cynical political elites for their selfish interest but as realities where they have their own peculiar values, customs, political systems and religions, and non-cautious impositions on such distinctive identities would result disorder. Ethnic constructions only to serve politicians could not be mixed up with the true essence of ethnicity; the earlier ones, to use Claude Ake’s expression, *are not ethnic problems but problems of a particular political dynamics which just happens to be pinned on ethnicity. By the same token, solutions to these problems must address die political dynamics in question, not ethnicity.* This political dynamics are very vast and intricate fields to be studied by interested researchers and the thesis deliberately neglected the part on the political dynamics of ethnicizing politics. Nonetheless, politicizing ethnicity have profound social and cultural basis unlike the ethnicized politics.<sup>65</sup>

*The adoption of the colonizers' language restructures the society into a new hierarchy of power relations. The mastery of the language is required for political competition and contestation, for the sharing of meaning and the appropriation of values. So there is constituted a hierarchy at the top of which stand those who command the*

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<sup>64</sup> For instance, for Barthes we can assume no simple one-to-one relationship between ethnic units and cultural similarities and differences. The features that are taken into account are not the sum of ‘objective’ differences, but only those which the actors themselves regard as significant. For Barthes dichotomized cultural differences are vastly overstated in ethnic discourse. However, scholars asserted that Barth’s argument is vulnerable to criticisms. *In suggesting that shared common knowledge, common sense and patterns of behaviour (similarity) come into being as a result of processes of identification (differentiation) at the boundary, rather than vice versa, he misses the dialectical simultaneity of identification..... In any ways, the increasing identification results to stress more on shared common knowledge, common sense and pattern, etc in a fundamental way of overstating the difference.*(Jenkins, 2008.)

<sup>65</sup> ‘Our treatment of ethnicity and ethnic consciousness reflects this tendency to problematize the people and their culture, an error that continues to push Africa deeper into confusion’. Claude Ake, 1993.

*language, leaving the rest of society who do not understand it not only in a subordinate position, but effectively disenfranchised.*<sup>66</sup>

Globalization exactly is a continuation of this trend. If the AU genuinely permits different interest groups(ethnic and religious) to pursue their important self-assertions against globalization then there would certainly be a chaos for there necessarily would be an inevitable strong interest to destabilize the power structure which was constituted based on colonizers language and which still maintains this trend. So indirectly or directly the monocultural exclusionary 'nation states' would be again affected by this reaction. This tendency would possibly come to threaten the African union itself where its power structure is the exact equivalent of African nations.

The relativization, the homogenization, etc would not necessarily affect the elite but the ordinary members of ethnic groups so all the self-assertions would sprang necessarily from the mass through spontaneous resistances in Africa more than before. What they would be resisting is not the global forces only but the elite himself who is usually the agent of a certain 'Externals', transnational corporations, universalists, mono-culturalists, etc. And this resistances would manifest themselves not in one or two ways but in many diverse ways.

*Riot and protest, withdrawal of labour, uprising on the plantation, sullen minimal co-operation, the interactional refusal to recognise the oppressor: the possibilities are many and obvious. Organised resistance is also a multi-headed creature: neighborhood groups and political movements and parties; persistent and delicate lobbying and non-violent mass civil disobedience; anonymous leaflets, newspapers and satellite television broadcasts; assassination, guerrilla tactics and full-scale armed mobilisation. And means and ends may be thoroughly implicated in each other. Resistance, whether spontaneous or not, can be a potent affirmation of group identification; organizing is necessarily so.*<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Ake, C. (1993), What is the Problem of Ethnicity in Africa?

<sup>67</sup> Jenkins, C. (2008). Social Identity.

The self-assertions and self-affirmations compel identity formations to be easily and constantly shifting which in turn will make any reaction against such self-assertiveness challenging. Individuals and groups will assert their own sense of who and what they are. They may not always be successful as Jenkins mentioned it but that's not the point: there is always an overt resistance for any kind of integration or unity. That is the point.

What politics and economics provide is reason. But cultural identity is beyond reason. Because people do not live by reason alone. Huntington claimed that people cannot calculate and act rationally in pursuit of their self interest until they define their self. Interest politics presupposes identity.<sup>68</sup>

Therefore, the future is very depressing for organizations who work on Africa and who deny the people and their culture simply as colors of a certain street party. People are blame tools because policies on organizations are genuinely created not taking people as they are but as they should be. This would regard these organizations themselves at the line of the global powers and complicate any effort to hasten the integration, coordination and subordination processes among at larger collectivities let alone at the continental level. Accordingly, unlike the established belief that globalization is relativizing culture an acute observer also should consider that 'a globalized culture is chaotic rather than orderly – it is integrated and connected so that the meanings of its components are 'relativized' to one another but it is not unified or centralized or harmonious.'<sup>69</sup>

So African Union beyond defending the people from the inconveniences of globalization, did it consider the increasing religious and ethnic assertiveness of the people as the new potential 'threat'(in fact treat for the organization but wider opportunity for the mass) to the unification process?

