UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

THE RISING HORIZON: A POST-COLONIAL READING OF AYI KWEI

ARMAH'S *OSIRIS RISING* AND *KMT: IN THE HOUSE OF LIFE*

DORCAS PEARL SLIPPE

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BY

DORCAS PEARL SLIPPE

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English

OCTOBER, 2017

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this University or elsewhere.

Signature:..   Date:...................................

Candidate's Name: Dorcas Pearl Slippe

Supervisor's Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Signature:...............................   Date:...................................

Principal Supervisor's Name: Prof. K. Opoku Agyemang

Signature:...............................   Date:...................................

Co-supervisor's Name: Dr. Moussa Traore

ABSTRACT

This thesis sets out to investigate how Ayi Kwei Armah, as a post-colonial African writer, in *Osiris Rising* and *KMT: In the house of life* re-tells the history of Africa as a way of "writing back" to assert the African Identity as his way of responding to Hegel's (1957) claim that Africa prior to European colonization had no civilization of note to boast of. Thus, through a study of the setting, plot and characters in the two novels, this work reveals how Armah artistically uses the Egyptian mythology of Osiris and Isis in the texts to validate his claim to a pre-colonial African civilization. The work also discusses how the two novels build on the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade experience to fictionally contextualize the Pan-African renaissance; an artistic move that results in a physical, cultural and intellectual re-unification of Africans living on the continent with their brothers and sisters in the African diaspora. In view of this, the study suggests to all Africans not to, in the era of globalization, idealize their common past but critically engage it, rise up and embrace the hybrid nature of their post-colonial cultures and in the light of lessons learnt from it, work together as a people with a common destiny to guard against a further erosion of their cultural values and identity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

Daddy Kobby, Nhyira, Aseda and Adom

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

"It is a good thing to place different civilizations in contact with each other; it is an excellent thing to blend different worlds; [...] whatever its own particular genius may be, a civilization that withdraws into itself atrophies."
                                                                            Aimé Césaire

Introduction

As a result of the colonial encounter between Africa and Euro-Arab world, Africa has become a multi-cultural society. Its post-colonial culture has become a hybrid of its pre-colonial and colonial heritage. However, in the light of formal independence from European rule starting in the Late 1950s, African writers such as Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe, Senghor and Kobina Sekyi, among others, have condemned colonization and kicked against its perpetrators. They have consistently highlighted many of the negative effects that the colonial encounter has had on the natural and human resources of the continent in their works.

Thus, in a bid to re-affirm their identity as a people, many post-colonial writers in re-writing Africa's history challenge the colonial outlook and attitudes towards Africa as a continent as well as the humanity of Africans as black people. They also criticize the present: failed leadership, compromised democracy, political and corporate misdeeds, greed and bureaucratic corruption of African intellectuals in post-independent Africa (Esty, 1999). This, in the researcher's view, is one of the several means through which such writers proclaim and assert Africa's independence from its colonial masters.

Therefore, as part of the background to this introductory chapter, the researcher will review samples of such works to help put into context the

works of African writers such as Ayi Kwei Armah who are consistently preoccupied with the question of Africa's present condition. It will also highlight their vision and emphasize the alternative measures and steps they take to help the image of Africa. In line with this, this thesis explores the theme of cultural hybridity in Ayi Kwei Armah's *Osiris Rising* and *KMT: In the house of life* and highlight its significance to the post-colonial African.

The study begins with a discussion of the legacy of the colonial experience on the psychology and cultural identity of the African in general and the Ghanaian in particular. It also analyses the effect of the colonial encounter on racial representations as well as biological and cultural backgrounds. This is to enable the researcher to investigate, through the two selected texts under study, life in Africa before colonialism, in order to ascertain and affirm the claim by post-colonial writers such as Ayi Kwei Armah that the pre-colonial African had a culture which was relevant and significant to his African way of life.

It will further explore Armah's Pan-Africanist ideology as a call for the return of people of African descent living in the diaspora to Africa to help develop the now independent continent. Although this ideology was developed through a framework of the Hegelian dialectic, it takes the histories of both the pre-colonial and colonial into account and yet forges a new synthesis of progressive Pan-Africanism meant to champion an African developmental agenda

Although the researcher concedes that the colonial encounter has had many types of effects on the African, the study argues that it has also left behind a cultural legacy which cannot be easily thrown away. The researcher

disagrees with African scholars like Ngugi who through their ideology of a nationalist 'Africanness' advocate a total rejection of the colonizer's ways. The researcher contends that in the light of globalization and its resultant interconnectedness, the African does not need to totally reject the colonizer's culture. This is because as Césaire (2000) puts it, "a civilization that withdraws into itself atrophies." This work will therefore highlight ways in which a hybridization of both cultures will be to the advantage of the post-independent African: The colonizer's language and educational institutions, for instance, when properly 'domesticated' can be used to educate the contemporary African on his culture and history.

Background to the Study

Ghanaians, like many other Africans still regard the language of their colonial master as their official language. They speak, write and use the English language as the medium of instruction in schools and universities. They equally conduct all government business and activities in English. As Britain is not the only European country to have colonized another country, other African countries also still speak French, Spanish and Portuguese; languages they inherited from France, Spain and Portugal respectively as a result of colonization.

According to Scheff (1965), one indicator of cultural integration among many others is a change in language use. This is explained by an instance where the principal language of a given language community differs from that of an immigrant's native language. The subject of colonialism together with its legacies has and still continues to attract scholarly attention: Wrigley, (1965), Wolff, (1974), Kitching (1980) and Mamdani, (1996). Much

of Colonialist discourse indicates that colonialism had a powerful impact on Africa. To the Ghanaian historian, Adu Boahen (cited in Akurang-Parry, 2006), the impact of colonialism was deep and certainly destined to affect the future course of events. Young (1995, p.24) affirms that, "overall, colonial legacy cast its shadow over the emergent African state system to a degree unique among the major world regions".

Evidently, whenever two cultures come into contact, there is usually a gradual process of mutual cultural borrowing (Heckmann & Schnapper, 2003; Michael, 2005). This implies that Africa and Africans cannot be fully explained or understood without an unraveling of the continent's colonial experience of political and cultural domination as well as economic exploitation. However, in an instance where one of the two cultures presents itself as superior and so imposes elements of its own culture on the other, thereby forcing it to reject its unique track of cultural civilization, the weaker one is lured into an extensive act of cultural borrowing consequently resulting in a situation of cultural disorder. This is what George Ekwuru calls the evils of acculturation which consequently 'de-culturalised' and 'de-personalised' a people [Africans] within their own land (Ekwuru, 1999).

During the colonial period, the colonial masters successfully 'educated' the African to believe that all things African were retrograde and were to be despised, and that through Anglicization (and Christianization) was the passport to "civilization" and "progress" (Langley 1997: xv). This went down so deep into the intellect of many Africans that the educated Africans began to look down on the African personality and culture. Since everything about the African culture was made to appear inferior and uncivilized while

everything about the European culture was presented as superior, more dignifying and civilized, the African culture was over time 'swallowed up' by Western culture and this generated an erosion of the cherished values and virtues of life amongst all Africans (Mawere, 2014).

To show, many early Western scholars presented the African continent, prior to Western imperialism, as without culture and civilization. Hegel (1956, pp. 91, 99) describes pre-colonial Africa as "the land of childhood, outside history, deprived of movement and any development... unhistorical, undeveloped spirit, still involved in the conditions of mere nature". However, contrary to this Europeanist view of pre-colonial Africa, many post-colonial African scholars after studying historical facts and records on pre-colonial Africa from authentic and reliable traditional African sources have consequently "written back" to give a 'proper' representation of life in pre-colonial Africa. This is often intended to deconstruct the notion that the African continent together with its inhabitants, before any contact with the Western world, was uncivilized, primitive and undeveloped in any way. Amin (1972) writes that in terms of culture, governance and politics, "black Africa was not on the whole more backward than the rest of the world. The continent was characterized by complex social formations, sometimes accompanied by the development of the state, and almost invariably based on visible social variations which reveal the disintegration of the primitive village community" (p. 505).

Bohannan and Curtin (1988), Ayittey (1992), Mandela (1995) and Adejumbi (2000) also add their voices to the claim that African societies indeed had customs, laws, rituals and other social conventions which were

used in the resolution of conflicts as well as in the enforcement of order. They further assert that there were formal political and legal institutions where disputes were settled either by consensus or through a council of elders.

On the issue of education and training, Mungazi and Walker (1997) write that "before the coming of Europeans to our country, no aspect of our life, no boy or girl was ever neglected by our educational system because it was constantly being innovated to make it relevant to the needs of all students" (p. 30).

The educational system that existed in the traditional African society is seen as one that encouraged physical, moral and intellectual training. It "combined physical training with character-building and manual activity with intellectual training" (Fafunwa, 1974 p.16). Furthermore, since the African had intellectual capabilities and could learn, reason and develop his/her abilities, "without being taught, the African child developed his/her physical self through imitation, intuition and curiosity" (Bassey, 1999 p.19). The primary goal of such traditional education was to develop members who would be capable of sustaining their communities. Therefore, on the whole, the education on the African continent before the arrival of the British and their missionary schools "was a deliberate efforts [by Africans] to perpetuate and reinforce social solidarity and homogeneity" (Ashley, 1997 p.29).

In comparison, the traditional system of African education seems to have better suited the African way of life than the British colonial system of education. This is because whereas tradition demanded that African education trained individuals who would be "essential to the sustenance of diverse components of society and individuality" the colonizer's system of education was merely intended to "produce ideologies that support the dominant group's

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authority rule" (Bassey, 1990 pp. 3, 30). The educational system that was designed by the colonizer was meant "to produce individuals enlightened enough to understand the values of the world outside their homes but not equipped to think inwards for the betterment and salvation of their own immediate society" (Emenyonu, 1997 p. 37).

As a result of this purpose, the British educational framework began to strip its native students of their native cultural practices, traditions and languages. Many colonial schools did not highlight the teaching of indigenous culture in the educational setting. Much emphasis was rather laid on the teaching of European values, languages and philosophies which were foreign to the African cosmology. Even in instances when these colonial schools did teach about the native culture, "the indigenous history taught devalued indigenous culture by emphasizing its tribal conflicts, civil wars, famine and barbarism" (Bassey, 1999 p. 45). Certainly, the colonial schools alienated their African students in that students were de-culturalised from their African values and heritage and in turn en-culturated with European values.

History shows that Africans minds resisted colonialism both physically and intellectually. The French speaking African and Caribbean intellectuals, for instance, formed the "Negritude" movement as a protest against French colonialism and the policy of assimilation. Spearheaded by Aimé Césaire, Léopold Senghor and Léon Damas, Negritude was basically a response to the European claim of civilizing the African: saving him from his barbaric culture and pagan religion. An important influence to the founding of the Negritude movement was the Harlem Renaissance in New York in the 1920s and 1930s.

In other parts of the continent, intellectuals who had been exposed to western languages including English and French such as Chinua Achebe started 'writing back' to expose the effects of colonialism on the African cosmology. Thus, themes revolving around liberation and independence characterized early works such as Achebe's *Things Fall Apart and* Ngugi's *Weep Not Child.* However, unfortunately, some writers lost their lives in the struggle for liberation. Intellectuals like Christopher Okigbo of Nigeria died in the battle for the independence of Biafra in 1967 while Steve Biko was assassinated in 1977 in South Africa.

Consequently, when Africa as a continent was finally liberated and many of its lands gained independence, its people were determined to prove to their colonial masters that they were capable of managing their own political, cultural and socio-economic affairs (Tyson, 1999). However, in their attempt to create an indigenous identity for themselves, they came to the realization that most of their pre-colonial culture had been lost over the many years of colonial domination. What they, as a people, had adjusted themselves to was mainly the culture that had been imposed on them by the Europeans.

To make matters worse, the colonial education system had succeeded in producing many educated but alienated Africans useful only to the colonial system of governance which was founded on individualism, self-interest and dictatorship. The loyalty of those elites who, like the colonizers, had also cushioned themselves in extravagance and affluence at the expense of the masses was thereby also skewd towards the advanced nations of Europe than to Africa. This resulted in a decline and denigration of traditional authority and values (Ngugi, 1993; Williams, 1999; Geller, 1995).

In imitation of the elite, many others like Mrs. Aborofosem in Kobina Sekyi's *The Blinkards* "had a lot of admiration for European values to the extent that they looked down on African culture, thereby facilitating the drift from our traditional African values to foreign concepts" (Adu-Boahen, 1990 p. 9). These elites, now leaders of the new states, represented to the masses a past which could best be reclaimed - revisited and realized in partial, fragmented ways - but never fully reconstituted. Consequently, African's post-colonial social formation has been largely built on the colonial heritage. It is an uncomfortable mixture of the pre-colonial and colonial structures. As Young (1986 p. 25) puts it, the "character of the contemporary African state has been determined by its colonial origins, [however], the colonial legacy in turn has been altered in crucial and often negative ways since political independence was attained".

To be able to create a better future for posterity, Cheikh Anta Diop believes that there is the need for African historians and literary artists to correct 'falsified' understanding of Africa by Western scholars. One of the necessary steps to be taken requires the linking of Africa's past - history and experiences - to its contemporary state with a view to project a 'new' Africa. This is in other words a move in favour of hybridism: a fusion of two cultures to form a distinct third in which the hybrid subject retains an actual semblance of both cultures. According to Diop (1974 p. xvi), this merger will guide the quest to "redefine the image of modern Africa reconciled with its past and preparing for its future".

Justification for the Choice of Books

The two literary texts used in this study, *Osiris Rising* and *KMT: In the house of life*, were purposively selected after a close study of many of Ayi Kwei Armah's works. They were chosen because they are significantly related. First, they share a spatial and temporal representation that span over many centuries, from life during the pre-colonial period through the Slave Trade regime into the post-colonial era. Second, they share similar thematic representations which focus on Black identity and Africa's cultural heritage as well as the African's anti-colonial struggle in today's post-independence era.

Thus, many of the major thematic occupations that characterize literary works produced during the post-colonial period such as Colonialism, Hybridity, National and Cultural awakening and Pan-Africanism are reflected in them. In addition, in these two texts, Armah touches on sub-themes such as neo-colonization, otherness, double consciousness, resistance and alienation. To add to this, social issues such as betrayal leading to internal conflict among others which in one way or another contributed to the "dismemberment" of the African way of life are also highlighted in them.

Moreover, *Osiris Rising* and *KMT: In the house of life* are the author's novels which speak to the purpose of this research. In them, Armah presents a broader perspective on how not only Black Africans living on the African continent struggle to end their quest for self-identity but zooms in onto the struggles of African Americans and by extension, all Africans living in the Diaspora.

Additionally, they provide the researcher with an academic opportunity to study the African's 'version' of the colonial experience, its consequence

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and influence on the future of Africans. The researcher believes that questions concerning a hybrid cultural identity are best answered in studies that ground theoretical notions of hybrid cultures in concrete empirical work. Thus, the texts under study serve two main purposes:

a) They deconstruct the white myth of monolithic cultural superiority by replacing it with an assertive African culture.

b) They review and re-connect history from an African point of view.

Moreover, although they encapsulate and, as it were, build on the thematic preoccupation of Armah's early novels - consequences of the colonial encounter of Armah's early novels.

Statement of the Problem

A critical review of existing literature revealed that much work has been done on the negative effects of the colonial experience in Africa. However, as established in Alam (2000), Nandy (1983), Ocheni (2012) and Settles (1996), comparatively, much of the literature relates to the 'physical' manifestations as against the psychological and cultural effects of that encounter. This in the researcher's view has created an imbalance since the war against colonialism must not only be material but must also engage the mental.

Secondly, many of the few African literary artists who continue to challenge the colonial legacy of inferiority imprinted on the psychology of the African often tend to advocate a re-establishment of African morals, values, customs and practices. This, to them, is one way of asserting the humanity of Africans as having been civilized and self-dependent prior to their encounter with the Western world (Diop, 1974 p. 4). However, in the face of the new

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trend of worldwide interconnectedness – globalization – a major question thus arises: Does the African really need a complete return to the pre-colonial African culture as a means of proclaiming independence or asserting humanity?

Purpose

This study seeks to examine how Ayi Kwei Armah in *Osiris Rising* and *KMT: In the house of life* presents to his audience a practical solution to the African's search for self-identity in a changing world.

It will therefore highlight the suggestions which Armah in the texts under study gives to Africans at home and in the Diaspora on how to incorporate the positive values, morals and practices in their pre-colonial African culture into their colonial legacy to form a third unique post-colonial culture which they can comfortably call their own.

Methodology

The research is to be carried out using the qualitative research approach. This approach according to Gilham (cited in Dirwai and Gwimbi, 2003 p. 57), "is a method that enables the researcher to carry out investigations by exploring phenomena in his/her area of study where other 'controlled' methods such as experiments are neither practically nor ethically justifiable".

For the purpose of this study, a textual analysis of the two novels will be done using insights from post-colonial theory. This method of data collection and analysis is deemed appropriate for this study because the research is exploratory in nature and thematic in focus. The study will require extensive use of the library and internet.

Primary sources	Ayi Kwei Armah: (1995) *Osiris Rising*
	(2002) *KMT: In the house of life*
Secondary sources	Ashcroft & co. (1995) *The Post-colonial Studies Reader.*
	Edward Said (1979) *Orientalism.*
	Homi Bhabha (1994) *The Location of Culture.*
	W.E.B Du Bois (1995) *The Souls Of Black Folks.*
	Frantz Fanon: (1969) *Black Skin*
	White Mask On Culture
	Ayi Kwei Armah: (1969) *Fragments.*
	(1973)*Two Thousand Seasons.*
	(1974) *Why Are We So Blest?*
	(1979) *The Healers.*
Supporting Sources	Critical works on Ayi Kwei Armah.
	Reviews on Ayi Kwei Armah's writings.
	Writings on post- colonial critics.
	Thesis and dissertations on Ayi Kwei Armah's works.
	Works on Identity and Hybridity.

Definition of Key Terms

Culture

This refers to human phenomena that are not purely results of human genetics. Its focus in this work is on the ways in which people live and represent their experiences including ideas, customs, social behaviour and way of life (Taylor, 2006).

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Civilization

The word will be used strictly as defined by Western Europeans, especially when they attempted to justify slavery and colonialism in the past. 'Civilized' will be looked upon as opposed to 'primitive', not having attained the Western model of well-being (Bowden, 2004).

Colonialism

This term, as outlined in Stuchtey (2011), is a broad term which generally describes the practice of one country acquiring full control over another country politically, economically and socially. Its usage in this work describes events before, during and after the scramble for Africa by European powers.

Hybridity

Hybridity is the process of integration that makes it possible to harmonize two different cultures resulting in the creation of new cultures. Its effect on identity and culture is intended to result in a meaningful flow of cultural interactions. This is in harmony with Pierterse's (2009) assertion that as a cultural effect of globalization cultural hybridity stands in sharp contrast to cultural homogenization.

Diaspora

This term will be used to include every individual of African origin or descent living out of the continent. This will include Afro-Americans, Afro-Latinos, Afro-Europeans, Afro-Asians and Afro-Australians. Those born in Africa but living abroad for whatever reason will also be included in this definition (Manning, 2003).

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Pan-Africanism

Pan-Africanism as a literary term in this study refers to an ideology movement that in its practicality encourages the solidarity of continental and Diaspora Africans worldwide. It asserts the belief that African peoples, both on the continent and in the Diaspora, share not merely a common history, but a common future destiny. Thus, its use is intended to communicate a literary attempt aimed at defeating neo-colonialism in order to uphold the African identity worldwide. This is in line with Michael Williams' claim that Pan-Africanism is a global movement that fosters a sense of cooperative movement among peoples of African origin to unite their efforts in the struggle to liberate Africa from racial oppression and exploitation associated with European hegemony (Williams, 2005).

Globalization

As used in this work, globalization refers to the process through which the world is increasing becoming an interconnected whole primarily as a result of increased cultural integration. Bosswick and Heckmann (2006) identify it as a process of integration which through cultural hybridization is "linking single elements to one another and, out of these, forming a new association; adding single elements or part of the structures to the existing structure, to form an interrelated whole; improving relations within a system or structure" (p. 12).

Significance

The study will above all serve as a contribution to on-going scholarship on the writings of Ayi Kwei Armah from the perspective of one of the core concepts in post-colonial criticism: hybridity.

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It will also help to raise awareness on the need to efficiently manage cultural issues in the face of global cultural integration. This will assist policy makers and research institutions in Africa to design new programmes that will reflect the cultural needs of the continent.

Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is divided into five chapters. The first chapter, the introduction, provides a general background to the study. It presents the identified problem and states the purpose of the research as well as its significance as a literary work.

Chapter Two reviews literature on the works of Ayi Kwei Armah. It also discusses the theoretical perspective that will be used in analyzing the texts under study. The chapter will further review literature that traces the origin of one major post-colonial theme underlying this study: hybridity.

Chapter Three discusses the author's artistic role as a post-colonial writer in chronicling and re-telling the history of the African people.

Chapter Four explores how the author roots, contextualizes and communicates his Pan-African ideology in the texts under study.

Chapter Five presents the researcher's observations and conclusions.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter is divided into three parts. It will first introduce the reader to the theoretical framework with which the researcher will conduct the study.

The texts under study, *Osiris Rising* and *KMT: In the house of life*, will be analyzed using insight from post-colonialism. A discussion of the theoretical orientation underlying the study is deemed appropriate as it will help put the study into proper perspective.

Next, the chapter will review works which critique the works of Ayi Kwei Armah. This will provide the empirical basis on which the texts under study can be classified as African literature. Chapter Two will further provide a historical background on the concept of hybridity. This is intended to help trace the origin and evolutional stages the term has undergone since its initial use to its contemporary use and meaning. This will enable the researcher to define the perimeter from which the term hybridity will be defined, used and discussed.