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid(2002).

<sup>69</sup> Waters, M. (2001). Globalization, Second edition, Routledge.

## **Questions that Follow**

The questions would be, did the African union initially take into account this side of the new reaction to globalization? what different alternatives(than what the global powers are offering to Africa) do the Africa union has for those religious and ethnic groups on their reactions against the homogenization process? How accommodative will the alternatives would be based on the fact that there are and would gradually be more diversified interests? If AU fails to accommodate all the different self-assertions then it will face the danger of non-recognition and ultimately an agonizing disrespect.

## Chapter 3: Modality

The Pan-African Parliament and the ECOSOCC are two of ‘the main’ organs of the AU. These two organs are established on March 2004 and March 2005 respectively. The PAP is launched based on Article 17 of the constitutive act of the AU where its principal objective is ‘to provide common platform for African people and their grass-root organization to be more involved in discussions and decision making.’ It made its sit at Midrand, South Africa. These two organs are very much the same respective of the objectives they’ve been given by the AU.

The researcher strongly believed that these two prominent bodies could be very much helpful in understanding how the arguments raised in the thesis would be treated. While there were brothers and sisters from the AU Cultural Department who worked with the researcher with a strong passion and commitment like Angela Martins, Shepande Machacha, etc. There were also embarrassingly preposterous people who misunderstood the phrase African personality with the so-called ‘African personalities’ like Nkrumah, Senghor, Nasser, Haile Silase I, etc.

A. The people from the PAP in Midrand, after the researcher’s email that he’s working a thesis about African personality, were excessively appreciating the researcher (including the secretariat general office) for his interest to work on African personality discourse. However, immediately after they received the thesis’s arguments on the dubious hermeneutics of their celebrated African personality theory they prefer to shy away from ‘getting involved in such a mess’. The researcher frequently send emails so that they could say something on the questionnaires whatever their replays would be and weeks of silence were followed. The researcher, then, wished at least they could tell him ‘We are sorry, the Neo-colonialists or the Western Imperialists or... ate your questionnaire!’

Hence, on the African personality arguments that the researcher forwarded, he could confidently tell that no one there in the AU, who claimed himself as ‘a defender of African personality’, could sensibly defend it at least through his own cosmopolitan way of thinking. It is a fraud, a hoax, a mystified tool presented to manipulate the mass by throwing them into the abyss of confusion. There is no such a thing called African personality and if there is it must be the Rolex watch these people wear, the Gucci shoe they put on, the three-piece suit and the spectacles they dressed in with their black brief-cases they always handle.

B. The researcher’s proposition that because of the very discontents of globalization the reaction to it, i.e. cultural assertiveness would eventually make Africa pretty much balkanized and fragmented continent appeared to seem a strange outlook in the African Union cultural division which gave them both a discomfort and ‘Aha!’ experience. The researcher got convinced that globalization in the AU is wholly taken as an inevitable process which one can’t resist or a certain kind of mega-force operating beyond human control. This is the very essential characteristic which greatly shaped the policies, charters and any other instruments of this division. There is even a ridiculous attitude in the cultural division that even if globalization would affect African culture and ultimately create a globalized culture through Western relativization (which clearly means establishing its position in relation to the capitalist West), Africa would have ‘a greater role’ in that globalized culture. The instruments and effects of the relativization of the West seemed naively forgotten.

So what has been happening in the cultural division of the AU is to promote African shared values and traditions and eventually make those shared values to be brands of Africa in the market of the Global culture. This idea of promoting shared values and branding them, according to the senior cultural officers, was started in ‘The Sixth Ordinary session of the Assembly’ held in Khartoum, Sudan in January 24, 2006 by adopting an instrument called ‘Charter For the African Cultural Renaissance’. Brothers and sisters in the AU benevolently handed the researcher the brochures of the charter which are all in French, English, Portuguese and other colonial languages; a defamation of the Article 18 of its own charter ‘... the need to develop African language in order to ensure cultural advancement...’