Theoretical Framework

Literary theory is the collection of ideas and methods used in the practical reading of literature. It describes the underlying principles that one uses in an attempt to understand what a literary text is telling its audience. A discussion of the theoretical orientation underlying this study is deemed appropriate as it will help put the study into proper perspective. This section looks at the theories the researcher will apply in analyzing *Osiris Rising* and *KMT: In the house of life*.

Post-colonialism

Post-colonialism is an umbrella term which describes a study of the relations between colonized countries and their colonial masters. In literary studies, Post-colonialism studies these relations through the works of literature written by the colonized thereby empowering them to air their views and speak from their perspective. According to Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin in *The Empire Writes Back* (1989), about three-quarters of the people living in the world today have had their lives shaped by the experience of colonialism.

Interestingly, Henry Louis Gates Jr. also made an important observation in harmony with this claim. His critical study of the interwoven nature of black literary and artistic production of writers of African origin and descent had identified a conscious use of African folklore in Black works of literature, be it in the diaspora or on the continent. Hence, in describing the network of cultural heritage that binds Afro-American texts in particular and black literature in general, he wrote that:

> "The black Africans who survived the dreaded "Middle Passage" from the west coast of Africa to the New World did not sail alone [...]. [They] carried with them to the Western hemisphere aspects of their cultures that were meaningful, that could not be obliterated, and that they chose, by acts of will, not to forget" (Gates, 1988 p. 3, 15).

To Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, "the idea of 'post-colonial theory' emerges from the inability of European theory to deal adequately with the complexities and varied cultural provenance of post-colonial writing". They define post-colonial theory as "that dynamic of opposition, the discourse of resistance to colonialism which begins from the first moment of colonization" (p. 163). This definition makes Post-colonial theory an appropriate theoretical perspective to use in this research because it questions the ideological

assumptions of colonialism and also acknowledges its psychological consequences on the experiences of the African.

It is considered as an analysis of literary works related to colonialism written during the colonial period as well as in the aftermath of the colonial era. Such literary works, mostly written by writers who hail from countries which were once colonized, react to the discourse of colonization by analysing the cultural legacy of colonialism. Most post-colonial works deal with issues relating to the de-colonization--the cultural and political independence--of people who were once colonized. As Gutherie (2011) put it, it raises self-consciousness which revolutionalizes the minds of the colonized and the colonizer to build a new society where liberty and equity prevail. In effect, Post-colonialism focuses particularly on the way in which literature by the colonizing culture distorts the experience and realities, and inscribes the inferiority, of the colonized people.

As a literary concept, Post-colonialism addresses issues related to identity: the challenges in developing a post-colonial nationality as a result of the continual shedding of the old skin of Western thought and discourse leading to the emergence of a new self-awareness, critique, and celebration. With this comes self-awareness and self-expression. Segovia (2000) affirms that post-colonial critique as a dialectal discourse marks historical facts of de-colonization. It allows people emerging from socio-political and economic domination to reclaim their sovereignty; it gives them a negotiating space for equity.

This role is vital because as explained by Foucault, whosoever holds power over another has control over how much knowledge that one can have.

He asserts that knowledge linked to power, not only assumes the authority of the 'truth' but has the power to make itself true. Knowledge is, therefore, a very essential facet in colonial and post-colonial studies because it gives an insight to the dynamics of hybridity and acculturation. Kenyan writer Ngugi wa Thiong'o describes the imperialist's control of affairs in the colonization process in the following terms:

> "To ensure economic and political control the colonizing power tries to control the cultural environment: education, religion, language, literature, songs, forms of dances, every form of expression, hoping in this way to control a people's values and ultimately their world outlook, their image and definition of self" (Killam, 1984 p. 160).

This explains why the colonial masters reserved for themselves the right to decide on what was right and what was wrong. Based on their own criteria they tagged African cultures as primitive and barbaric. This was typical of the French, who introduced Assimilation, a policy aiming to transform Africans to Frenchmen. Tiffins (1984), thus, rightly states claim that the term Post-colonialism stresses the inescapable historical grounding in the practices and institutions of British imperialism and colonialism as well as the responses to legacies of this history across a variety of widely dispersed and vastly divergent cultures.

The field of Post-colonialism can again be said to be relevant because of its interdisciplinary scope. Ato Quayson (2000) opines that Post-colonialism has taken on and "in turn influenced a wide range of disciplines". It cuts across and into other theories and disciplines such as Cultural Studies, Feminism, Psychoanalysis, Marxism, History and Politics in its bid to challenge accepted myths of European essentialism. Like History, Post-colonialism asserts the struggle for cultural identity through the rewriting of

historical events and issues relating to the representation of the African. In Post-colonialism, writers find recourse in the urge to rewrite the past and give the African a voice as well as denounce myths about white monolithic superiority.

McLeod (2000) also reiterates this point when he likewise observed that post-colonial works are often resourced by concepts from critical perspectives such as feminism. Post-colonialism, for instance, overlaps with feminism on issues of marginalization of the subaltern and 'otherness'. In feminist theory, women are considered to be marginalized and oppressed economically, politically, socially, and psychologically through patriarchal ideology (Tyson, 1994). To them, in every domain where patriarchy reigns, the woman is the 'other' defined only by her difference from male norms and values. Post-colonial theory is also built around, among many others, the concept of 'otherness'- be it in relation to gender or race.

Post-colonial theorists equally use the concept of the 'other' to describe the process by which a dominant group otherwise known as the 'self' (colonizing countries) constructed 'other' dominated groups (colonized countries) by stigmatizing and perpetuating differences, real or imagined, so as to 'moralize' and 'legitimize' their dominance. "Otherness", derived from Friedrich Hegel's theory of binary opposition, often referred to as the master-slave dialectic, where the 'self' defines itself in relation to the 'other'. In explicating Hegel's dialectics, Philip J. Kain argues that "desire desires the existence of the other as much as its negation. Desire, then, shows self-consciousness that there is another and that this other has an independence that cannot easily be eliminated" (Kain, 2005).

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The researcher, thus, considers the Post-colonial theoretical framework to be the most appropriate perspective to use in analyzing the concept of hybridity. This is because Post-colonial theory fundamentally concerns itself with the issue of racial representation, cultural hybridism and the mixing of races. Its use is therefore of relevance as it will help the researcher to achieve the set objectives for this study.

Ayi Kwei Armah

Ayi Kwei Armah is a Ghanaian novelist. His writings are mainly about the state of affairs in post-colonial Africa. All of Armah's works focus on the ideological struggles of the African as he attempts to create an identity for himself after the colonial experience. His novels have established him as a major African writer along with others like Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Ama Ata Aidoo.

From his first novel *The Beautyful Ones are Not Yet Born* to his seventh novel *KMT: In the house of life,* Armah brings up issues relating to the exuberance of the immediate post-independence period followed by disillusionment, the struggle for individual and collective cultural identity, alienation, double consciousness and hybridity of cultures, among others. According to Nelson (1986 p. 341), Armah, like other African post-colonial writers, is burdened with the task to "reclaim the history of his people from the ethnocentric imaginations of the colonialist historians. He [the writer] has to salvage the past from White discourses in order to re-form it". This reformation often includes "practices that are partly inherited, partly modified as well as partly invented" (Lowe, 1996 p. 65). It often involves trying to capture living experiences just before colonialism and presenting it with

cultural dignity as an established structure that was cherished before colonialism.

Ogede (2000) celebrates the fact that Armah, like many post-colonial writers, has and indeed continues to live up to this task. To her, in the novels *Osiris Rising* and *KMT: In the house of life* Ayi Kwei Armah is very much in tune with other African novelists like Achebe and Ngugi who through their artistic works reconstruct the history of Africa. To Ogede, Armah's fight can be defined as a radical quest for a new direction that can change the fortunes of Africa and the black people. To him, Armah advocates the retrieval of African traditional values and systems as well as the study of the ancient Egyptian language, hieroglyphics as a means of establishing and asserting the humanity and identity as of his people in the texts under study.

Omar Sougou explains that, "His [Armah's] focus on Kemt – Egyptology- ties him with Cheikh Anta Diop's proposal for "Africans to return to ancient Egypt as a foundation for building humanities, just as the West did it from a graeco-latin basis" (Sougou, 2001 p. 26). Robert Fraser emphasizes the historical dimension in Armah's works, suggesting that "his imagination is of an historical order, not in the ways applicable to the historian.......but rather as one whose mind dwells on tracks of human experience in search for a clue to the depredation visited on his people' (Fraser, 1980 p. 28).

As an African writer, Armah draws from the fantasia-mythical stock in order to show his readers the extent to which the African past can possibly be of instructive consequences. The framing of his narratives around the deployment of myths, legend, tales, dream-visions, parables and allegories is

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clearly an attempt at debunking western misrepresentations of African history by providing 'one's own history'. For Armah, African history in reality is neither a representation of Africa as a caricature of humanity, nor a world of naïve savages existing outside history, but a rather complex yet civilized entity: thus, his use of the historical Isis-Osiris myth in his reconstruction of Africa's history in *Osiris rising*.

Bolaffi et al. (2003 p. 190) posits that myths by their nature are "ostensibly explanatory or historical". They are very important for group cohesion and national identity. Apart from learning about one's identity and individuality, history instructs on how to confront life actively and responsibly. Said 1994 sums it up in these words:

> Appeals to the past are among the commonest of strategies in the interpretation of the present. What animates such appeals is not only disagreement about what happened in the past and what the past was, but uncertainly whether the past really is past, over and concluded, or whether it continues, albeit in different forms, perhaps. (p.3).

Thus, the names of the revolutionaries in Armah's works are often chosen from all parts of Africa, from myth and history to reflect the originality of Armah's vision: his inventiveness and the Pan-Africanist formation he wishes to promote. Ayi Kwei Armah's six novels, described as works of historical reconstruction have generally received much scholarly criticism and attention: Amuta, 1992; Fraser, 1980; Anyidoho, 1992; Gillard, 1992; Zumakpeh, 1992; Eboye, 2011; Nartey & Kakraba, 2011. Achebe, in the essay 'Africa and Her Writers' (1972) described Armah based on his earlier writings as a pessimistic "alienated native". On the other hand, critics like Wole Soyinka, Kofi Anyidoho and Isidore Okpewho see in Armah's later works an optimistic aim to create a visionary ideal that is "not simply a retrieval of a past ideal but a

reshaping of a future world free from the destructive factors of past and present conditions" (Anyidoho, 1992 p. 41).

In as much as Armah's novels are fictional representations of historical facts, Durix (1987) argues that many of the events narrated in his novels are autobiographical (pp. 3-12). His argument is in line with the assertion made by Dan Izevbaye that autobiography and fictional works are to a great extent so intimately linked as to be inseparable. According to Izevbaye (1979 p. 39), "we are constantly aware that the story is not wholly feigned, for characters do not seem to exist independently of the view held by their author". In line with this school of thought, Neil Lazarus in "Larsony" argues that Armah seems to be stuck in his thinking as he [Armah in his works especially *Fragments*], writes about himself; his personal experiences, goals, difficulties and achievements (Lazarus, 1990). To the researcher, this criticism may have come about because in handling the theme of identity in his novel *Fragments,* Armah presents events in a way that seems to indicate that he identifies closely with those situations. Moreover, traces of the hardships experienced by the central characters Baako parallel Armah's personal life experiences either as a Ghanaian intellectual living in Ghana after Independence or as a Black traveler abroad.

True, Armah by virtue of his western form of education is a hybrid and so he inhabits a hybridized cultural space: a cross between an imposed western culture through formal education and his African cultural milieu (Bhabha, 1994). However, this, in the researcher's view does not wholly justify the claim that one can understand him as a person by directly reading meaning into the words and actions of the characters in his works whose lives seem to

parallel his own. This is because in the world of fiction, characters, plot and setting are not defined as existing in the real world but as coming from the author's creative imagination.

HYBRIDITY

The term hybridity has become an indispensable term in cultural and post-colonial studies. It describes the coming together and blending of two or more cultures. In *The Location of Culture* (1994), Homi K. Bhabha discourages the concept of cultural purity and maintains that cultural systems are constructed in a space that he calls the "Third Space of Enunciation", and cultural identity always emerges from this contradictory and ambivalent space. Bhabha (1994) asserts that the significance and productive capacities of this third space are deeply rooted in a post-colonial provenance. This suggests that the colonizer-colonized discourse meets in this third space of enunciation under post-colonialism, demystifying the colonial master and empowering the subaltern. In the preface to *The Black Atlantic* (1993), Paul Gilroy announces that the book is generally against racial [and cultural] purity and advocates the inescapable hybridity and intermixture of ideas. Gilroy argues against cultural essentialism and echoes Bhabha's ideas of the constant mobility of cultures. In an ever-changing socio-political world, hybridity becomes an important element when one analyses post-colonial literatures, hence, its significant presence in this study. The arguments for hybridity in this work would be modeled alongside the views of Homi Bhabha and Paul Gilroy.

Historical Background of the Term 'Hybridity'

In Post-colonial studies issues involving language, gender, sexuality, national identity, and colonialism have a related history in hybridism (Young

1995, p.5). Young traces the roots of the term to the scientific field where it was first used in botanical terms, to refer to the genetic combination of one or two species to produce a third which although different has characteristics inherited from all its component agents.

From its origins in biology and botany, hybridity has been purposefully contested and deployed to claim and represent change in Post-colonial discourse. Authors such as Paul Gilroy, Stuart Hall, Iain Chambers, Homi Bhabha, and James Clifford among many others have defined hybridity from different viewpoints. However, all the definitions are centered on one condition: mixing and combination in the moment of cultural exchange. Avtar Brah and Annie Coombs report that in the eighteenth century, the concept of hybridity was expanded to incorporate "humans and mythological nature-human hybrids such as goat-men, winged-feet angels and mermaids of western mythology" (Brah & Coombs, 2000 p. 3).

This later gave way to less imaginative concerns such as inter-racial human hybrids in the evolutionary development of the term. The 1861 edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*) first denoted the crossing of people of different 'races', thus marking the acceptance of the possibility of human hybrids. Consequently, issues of heterogeneous alliances, by means of sexual 'border crossing', resulted in the inter-breeding of humans and led to the invention of various classification terminologies such as 'mulatto', 'half-caste' and 'mestizo'. Ann Pheonix and Charlie Owen conceptualize the issue of race mixture as a terminological confusion with worrying consequences. This is due to the fact that although people with one black and one white parent have historically been categorized as 'black', they have yet been simultaneously

and contradictorily identified as being separate from both 'pure' black and 'pure' white people. Consequently, people of mixed parentage, resulting from sexual unions between black and white people, cannot easily be fitted into the racialized binary opposition of *black* and *white*. Thus, racial classification terms like "half-caste", "mixed-race", "bi-racial", "maroon", "mulatto" (from mule), and "metis" (French for mongrel dog) all demonstrate essentialism and bipolar thinking (Pheonix & Owen, 2000 p. 74).

By the turn of the 20th century, the concept of hybridity had been given in addition to its botanical meaning another significance: describing cultural phenomenon. In cultural studies, hybridity is an umbrella term that denotes multiple identity, boundary-crossing experiences and styles, matching a world of growing migration and 'diaspora' lives, intensive intercultural communication, multiculturalism and erosion of boundaries. Paul Gilroy in *The Black Atlantic* finds, through migration, the concept of hybridity helpful in the field of cultural production. To him, the musical components of hip hop, for instance, are "a hybrid form nurtured by the social relations of the South Bronx where Jamaican sound system culture was transplanted during the 1970s" (Gilroy, 1993 p. 33).

In his role as a literary artist, Edward Brathwaite produced works such as *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica, 1870-1920* (1971) and *History of the Voice* (1984), both of which focus on the continuation of African cultural expressions, especially through music, dance and oral poetry, in the Caribbean, and the creation of a distinctive hybrid European and African culture. Brathwaite (1971) explains hybridity as "a cultural action or process" after he made "a historical study with a socio-cultural emphasis" in

Jamaica (pp. xiv-xiii). To him, people, mainly from Britain and West Africa, who settled, lived, worked and were born in Jamaica, contributed to the formation of a hybrid society 'which, in so far as it was neither purely British nor West African, is 'creole'.

The term 'creole' as used by Brathwaite (1971) denotes a multi-racial society in which there is a juxtaposition of master and slave, elite and labourer, in a culturally heterogeneous relationship. Such colonial relationships often made up of a "metropolitan European power, on the one hand, and a plantation arrangement on the other" were often organized for the benefit of a minority few of European origin (p. xv). Such experiences are today shared by various African countries which were once European colonies. His epic trilogy, *The Arrivants* (1973), traces the migrations of African peoples in the African continent, through the terrible sufferings of the Middle Passage and slavery, and further journeys to England, France and the United States in search of economic and psychic survival. The middle section of the trilogy, *Masks*, seeks to recover for African Caribbeans the Ghanaian culture from which many of their ancestors were forcibly torn away from two or three centuries ago. However, Brathwaite's view of a hybrid culture differs from both Homi Bhabha's. Its emphasis is on the 'Africanness' of Caribbean customs, traditions and beliefs whereas Bhabha's formulations tend to focus on language and to present hybridity as consisting of two equally weighted cultures, whose interaction creates an 'in-between' or 'third' space, in which a speaker positions himself or herself (Bhabha, 1994).

Another field where the notion of hybridity has a distinct history focused on preservation is in linguistics. The 1890 *OED* actually makes

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explicit the link between linguistic, cultural and racial fusion. James Clifford uses hybridity in linguistics to describe "a discourse that is travelling or hybridizing in new global conditions" (Clifford, 2000 p. 304). Hybridity in the field of Linguistics is a very productive term associated with creativity in the formation of identity in language usage. It is used to describe innovations of language evident in the production of forms such as creole, patois and pidgin which made speech interactions between the colonizer and the colonized possible. Regarding inter-racial mixture, both language and sex have produced 'creoles': pidgins, patois, mixed-blooded children. Cultural 'creolization' and the idea of a linguistic continuum both evolve from the study of interactions like that between African and European peoples in the Caribbean.

In line with scholarships which continue to describe hybridity as a term for a wide range of social and cultural phenomena involving 'mixing' (Brah & Coombs, 2000), many conventional post-colonial researchers who have related to the concept assert that hybridity is fundamentally based on "the process of cultural mixing where 'diasporic' arrivals adopt aspects of the host culture and rework, reform and reconfigure those aspects in their bid to produce new hybrid cultures or hybrid identities" (Chambers, 1994 p. 50). Post-colonial theorist Homi Bhabha (1994; 2004) defines hybridity as an 'in-between' term and so refers to hybridity as a 'third space', in the context of colonization and its resultant interface between the colonial and indigenous cultures. According to him, in Post-colonial discourse, hybridity is the channel through which "newness enters the world" (Bhabha, 1994 p. 227).

Hybridity has become a key concept within Cultural criticism and Post-colonial theory. It is often treated in current Post-colonial discourse as a

subject of intellectual inquiry as well as a critical tool through which cultures and identities are analyzed. Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin (1995 p. 183) have observed that "hybridity and the power it releases may well be seen as the characteristic feature and contribution of the post-colonial, allowing a means of evading the replication of the binary categories of the past and developing new anti-monolithic models of cultural exchange and growth". The use of binary categories such as *self* and *other* in post-colonialism refer to the discourse of 'otherness' which is associated with racism - ideas of superior and inferior human races and cultures. In the context of post-colonial discourse, the *other* tends to stand for the colonized culture or people as viewed by the dominant power (Attridge, 1999). Many post-colonial critics and theorists in different parts of the world have advanced various concepts related to identity from the negritude advocated by Amié Césaire and Leopold Sedar Senghor through to the national identity of Frantz Fanon and to recent multicultural propositions on hybridity.

Hybridism became part of the colonial discourse in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It became very influential in imperial and colonial discourses when the union of different 'races' was referred to in negative terms (Young, 1995). The 1828 *Webster* defined a hybrid as 'a mongrel or mule; an animal or plant produced from the mixture of two species'. In such cases, the hybrids formed were usually not fertile but sterile. In this way, hybridity in its history developed as a negative notion. The concept was appropriated during the colonial period to refer to children born of white and black parents. The hybrid was thus, in technical terms, a derogatory term used in reference to people who are a 'cross' between two different races.

Many post-colonial theorists have approached hybridity as a means of countering the hegemony of Western identity politics through the theme of syncretism. Roger Bastide defines syncretism as "uniting pieces of the mythical history of two different traditions in one that continues to be ordered by a single system" (Bastide, 1996 p.23). The researcher agrees with Alfonso De Toro (2006 p. 11) in his assertion that hybridity is "a paradigm, a condition of our time". Truly, people living in our current world are living in a "heterogeneous time of the fusion between the present and the past" (Olivier, 2003). This is obviously a spatial time for which there seems to be no proper name other than the use of the current and controversial qualifying prefix 'post' both in its identification and categorization post-colonial; post-independence (Bhabha, 1994 p. 2).

In contemporary post-colonial discourses, this 'post' era does not allow the existence of fixed cultural borders. Presently, the main thrust of hybridity thinking concerns cultural hybridity. The phenomenon of hybridity described as - "neither the one nor the other but *something else* besides" (Bhabha, 1994 p. 219) revolves around the disintegration of rigid, totalized, established, stable and unitary cultures. Upon its entry into the dictionary of postcolonial studies, its use has been defined to refer to the creation of new trans-cultural forms in the colonial contact zone. Bill Ashcroft wisely stresses this point:

> The assertion of a shared postcolonial condition such as hybridity
> has been seen as part of the tendency of discourse analysis to de-
> historicize and de-locate cultures from their contexts" (Ashcroft,
> 1998 p. 119).

Here, hybridity is seen as the outcome when two or more cultures are incorporated to create a new cultural identity. Its appreciation is in its ability to lead to renovation and newness through recombination and reconstruction in

an intermediary cultural space. This intermediary zone "opens up possibilities of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy" (Bhabha, 1994 p. 4). Pnina Webner (1997) draws on Mikhail Baktin's concept of discourse analysis that hybridity has two forms – organic/unconscious and intentional/conscious - to argue that the mixing of cultures takes place on two different levels.