This branding process of shared values of African cultures for the common interest perspective agenda of the AU against the treacherously escalating discontents of globalization is like believing in the fable of the tortoise and the rabbit - if only the rabbit sleeps. This has the following major challenges. (The researcher dared to write this on the basis of what he had found out through discussions and interviews with the cultural officers there.)

1. One of the major problem is that the Charter for the African renaissance is only ratified by not more that seven countries in Africa; Chad, Senegal, Congo, Nigeria, Mali, South Africa and last year only Ethiopia. According to Article 35 of the charter ‘the charter shall come into force immediately upon receipt by the commission of the African Union of the instruments of ratification and adhesion from two-thirds of the total membership of the African Union.’ Unfortunately, the countries which ratified the charter could not reach one-fifth of the total member states. What is doubly sad is there are only 30 of the member states that have even signed the charter.

2. In almost all the articles African States are considered as cultural stakeholder(see Articles 11, 12, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28 29...) which implies that all the tasks of the cultural renaissance rest on the shoulders of those states which are not only reluctant to ratify the Charter but are also even disinclined to sign the Charter.

It took more than seven years to make those seven countries to ratify the charter and it might need forty years (if they are lucky) so that the charter would enter into force. That is why people in the cultural department are praying to see the African Union Commission transformed into the African Union Authority for the Union Government to enforce those states to accept the Charter. But they all know that this is unlikely to happen in their age.

Another option taken by the division of culture and other departments is a comical word called ‘sensitization’; to make the leaders sensitive to the situations of their people, the importance of shared values and the condition of the global order. And this humor, they know, is at least a good

entrepreneurship so that they won't sit in their leather couches cross armed for the next forty years.

So, preparing festivals, campaigns and celebrations for the 'African cultural renaissance' was a part of the 'sensitization' and advocacy process. This campaign, according to the AU Social Affairs Department, was held from 2010-2012 which is hardly known among the people of Africa. It is the leaders who must be sensitized first before the people which will certainly cost the formation of another African union. Because like the OAU the Assembly of the AU which comprises of heads of states, governments and their representatives is the mover and the shaker of everything in the power structure of the AU. This Assembly which welds enormous power decide on almost everything: It determines the AU's policies, admits new members, adopts the budget, appoints the Chairperson of the Commission and his/her deputy and other commissioners, and decides on intervention in other states. So whether it is the PAP or the ECOSOCC or the PSC or other 'lower' organs of the AU, it would be plausible if they passionately work on the so-called 'sensitization'.

Still States dominate and people are abandoned. The debate which is famous inside the compound of the AU as the 'Grand Debate' to advocate the importance of the Union government is started in 2007 and still continuing. The researcher was part of the so-called Grand Debate and the excessive lunch in 2012 but he realized that some conscious people already understood that the debate is useless if you are able to throw your eyes behind the curtain: States do not want to play 'this so-called union government game!' It is suicidal.

## Chapter 4: Summary and Recommendation

It seems(at least for the researcher) very clear that things are still gloom in the AU. Policies, strategies, agreements, charters, etc are waiting only for the state leaders to be ratified. Some concepts which are presupposed as the dynamic principles between the AU and the people are not even familiar inside the offices of the AU.

The Pan-African Parliament which is in Midrand is one step ahead in this regard. The South African Broadcasting corporation is trying to popularize the PAP by having daily broadcasts of interviews, features and discussion on the PAP while it is in session. This should be seen in all African countries. Meetings should not be exclusionary and only of foreign policy, International communities, defense, security, finance, global negotiations but of the people. AU is swelling with meetings and is going to burst before our eyes. The African Union club is cocooned with restless meetings ‘but how many Africans know about this meetings? Of those who know how many care? And among those who care how many can influence the policies?’<sup>70</sup> must be the questions asked.

The annual budget of the PAP and the ECOSOCC is still approved by the Assembly till they exercise legislative and influential advisory roles. In fact, the Assembly do not want them to function in such authority so that they will forever remain poodles for them. Hence mystifications and vaguenesses are still continuing inside the AU. The African people in the following forty years may pave their own road or invigorate the self-assertiveness that they already start travelling and would completely ignore those people from the AU which always are poodle for their leaders that ‘the question would not be whether or not to jump but how high to jump’; who in practice are megalomaniacs who always lust after power and who, in any ways, are not interested to listen to their people.

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<sup>70</sup> Abdul Rahmeen, T. (2008). Speaking Truth to Power: selected Pan African Post-cards, Pambazuka Press.