According to Bakhtin (1981), organic hybridity is a natural process through which cultures incorporate elements from other cultures as they come into contact with them. On the other hand, an intentional hybridity is a conscious hybrid. Its formation results from "an encounter within the area of an utterance, between two different linguistic consciousnesses, separated from one another by an epoch, by social differentiation or by some other factor".

On the contrary to such views, Homi Bhabha, one of the main proponents of cultural hybridity, does not make this distinction of organic and intentional hybridity. To Bhabha, 'all forms of culture are continually in a process of hybridity' (Rutherford, 1990 p. 211).

Hybridity in Fictional Works

Literary works on colonialism that treat the theme of cultural hybridity can easily be grouped and categorized according to three periods in history.

- The period marked by racist theories.

- The emergence of 'creolized' social formations as an outcome of colonialism.

- The present period marked by discussions of cultural hybridism.

Fictional works by notable early European writers such as Joseph Conrad and Joyce Cary whose works touched on the initial cultural encounter between

Europeans and Africans presented, from the point of view of the Europeans, an *other* who perhaps was a human being. Yet, that *other* could only be best described as being closer to animals than to the human species. It was often described as being in between the animal and human families in terms physiological, mental, sexual and social attributes.

The word 'hybrid' in the early 19th century was mainly used to refer to a physiological phenomenon. The concept of 'race', although very difficult to define, is a powerful social construct that is used to categorize people based on their physical differences (Haralambos et al., 2004). Of all the racial qualities utilized in the visible identification of someone as a member of a certain racial group, skin colour was and still is the most widely used as it is the most immediate and obvious. As noted by Bolaffi et al (2003 p. 239), human beings are psychologically conditioned to categorize events, objects and other humans and as such, [to us], race is just another category. It is merely a psychologically conditioned mode of categorization whose manipulation and influence has historically resulted in the establishing of one´s "essential identity" when diversity and similarity are identified comparatively. Stuart Hall attempts to explain this human tendency to naturalize difference based on colour perception:

> Blackness has functioned as a sign that people of African descent are closer to Nature, and *therefore* more likely to be lazy, indolent, lacking the higher intellectual faculties. Those, who are stigmatized…..as 'culturally different', and therefore inferior (Pilkington, 2003 p.180).

Historically, dark pigmentation has often carried associations of dirt, poverty, inferior social status, low intelligence, animal sexuality, primitiveness and violence. Winthrop Jordan, in *The White Man's Burden* (1974), notes that

prior to the sixteenth century, "black" had a number of connotations, among them being: "deeply stained with dirt; soiled, dirty, foul…. Having dark or deadly purposes, malignant; pertaining to or involving death, deadly; baneful, disastrous, sinister, foul, iniquitous, atrocious, horrible, wicked…Indicating disgrace, censure, liability to punishment" (Jordan, 1974 p. 6).

As a colonial concept, hybridity intensified notions of binaries and dichotomies because the ostensibly essential nature of the White *Self* and the Black *Other* was the basis for the understanding of hybridity as a form of dilution of the white race. The white colonizers upheld the belief that their colour and race were superior to the colonized Other, who were more often than not enslaved because of their so-called barbaric nature and blackness.

In referring to Africans as "blacks", Europeans revealed the existence of a preconceived Elizabethan notion about colour representations as well as their attitude towards the notion of 'purity and filthiness' which informed their 'colourative' description of the African people. Thus, a binary was firmly established from the first contact between the two people: *white* and *black* respectively connoted "purity and filthiness, virginity and sin, virtue and baseness, beauty and ugliness, beneficence and evil, God and the devil" (Jordan, 1974 p. 6).

As also evidenced in Shakespeare's *Othello,* Iago plays on and uses his race to distance Othello and make him seem an outsider to other characters because of his skin colour, race and religion. He refers to Othello as "the devil", "a barbary horse", "an old black ram", a "lascivious moor" with "thick lips", a "bonds-slave" and "a pagan" who needed to assimilate to Christianity and European standards or risk being treated as an animal. Being of African

descent, his race was inferior and not desirable so his marriage to Desdemona was frowned upon. It was a 'gross revolt' and as such any sexual relation between these two distinct races would result in the "making of the beast with two backs" – a hybrid.

Similarly, textual descriptions of Caliban in William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1994) equally present from the European racial point of view, a creature that is evidently an *Other* who can only be accepted by the white race as a human being if only he will be placed on a lower level on the 'human scale': a sub-human, a slave. Although evidently human, his portrayal and all that he represents is described as beastly and uncivilized. Seen as an abomination: a combination of man and beast, Caliban is one time called a 'tortoise' and at another is described as a "mis-shapen knave", "a fish-like" monster who is legged like a man: and his "fins" like arms. To the Eurocentric Prospero, Caliban is a human being who is only fit to be qualified as "a savage and deformed slave". In European history, people like the character Caliban were regarded as a people without history, culture or civilization who needed a European 'touch' for their betterment as human beings. Europeans even considered it their divine responsibility to civilize the black man.

Hybridity, thus, became a form of racial corruption for Europeans and the hybrid a category emblematic of the undermining of whiteness (Farr, 1864). This, according to Young (1995 p.6), marked the rise of the belief that there were "pure" human species which when mixed with "impure" species would result in the creation of an "intermediate" human race which was easily identified either by skin pigmentation, cultural, ethnic or national backgrounds.

Andrea Levy's two autobiographical novels, *Small Island* and *Fruit of the Lemon,* portray the life experiences of the first and second generation of coloured people who migrated to London after World War II. *Small Island* (2004) set in post-war London, 1948, tells the story of a Jamaican couple who moved to England after World War II. Since the colonial system of education in Jamaica was designed to make its students identify with Britain as the 'Mother Country', the first generation arrived in Britain with the notion that it was their "mother country".

As such, they expected to be accepted and hoped to be loved. However, the harsh reality they came to face to face with was that racism and the legacy of slavery had segregated coloured people living on European soil from other full members of the American and British societies. Britain made it clear to Blacks and West Indians that they did not and had actually never belonged there in spite of their colonial education which stressed loyalty to the British Crown. Coloured people were considered to be cunning, worthless and full of animal desires. Such binary categories created the platform for the establishment of a positive "Us" and negative "Them", thereby creating "in-group" favoritisms with "out-group" derogatives. Thus, historically, the concept of hybridity evokes the racist Victorian conviction that different races were other human species and hybridization of different human races would weaken 'pure' cultures (Young, 1995 p. 10).

Pheonix and Owen (2000 p. 75) assert that the history of slavery and colonialism accounts for 'a greater intermixture of peoples than is generally accepted'. During the colonial period, although sexual intercourse between the European master and the African slave frequently took place, the children born

of those illicit relationships were not recognized nor accepted by neither their white fathers nor the white society. In his autobiographical *Narrative* (1995), Frederick Douglass gives a testimony of the story of mulatto children born of white masters and their coloured female slaves in America. Such children because of the laws established by the slaveholders followed the slave condition of their mothers. Thus, coloured children automatically became slaves even when they were living with their siblings on their father's plantation. Many even suffered greater hardships than the other black slaves. They, being constant offences to their mistresses, were often under the lash or even sold to other slaveholders just to please their white mistresses.

Levy's *Fruit of the Lemon* (2007) also lays bare the problem faced by the second generation of coloured people in Britain. Coloured children born and raised on European lands did not belong to the European society either. Such children also received their share of racism and discrimination. In *Fruit of the Lemon,* Faith Jackson, born in Britain to West Indian parents, faces mockery right from her early age as school children who sneer at her parents who came to Britain on 'a banana boat' also call her a ´darkie´ because of her complexion. Discrimination and prejudice, at its peak, prevented any relationship between whites and coloured teenagers from being made public. If such a relationship ever became public, it was because perhaps, a boy wanted to provoke his parents by taking a black girl home. With the birth of 'scientific racism' in the nineteenth century, theorists of hybridity 'degeneracy', theologians, scientists and politicians merged superstition, theology and the Darwin's theory of evolution to provide 'evidence' in support of the claim of White superiority over people of colour. Works on

such theories published well into the twentieth century insisted that 'half-breeds' lacked physical, mental and moral strength. This perception readily lent itself to the interpretation that the maladjusted mind rather than the problems of colonial domination or racial oppression was the problem.

As a result, politicians manipulated law and custom to reinforce white hegemony by segregating and restricting mixed-bloods. The possibility of any form of social equality between half-breeds and pure- breeds was thus ruled out. This is a point well articulated by Francois Lionnet in the Introduction to her book *Autobiographical Voices*. She clearly states:

> Racial and cultural 'mixing' has always been a fact of reality, however fearfully unacknowledged. It is in large part because of the scientific racism of the nineteenth century that hybridization became coded as a negative category (Lionnet, 1989 p. 9).

In America, the 'one-drop' rule was an effective means of delimiting who could be included under the label 'white'. This rule made any child of one white and one black enslaved parent automatically a slave. Such a child was thus seen to be inferior and so did not have the full capacity of a full citizenship as his or her 'white' siblings did. In order to justify the 'one-drop' rule, scientists measured heads, sex organs and other body parts to demonstrate 'scientifically' that when even a single drop of 'impure' blood is mixed with 'pure' blood, the result would be the physical and mental disharmonic phenomena in half-breeds. Based on this, scientists offered 'scientific justification' for the social segregation and the application of other restrictive policies and practices.

Christopher Hutton in *Race and the Third Reich* also argues that in Germany, the Nazi ideology of race revolved around the supremacy of the true blooded Aryan race - the Nordic - over the Jews. Hutton (2005) presents

Johann Friedrich Blumbenbach (1752-1840) as the first theorist to attempt to define the German Volk in racial terms. In Hutton's words, Blumbenbach "classified humanity into five basic races: Caucasian, Mongolian, Ethiopian, American, and Malay" (p. 5). By defining physical differences and creating distinct impressions of various races, Blumbenbach established a system aimed at differentiating the differences between humans and attributing these differences to racial particulars. Stemming from an analysis of these differences, German intellectuals developed theories of national identity that stressed racial, linguistic and cultural diversity and expressed a mistrust of universal ideologies that threatened to erase that diversity. Many Nazi race theorists thereby sought to justify the existence of the German Volk as an entity that both included and excluded particular groups of people.

Consequently, subsequent attempts by racial anthropologists to define race in Germany had to first frame German racial diversity in terms acceptable to Nazi ideologies. Hutton further argues that a latter research made by one racial anthropologist, Hans F.K. Gunther (1891-1968), served to perpetuate racial terms that largely supported Nazi ideology. According to Gunther, six basic races made up the German Volk: the Nordic, the Mediterranean, the Dinaric, the Alpine, the East Baltic and the Phalian. From his research, Gunther proposed through his analysis of these races, that the Nordic was superior to the others. He also concluded that the psychological make-up of each 'pure' race, especially the Nordic can be summed up in terms of ideals such as bravery, single-mindedness, determination, nobility and heroism. Thus, for many Nazi theorists, interbreeding between races threatened the Nordic blood in the German Volk and was seen as a threat to the existence of

the Germans. They felt that "modernity involved the disruption of the relation of the Volk to territory... and [that] races, peoples, social groups... were now merging and blurring into one another" (Hutton, 2005 p. 10).

To them, Germany needed to reassert its place as a great European power and regain lost territory by ridding the body of the Volk of what was seen as foreign. Jews who were often equated with mixed marriages were seen to be racially foreign - a miscegenated composite. They were associated with social ills such as suicide, paralysis, alcoholism, syphilis, judicial punishments and moral delinquency. On the level of political propaganda and mass education the authorities drummed home the message that racial mixing was harmful to the Volk. As a result, Jews were banned from many public activities. Thus, while the Jews could not be classified as a distinct race, they were a descent group with a negative biological history and inherited characteristics which set them apart. By correlating the Jewish "race" with the perils of modernity, German officials in the Third Reich were able to separate Jews from the Volk. While Nazi officials did not promote "Aryan" as a racial term, they did embrace the use of its negative form ("non-Aryan") to classify Jews. Laws passed in the early years of the Nazi regime used the notion of 'Aryan' and 'non-Aryan' descent based on biological distinctions.

Interestingly, Mariama Ba's *So long a letter* (1981) reflects the existence of such a system of segregation in Africa, among social classes within the Senegalese society. Members of the Nyenyo (artisan and griot) and the Slave caste group are considered inferior to the Nobles, therefore, society does not allow the lower class caste to mingle with the noble upper caste group, not to talk of inter- caste marriages. This is the basis on which the

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marriage between Ramatoulaye from the upper caste and Moudou Fall a member of the lower caste group, as well as that of Aissatou from the lower caste and Mawdo Ba from the noble class is frowned upon. These inter-caste marriages fail in the novel because the social class division of the caste system runs deep and is almost impossible to bridge.

Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, issues related to mixed-bloods became important themes discussed in many discursive domains in the media. Dramas centered on the horrors of race mixing featured prominently on the literary front. In these dramas, mixed-race people almost always committed suicide in the plot resolution. Although film makers and playwrights in different texts highlighted and emphasized different issues, some common themes ran through:

- Miscegenation and mixed-race people are a source of pollution of 'pure' Whiteness and/or a pure nation.

- Miscegenation and mixed-race people are tragic, unnatural phenomena.

- Mixed-race people are psychologically damaged outcasts, angry at both parents' racial groups.

- Miscegenation and mixed-race people are exotic and desirable, yet ultimately forbidden to Whites.

- Miscegenation and mixed-race people often commit suicide in the plot resolution.

Even among Africans, mixed marriages were often not allowed. Even those defined as a union between people of the same race but dissimilar, or even sometimes, same cultural backgrounds as reflected in Ama Ata Aidoo's

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Dilemma of Ghost (1965) was frowned upon. The union between Ato and Eulalie is initially frowned upon because it is considered to be one of an inter-cultural mix. Eulalie is referred to as a 'stranger-woman'; a 'black-white woman' simply because she comes from a different cultural background. Her constant conflicts with her Ghanaian in-laws bring out the deep differences between the African-American culture and the cultural beliefs and practices that exist in Ghana. Her predicament is worsened by that fact that she is an African-American: a daughter of slaves, one without a tribe or family. Culturally, in the African context, she is an *other:* an inferior individual who does not have a dignified place in the society and this makes her an unsuitable wife for Ato. Although Ato and his wife both have black ancestry and they live in Ghana, Eulalie realizes painfully that due to her cultural background, she does not belong: a common racial heritage did not guarantee her acceptance in a society where cultural background was a very important factor in identity formation.

Similarly, in America, for instance, most African-Americans needed to contend with the dilemma of boldly identifying with their Black ancestry and risk facing rejection and isolation from society and friends or disown their Blackness and become Americans: think and feel like white men and women, in other to avoid racism. In order to feel a sense of belonging in the American society, many mixed-bloods who were white-looking deemed themselves and even their children fortunate to be physiologically 'umarked'. Consequently, they more often than not pretended to be 'pure' whites by refusing to reveal their Black ancestry, thus, 'passing' as whites in order to achieve social and

economic advantages which were usually easily available to white people (Boxill, 2001).

By the end of the 19th century, the phenomenon of racial passing was frequently seen in the United States of America and the word 'passing', according to Werner Sollors (1997 p. 248), was used more frequently as a short form of "passing for white" in the sense of 'crossing over' the colour line. As pointed out in Mills (1998), some 'passed' as whites with no intention of ever returning to their 'original' identity. Their aim was towards full assimilation. He states that to many, in "maintaining contact with black relatives, childhood friends and neighbourhood acquaintances will obviously jeopardize this endeavour, so it will be necessary to move away from them, sever all relationships and give one's children a highly pruned version of the family tree" (p. 56).

The Autobiography of an Ex-coloured Man (1989) written by James Weldon Johnson deals with the issue of racial passing as it existed in America. The plot revolves around a black man who has to choose between living as a black man or 'passing' as a white man. His choices, insecurities and fears reflect how many in search for freedom and an opportunity for renewal, or perhaps a new direction of growth, went as far as to betray race, culture and even family. However, Cathy Boeckmann in a review based on the actions of the characters in the plot of Thomas Dixon's novel *The Clansman* (1905), explains how looking like and pretending to be of the "pure" race – "passing" as white - would never translate one into truly acting white or having the essence of "whiteness" in one's soul. To her, although being "black blooded"

is not always physically visible, a mixed blood can in certain instances "pass" as a pure blooded individual.

However, the biological deficiencies inherent in mixed-race people would be expressed in their faulty character, which will eventually reveals these "passers" as who they are: imposters. In the plot of Dixon's work, white-looking mulatto characters revealed their inferiority through violence, wanton sexual desire for white women and in the exhibition of other deficient character traits. Thus, in addition to their biological deficiencies, bi-racial people were considered by the "pure" race as people who had psychological and social maladjustment problems. It was believed that the conflicting dual racial heritage of mixed-bloods often warred within their psyches making it impossible for them to find, accept and settle into their "acceptable" societal role of subordination to Whites.

W. E B Du Bois in his book *The Souls of Black Folks* (1903; 1995) emphasizes the fact that the formation of self-perception and collective racial identity is indeed historically situated. Du Bois' concept of 'double consciousness' was placed in a repressive culture that forced blacks to see themselves through the eyes of the dominant white society. It reflects the history of the American Negro based on the negative genetic reference/stigma which was associated with being a mixed-blood. The hybrid being an insider yet an outsider at the same time often struggled to negotiate the boundary between the two societies he is a member of. Du Bois (1995 pp. 16-17) describes the negative experience of African Americans, as they attempt to occupy the space in-between: neither fully being accepted as an African nor an American as well as the resultant longing to attain a self-conscious manhood.

He identifies a mental conflict: 'a peculiar sensation...two un-reconciled strivings' that existed in the minds of many people of African descent who lived in the white-dominated American society of his time as to whether they should identify with Negros or live as Americans.

In *The Black Atlantic* (1993), Paul Gilroy points out that many of the ideological and philosophical ideas and values of the African-American culture became so indelibly intertwined with similar ideals and values of the European cultural elite that as a result, groups that occupied this middle space experienced a kind of "two-ness", as two identities trying to exist within one person. Many who tried to reconcile the two cultures developed what Du Bois terms "double consciousness". Denise Heinze explains double consciousness as a "state of affairs in which an individual is both representative of and immersed in two distinct ways of life" (Heinze, 1993 p. 5). In belonging to more than one culture, there are obviously going to be aspects of the cultures that will clash and so will not allow any individual to fully belong to both of them. This will result in the individual having/developing multiple personalities. According to Owen Moore, having a 'double self' causes internal conflict and can delude a person to believe that they can mentally fixate themselves into being a part of a world or reality in which they do not belong.

As put by Moore (2005), to be a Negro is to be coloured: Black, African-American or to be associated with the cultural heritage the stems from Africa. Rightly put, the word 'coloured' entailed anyone who in skin colour was not white or Caucasian. To be American, however, is to be a black person in skin pigmentation yet mentally identify with white people and European

culture. Frantz Fanon espouses this theme of mental conflict which is generated within the mind of such a person in his novel *Black skin, White masks* (1967). Fanon insists that the colonial powers, with the death and burial of the original indigenous culture, especially its language, created within those they subjugated an inferiority complex which dislocates and separates the native African from his culture, from parts of himself as well as from his personal and familial identity. In trying to assimilate oneself into one of the two cultures, one becomes alienated from the other culture. This mental conflict can psychologically detach one from his/her heritage resulting in a cultural conflict which can cause one to deny or even totally reject one's indigenous culture and adopt the culture of the dominant society. Fanon sums up the mental and cultural limbo of the African-American in the statement, "without my Negro past, without my Negro future, it was impossible for me to live my Negrohood. Not yet white, no longer wholly black, I was damned" (p. 138).

Undoubtedly, the coming together of any two self-consistent yet incompatible frames of references causes a cultural collision. Gloria Anzaldua postulates that, any individual formed or living in such a cultural collision becomes a "'synergy of two cultures' [that] cannot hold concepts or ideas in rigid boundaries". She further asserts that due to this synergy a new hybrid culture will always be formed whenever two cultures 'edge each other' (Anzaldua, 1987 pp. 78-79). In reconciling the two divergent cultures by balancing both world views, people in such situations often create a space in which they attempt to construct a new cultural identity (Gupta, 1998). They develop a new 'consciousness' which is drawn from components of the

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individual's multiple identities to compose a self-consistent whole. Certainly, in the construction of a new cultural identity, the people involved only need to create, live and operate in a world view that suits them at any given point in time.

In *Negotiating Caribbean Identities* (1996 p. 397), Straut Hall maintains that the cultural identity of any group of people at any point in time is "not a fixed essence but rather a *positioning*". This claim can be said to be true because in a world society like ours that is increasingly becoming interconnected and is intensely involved in historical changes, dialogical relationships are required not only between individuals, groups and cultures, but also within the self of the one and the same individual (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010). There is the need for dialogue since people are always in a process of positioning and repositioning, not only in relation to other people but also in relation to themselves. It is in the light of this that Bhabha (1994) argues in favour of the need to create a "third space" to accommodate such individuals since the world as a whole "increasingly exists as a cultural horizon within which we frame our existence" (Tomlinson 1999 p. 30).

Contemporary Discussions

Transposing hybridism on to the cultural arena, Hall (1997; 1992) posits that modern nations are all cultural hybrids. This is true in that as people are exposed to hybridized forms of multicultural life through migration and transnational transportation, they increasingly become self-conscious of the change in civilization, societal, ethnic, linguistic, cultural and regional engagements in which their lives are embedded (Singh, 2004). Today, people

living in multicultural societies have successfully been able to position themselves in a 'third space': an in-between, hybridized space where identities - diversities, differences and boundaries of intersecting race, class, gender and nations - are negotiated and redefined in everyday life. This negotiation, often as a result of the articulation of cultural difference, is a constant endeavour "that seeks to authorize cultural hybrid ties that emerge in moments of historical transformation" (Bhabha, 1994 p. 2).