The AU should practically approach and follow the people rather than following the leaders considering all its challenges from the self-interest of the leaders. Following is not a simple word as it seems but a concept which encloses courage, determination and knowledge in it. The researcher would like to share a relevant new school of thought by sociologists like Latour and his friends that ‘The task of defining and ordering the social should be left to the actors themselves, not taken up the analyst.’ and ‘actors should be allowed to unfold their own differing cosmos no-matter how counter intuitive they appear.’<sup>71</sup> This will compel the AU to step down from its unreachable layer and discuss with the student, the street dweller, the intellectual, the farmer and the pastoralist, the elder and the forgotten, the raped<sup>72</sup> and the people in danger of massacre by gangs of their leaders, etc.

Otherwise as the researcher tried to show on the mystification of phrases in the rhetoric of Africanity or Pan-Africanism one would not be far from wrong if he/she suspects whether AU is trying to play the game of ‘The second sin’<sup>73</sup> or not, in order to break the contract with the people? Is not it another type of hegemony through ideological domination and mystification which makes Pan-Africanism an esoteric knowledge of the elite and people up there?<sup>74</sup> Is this a means to tactfully escape from the intricate reality at the bottom?

The African personality is considered as the dynamic principle which is basically in attendance between the people and the organization as a guarantee and if this dynamics is a complete

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<sup>71</sup> Latour, B. (2007). *Reassembling the Social*.

<sup>72</sup> In the span of seven months when the researcher was running up and down to accomplish this thesis, in Congo only rebels raped more than 16000 women and men (men also for goodness sake) in a brutal way and very sadly it was the G8 group who was pledging to end sexual violence in Africa. Not the AU but the G8. What does it mean to defend African personality or Africanness then (if there is any) which is facing such a complete humiliation.

<sup>73</sup> Szasz, T (1966). *The second sin*, ‘Mystification is the principal semantic tool of the ‘would-be’ leader... To concepts like suicide, homicide and genocide we should add ‘semanticide’ - the murder of a language. The deliberate or quasi deliberate misuse of language through hidden metaphor or professional mystification breaks the basic contract between people.’

<sup>74</sup> Because according to Gramsci (1972) (found in Jenkin’s *Social Identity*) and other scholars Hegemony includes offering direct alternatives and AU is trying to provide direct alternative through African personality for the people which, by and large, supports the supposition that ‘In the case of the Orient, Knowledge and power went hand in hand, and there was no such a thing as innocent, objective academic standpoint’ of Edward said.

uncertainty then what if it could be suspected that the AU itself has an identity problem which will compel the organization to gamble behind the closed doors between the global powers and the people of Africa? Isn't it scary to think the future of the AU which is political elite and baffling intellectual dominated even more than the 'mutual preservation club' of the OAU? Or as one respected intellectual from the Center For African studies used to say, are most of the actions of the AU resemble like 'spraying a perfume on a decayed body'(of maybe on the OAU)? This is the painful reality that an African would face if he undertook such a study.

Is AU like its predecessor infected with the disease of ad-hocism that its map would be near-sighted only to incorporate temporal political and economical philosophies which are full of failed policies and are often borrowed from abroad and neglect the public realm(which is already started through the questionable NEPAD )? The AU should genuinely consider not only the past and the present but also the future of its common interest perspective through the threats in the global order by making the people the center of interest. Otherwise all the discourses of economy and polity would be only tautologies.

The problem with the OAU was to omit the mass and work exclusively within its mutual preservation club and this syndrome of forgetting the people seems to continue. Today's intellectual has the color of Harold Cruise's Negro intellectual 60 years before in which 'while the Negro intellectual is not fully integrated into the intellectual class stratum, he is, in the main, socially detached from his own Negro ethnic world'.<sup>75</sup> The intellectual in the AU is possessed with such a 'half-wittedness' disease, half-baldness or Sphinxness who has been and still continuing to play between its head and the rest of its body. This is what makes him an agent between the global powers and the mass; a typical comprador.

Through such meditation one can eventually come up with a plausible skepticism that AU in its 12 years existence has done very little to provide the right answer on the most important yet the most faked questions of the people; Do the people know this organization(questions under part2.1) and Do and Will they recognize it(questions under part 2.2). There still is a century old similar problem of misunderstanding and underestimating the mass but without the mass AU will

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<sup>75</sup> Cruise, H. (1967). *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual*. New York Review Books.

be futile even in a period shorter than the OAU, and one may see the people up there in the AU howling to search another convenient name to create the third OAU!

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## Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work, has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of materials used for the thesis have been accordingly acknowledged.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as university advisor

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Advisor

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Signature

Date