Homi Bhabha argues in *The Location of Culture* (1994) that nationalities, identities and ethnicities are all characterized by hybridity. As a result of this characterization, it is only by embracing its hybrid identity can a country which was once colonized affirm its cultural difference as a way of resisting essentialism as well as cultural imperialism. In recent discourse on hybridism, cultural hybridity signifies a process in which incongruous and discrepant cultures overlap, contradict, intermix, and reconcile with each other. Since hybridity involves the fusion of two relatively distinct forms, styles or identities, cross-cultural contact is a requisite for hybridity. Today, as put by Jan Nederveen Pieterse, "hybridity is to culture what deconstruction is to discourse: transcending binary categories" (Nederveen Pieterse, 2001 p. 238). This process ends up producing an ambiguous, ambivalent and intermediate space "which enables other positions to emerge" (Rutherford, 1990 p. 211). In this space, identities are neither assimilated wholly or partially nor altered independently yet the third identity that emerges is not the same as either of the independent parts. This is because bits of identities are drawn from the independent parts and they in turn become elements of the new identity formed. Some of the new identities turn around 'tradition' while

others accept 'impurity', turning around what Bhabha calls 'translation': formations of identity that cross borders and include people who have been dispersed from their home land.

In the researcher's own view, this act of resistance is to enable such countries to conceive their cultural differences as positive and so empower them to 'take back' their identities from the dominating culture. The researcher wholeheartedly agrees with Bhabha that it is truly time for Africans to negotiate their own "authority through a process of iterative 'unpicking' and incommensurable, insurgent re-linking [of their past to their present to construct their future]" (Bhabha, 1994 pp. 251-256). This argument echoes the claim made by Carrithers (1992) that a marker of real understanding is being able to do something new with what is learned, not just to copy blindly what others have done.

To the researcher, what Africans need do is to merge their various multiple identities in order to create a new, unique identity. This will enable them to envision and build a future which would be guided by their past experiences and informed by the lessons learnt from those experiences. As Africans attempt to negotiate both sets of cultural values, they will undoubtedly be taking part in a process of adaptation that will result in a blending and renegotiation of cultural identity "inspired by their experiences within these overlapping worlds" (Dhruvarajan& Vickers, 2002). The attainment of a such a single-minded self-consciousness can only be possible if one is able to successfully merge the best he/she can draw from his/her multiple identities into a better and truer self (Gates, 1996). The essential quest in a single-minded consciousness is the power [of such a merger] that

will enable the African to define his own reality by merging this 'double self' into a better self which will allow Africans to look at themselves in a healthy way.

In the face of recent discussions in favour of globalization, the hybrid space which was once considered to be derogatory is now seen "as a part of the contestational weave of cultures" (Mudrooroo, 1990 p. 24). It is even considered an advantage. Ankie Hoogvelt in *Globailzation and the Postcolonial World* (1997 p. 158) believes that the hybrid has a "privileged kind of superior cultural intelligence owing to the advantage of in-betweeness - the straddling of two cultures - and the consequent ability to negotiate the difference". Globalization, defined as 'a tendency to undermine tradition while people become acquainted with other ways of living which results in an increased reflexivity with regards to the collective identities' in *Racial Disadvantage and Ethnic Diversity in Britain* (Pilkington, 2003 p. 197), today has a great impact on societies all over the world.

As stated by Nederveen Pieterse (2009), the issue of cultural globalization has raised a great deal of controversy as to whether or not globalization will consequently result in the universalizing of all cultures. Advocates of anti-globalization such as Featherstone (1996); Kilminster (1997); Guillen (2001); Lechner & Boli (2008) in their discourses are of view that globalization will lead to the fusion of all world cultures. To them, globalization will diffuse the individuality of the various cultures and fuse them together to form one big culture. The researcher, however, thinks that these scholars are mistaken because by focusing on the fusion of cultures they overlook the bigger question of the power of people's subjectivity. To them,

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globalization will lead to the homogenization of the world which will eventually lead to the growth of a global consciousness – a global culture.

This researcher agrees with Beck (2000 p. 47) that such advocates only focus on how "the world horizon opens up in the cross-cultural production of meaning and cultural symbols" as a result of the inter-dependency of humanity. Positivist scholars such as Smith (1990), Appadurai (1996), Luhman (1997) are of the view that globalization does not imply the emergence of a world culture. Beck (2000), Tomlinson (1999) and Bauman (1998) also assert that globalization will not result in a totally coherent and culturally directed process. To them, it rather permits a multiplicity of combinations among contradictory but nevertheless coexisting elements.

Contemporary trends are fast proving that in order to even have a global culture, equality and dignity of all cultures need to be recognized. The rights of each person should be respected. Moreover, all cultural communities need to affirm and preserve their cultural identity in order to have it respected by others. This is summed up in the position Sartre takes:

> If we can respect the diversity of peoples and their cultures in this new era, it can lead to a global community marked by unity in pluralism. If, Indeed, by having a global culture, the hopes and aspirations for a better world in which all human existence may be united, improved and pacified then, really, the prospect of having a global culture, is not be a bad idea at all (Sartre, 1981).

This conclusion drawn by Sartre adds weight to the argument that in globalization, cultures may indeed no longer be 'local' in the traditional sense, but would still be heterogeneously hybridized and contemporary yet unique. Nederveen Pieterse (2009) also agrees that globalization promotes cultural heterogeneity. According to him, the globalization process allows the injection

of new cultural elements into local societies thereby reconstructing, hybridizing and consequently, enhancing the cultural identity of the people.

Such positivist scholars are of the view that in the face of globalization, people become much more concerned and focused on the uniqueness and particularity of their own culture. To them, cultural identity provides the global significance of local knowledge as well as the sense of self, community and nation. In the light of this argument, globalization brings much more awareness of cultural identity. Although there is an erasure of distinct national and cultural identities among cultures in the face of globalization, there is still a benefit derived in terms of the inventions of new forms. The result is a new form that "signifies the encounter, conflict, and/or blending of two ethnic or cultural categories which while by no means pure and distinct in nature, tend to be understood and experienced as meaningful identity labels by members of these categories" (Lo, 2002 p. 199). In many African literary texts, authors have combined Western and African quotations, recast plots and used narrative resources from different cultural archives to define their own didactic projects in such a way that their own messages to local readers will be illuminated. As explained by Newell (2000 p.8) such literature often draw on narrative conventions from "a shared pool of literary languages, crossing different genres and language registers and in the process create narratives that are self-consciously textual". A narrative may contain quotations from western texts while the surrounding text makes reference to folktales.

In J. Abedi-Boafo's novel *And Only Mothers Know* (1946 p. 20), for instance, the author on the issue of marriage makes references to well-known

Biblical women in the unions between Bible characters like Samson and Delilah to project meanings and generate moral judgments on the nature of Ghanaian women and problems to be encountered in contemporary marriages. Also, in the concert parties of the 1930s and 1940s, according to Bame (1985) and Collins (1994), Christian parables were recast in local settings, filled with local characters whereas new lyrics were sung to tunes of old Christian hymns. Such creative fusion of foreign and local influences result in a heterogeneous form - a hybrid - that is impossible to root in fixed sources as African elements cannot be separated from western forms. These works can never be set against the original and viewed in derogatory terms as they were of great relevance and importance to the people of that time.

The essence of this review is to show that a hybridization of African and European cultures in the face of recent influences such as globalization is necessary and will be beneficial to the postcolonial African, whether living in Africa or abroad. This is because there are many valuable aspects in the traditional customs and practices which define the cultural identity of the African. Therefore, if these valuable aspects are blended with the admirable ones in the African's colonial heritage, the result will be the formation of a hybrid identity positioned within the third space, with the ability to transverse both cultures, negotiate and mediate affinity as well as difference within a dynamic of exchange and inclusion (Papastergiadis, 1997).

Overview

This chapter first introduced and presented the theoretical framework from whose perspective issues raised in the study are grounded. It next focused on the thematic organization, review and analysis of literature relevant

to the researcher's scope of work. This was intended to provide a critical overview of research on/related to the topic of this study.

The goal of this review is to relate this research to other empirical studies in the field of Post-colonial studies. Therefore, contrasting perspectives and findings were examined and analyzed in order to provide the framework for relating new findings to previous one. It was also to demonstrate the relevance of the purpose of this study as well as establish how this research advances all previous research.

A general discussion of hybridity as a concept in post-colonialism was made. This required a review of many empirical works in this field. Of particular importance to this study were the works of Anzaldua (1987) Bhabha (1994), Ashcroft et al (1995) and Hall (1996). Empirical studies on double consciousness were also reviewed and discussed. Reference was made to major works such as Gilroy (1993), Du Bois (1995) and Fanon (1967). Finally, scholarships which claim that globalization will not result in the fusion of all cultures into one were reviewed and discussed to counter those which are of the view that globalization would lead to the homogenization of all cultures.

This is intended to help readers of this work to appreciate the possibility of a cultural hybridization which in the face of globalization would result in the creation of a unified world made up of heterogeneous cultures. It also seeks to shed more light on the need for Africans both home and abroad to blend the valuable aspects of their traditional culture with the admirable values in their colonial legacy. This would result in the creation of a 'third' culture which they can identify with and confidently call their own. Chapter

Two ends with remarks by the researcher on the need for such a fusion of cultures in the face of powerful influences such as globalization.

The next chapter will focus on how Ayi Kwei Armah as a Post-colonial African Writer performs his artistic role of telling, through fiction, the history of his people to assert their identity as a people.

CHAPTER THREE

RE-TELLING THE AFRICAN PAST: AYI KWEI ARMAH'S

ARTISTIC ROLE

Introduction

Ayi Kwei Armah's texts Osiris Rising (*Osiris*) and KMT: In the house of life (*KMT*) constitute the primary data that will be used for the analysis in this chapter. However, reference will also be made to some of his early works such as *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, *Fragments, Two Thousand Seasons (TTS), Why Are We So Blest?* and *The Healers*. The focus of this chapter is to analyze the two main texts for the parameters within which the two novels show that Black Africa had an organized and stable culture before the arrival of the Western imperialists.

Accordingly, it will discuss the ways through which Armah, as an African artist, strategically manipulates and indigenizes three elements of fiction - plot, setting and character - so as to enable him present a record on Africa that glorifies its people, the land of their birth as well as their cultural heritage.

Although the researcher, with all humility, acknowledges that this Chapter does not present an exhaustive examination of all the strategies which Armah as an African writer adopted in "writing back", the instances cited herein conveniently help to affirm Kwame Ayivor's claim that when Armah's works are arranged chronologically in terms of theme, setting or cultural milieu, they unmask a positive historical sequence of narration that links Africa's past to its present (Ayivor, 2005).

To start with, the chapter will discuss the literary context surrounding the African writer's move to re-tell the history of his people. This is intended to give significance to the effort the author puts into re-writing the history of Africa in the texts under study.

Then, it will explore the lines of connections which the author, through his artistic use of mythology, draws between the cultural history of the fictional world in the two novels and ancient Egypt in his attempt to establish a claim to that pre-colonial African civilization.

Discussion

1.0 The literary context and the African writer's position

It is an undeniable fact that history is vital to the survival of any group of people. This is mainly because history provides the structure through which the past could be communicated. On the importance of history, Woodson (1984, pp. 10-11) asserts that "if a race has no history, if it has no worthwhile tradition, it becomes a negligible factor in the thought of the world and it stands the danger of being exterminated."

Research has confirmed that the fabric of History has on numerous occasions been a site for racial tension given the cultural, social and political impact of colonialism on the people whose lands were colonized worldwide. Thus, to African writers an accurate re-counting of historical details is of much importance.

To them, an affirmation of their history validates their existence as responsible members of the human race. Moreover, they claim that History will inform and guide contemporary Africans to learn from their past in their attempt to modify their present and create a better future for posterity.

Consequently, many African writers from once colonized countries who seek to assert their cultural identities have, through their woks, contested the authenticity of Western literature on Africa. These writers often in their works subversively maneuver fictional elements such as character, plot, setting, narrative structure and language among others in an attempt to counter or "write back" with a view to interrogating the philosophical assumptions on which many European 'realities' were built. Many of such writers often restructure their literary elements in an African way to project the African way of life.

To Soyinka (1976), this assertive projection, of most especially the pre-colonial African culture, has become necessary now that the Post-colonial African writer intends to deliberately highlight the particularity of the African culture and in so doing, expose the damaging effects that Western civilization and imperialism has had on the African way of life. This is mainly because early European ethnocentric concepts consistently de-meaned and de-stabilized claims to an African history or culture before its colonization by insisting that Africans, for instance, had no history or culture before the colonial encounter (Hegel, 1956). The works of early Western historians such as William Shakespeare, Daniel Defoe and Joseph Conrad provided paradigms to support such claims.

However, no matter how graphic such documentation often proved to be, many African writers do not accept its authenticity and reliability. They argue that such records are not authentic since they were sourced from the observation of 'outsiders' - European explorers, traders, missionaries and colonial officers among others - and not from native 'insiders' who would

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have been in the position to give a true account of their own history. They also contend that those early Western scholars did not always comprehend what they observed. Thus, they were unaware of or perhaps unable to translate written documents of African origin coded in the African languages. Moreover, because many were also deeply influenced by the then growing notions of European racial superiority, such Western writers were often bias and, even at times, prejudiced in their assessment of the African way of life.

As a result of this assault on the African psyche, the African mind in the form of its writers has on occasion without number risen to defend itself. In recent years, many of them have stepped up to boldly challenge the racist ideology that underpins much of what has been written about African people, history and culture in European literature. To enable them to achieve their literary objectives, notable West African writers have adopted several strategies. Many, including Chinua Achebe, Ben Okri, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, and Ama Ata Aidoo have adopted and used the English Language as well as the novel - both forms which originate from the literary history of the West - as instruments through which to develop their stories on and for Africa. Such writers mostly choose to write in the Language because it is the national language of their people. Hence, its use 'officializes' the message which they seek to communicate. Moreover, since the message they seek to give is often intended for an International audience, they assume that the English language would best carry it across.

However, as a way of 'Africanizing' their works, these writers often modify the conventional features of either the Language or the novel by introducing into them indigenous literary elements such as proverbs, myths

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and folktales which belong to the cultural and cosmological worldview of the African. In so doing, such ones openly acknowledge and accept the oral traditions of the African people as an authentic native source of history on Africa. This stance has paved the way for many African scholars to extensively research into and consequently identify themselves with oral sources in their re-writing of African history as a way of both challenging colonial narratives and giving a voice to African natives whose stories had hitherto been ignored or completely overwhelmed by European historians.

In Africa, Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, for instance, presents from an African point of view the physical and psychological impact of the colonizer's appearance on the African. Similarly, Abdulrazak Gurnah's *Paradise* (1994) also provides an African variation on Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness (1973)* whereas in the Caribbean context, Aimé Césaire from Martinique and George Lamming from Barbados have also offered their own versions of Shakespeare's *The Tempest.*

These rewritings, to the researcher, are examples of what Frantz Fanon describes in *The Wretched of the Earth* as a writer's attempts to "rescue" native culture and history from the colonizer's custody in a bid to establish the native path to be followed for the construction of an ideal society. He put it this way:

> The claims of the native intellectual are not a luxury but a necessity in any coherent programme. The native intellectual who takes up arms to defend his nation's legitimacy and who wants to bring proofs to bear out that legitimacy, who is willing to strip himself naked to study the history of his body, is obliged to dissect the heart of his people (Fanon, 1965).

This urgency to remember the past is therefore a way to establish a continuum between the state of affairs in which the country was before the domination of foreign colonial power and the present situation. It is also a way to fight against the attempt made by colonial power to hide or, even, to deny the presence of an African pre-colonial political system

Notable African writers including Diop, Senghor, Sonyika, Achebe, Ngugi and Ama Ata Aidoo have often in many of their works boldly "written back" to affirm Africa's cultural validity and to delineate its history in African terms. Boehmer (1995) refers to such works as a body of literature which identifies itself with the broad movement of resistance to and transformation of colonial societies. This is because they spur on what Tiffins (1996 p.16) calls a "de-colonizing process" which challenges European colonialist discourses through the writing of African alternatives and sometimes, even, replacements for European historical and fictional records on Africa. The writings of early African intellectuals including Senghor and Cheikh Anta Diop are among the first few literary works which placed emphasis on the beauty and uniqueness of the African culture and history.

Senghor's works about Timbuktu and the Mali Empire, for instance, illustrated many of the achievements of the African people which had been ignored in Western literature. Diop (1974) also further made a strong claim that Egypt with its past artifacts and monuments belong to and are part of an ancient African civilization. Also, based on conceptual frameworks such as Negritude, Africanism, Nationalism and Pan-Africanism contemporary writers like Achebe, Ngugi, and Aidoo have also built on the foundation of resistance to selectively re-create the African historical context in their works.

Others yet have also used a number of measures ranging from the use of African languages in "writing back" to the 'domestication' of European languages as an attempt to express the African experience from an African perspective. Ngugi, *for instance,* in his novel *Weep not Child* "writes back" to show how the Whites who colonialized the lands in East Africa maltreated the black people who lived in those lands during the colonial era. As put by Alexander & Nartey (2011), the thematic vision of such works is often aimed at emancipating the continent of Africa from the forces of neo-colonialism by heightening the awareness of Africans to the imperialist socio-economic structures that cause social inequalities.

Born and raised in Ghana during its period of colonization, Ayi Kwei Armah has joined the many Post-colonial African writers who write in response to the works of the early European scholars. His aim, undoubtedly, is to correct as many misrepresentations on Africa as possible. Thus, he also consistently uses the medium of prose fiction to interrogate the complexity and enormity of Africa's post-independent problems. To him, colonialism was a "post-conquest European strategy for keeping Africans usably under-developed and dependent" (Armah, 1995 p. 213).

As a Ghanaian writer who has taken on the task of re-constructing Africa's story, Armah's two novels under study, like all his other works, reflect his primary focus of re-telling the history of Africa in a manner that glorifies and upholds the African identity. Hence, in *Osiris* and *KMT*, he does not merely stimulate an artificial re-creation of history based on fictional characters and content. Instead, he centers his plot on the entire stretch of Africa's history: from its ancient origins to the contemporary era. He also

artfully explores the myth of an ancient Egyptian civilization to reflect major phases in Africa's history: colonialism, slavery and neo-colonialism as well as the African's post-independence search for the African identity. This broad sweep through history allows him to, through fiction, identify and showcase the cultural effects of the colonial encounter on his people.

The researcher's review of literature on the significance and use of mythology in African literature revealed that many writers use myths to either authenticate or contextualize their works which counter the Western myth of White supremacy. Mawuli Adjei, for one, in '*Back-to-Africa', 'Double Consciousness' and the African Diaspora: Confronting the Myth and the Reality in Ghanaian Fiction* mentions Wole Soyinka, Charles Angmor and Efua Sutherland-Addy as a few of the African scholars who have highlighted and stressed the importance of myth in African literature (Adjei, 2005). Interestingly, Sutherland-Addy's (1996) definition of a myth pictures it to be a particular type of story with defined features that are collected, anthologized, analyzed and depicted as representing the heritage of an ancient society. In expanding the boarders of this definition, Kunene (1980) further acknowledges that myths can conveniently be used to re-organize historical content in terms of modern perspectives to create an attractive vision that will define in familiar cosmic terms, the future possibilities of any given society.

In his evaluation on the use of African myths in contemporary literature in Ghana from 1911 to 1978, Angmor (1996) contends in *Myth as Aesthetic Perspective in the African Novel* that many Ghanaian writers have and continue to draw on and use traditional materials including mythology to create an "African Saga" out of the legends of the African peoples. This,

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Armah explains, is because in Africa, mythology is not considered to be mere artistic resource. This is due to the fact that its contents move hand-in-hand with history. He notes:

> In Africa, connections between myth and history are strong and obvious. Both myth and history are invaluable psychosocial resources, especially for societies aware that they have lost their way, and willing to work their way toward a more lucid future. In addition to the intrinsic fascination of our myths as artistic narratives, they offer us insights about our society, its experiences and its potential, its fears and dreams … the study of our myths, along with a serious immersion in our history, is a path to self knowledge (Armah 2006, p. 25).

Thus, from his first novel through to his latest, Ayi Kwei Armah has explored and subsequently re-created many ancient African myths and has put them into modern perspectives to enable him to achieve his artistic objective of enlightening his readers on the cultural heritage of the African: The Melanesian Cargo mythology in *Fragments*, the Akan myth of Anoa in *Two Thousand Seasons* and, in the texts under study, the Kemetic myth of Isis-Osiris.

In *Two Thousand Seasons,* for instance, the author, through the Myth of Anoa, introduces his readers to the life of the African people as they battled slavery. This theme is extended into *The Healers.* There, he marks the difference between African and Western cultures by bringing to the fore effects of the scramble of Africa by the colonial masters on the cultural and political heritage of the African people in the fictional world he creates. This he aptly parallels to the story of how the Ashanti Empire fell under the heavy influence of colonization. To commend this bold move, Isidore Okpewho, in *Myth and Modern Fiction: Armah's Two Thousand Seasons* (1983), lauds

Armah ability to revise an existing historical yet mythological convention to suit his artistic objective.

In addition to his fictional use of African myths, Armah like many African writers has extensively drawn on both Nationalistic and Afrocentric paradigms to counter many Eurocentric mis-representations in world history about Africa in his works. This in the researcher's view is very noteworthy since Afrocentrism as a proponent in Post-colonial Studies represents a counterpoint to Eurocentrism with a basic motive of bringing about a positive change in the African's present cultural, social, educational and psychological situation. As a result, many of its advocates including Asante Molefi Keteku, Cheikh Anta Diop and Yosef Ben-Jochannan have strongly sought to by its use undermine the notion of white superiority with their claim that there once existed a coherent black civilization that had its roots in ancient Egypt: Africa. They have also consistently shown, by watering down all such Eurocentric notions on Africa, a commitment to the regeneration of the pre-colonial African way of life which in their view will eventually lead to a future comprehensive development of Africa.

Based on this discussion, the researcher, in the next section, will analyze three elements of fiction in the texts under study - setting, plot and character – for textual evidence on how Armah

- links the characters, setting and plot in both novels to the Egyptian myth of Isis-Osiris.
- parallels the customs, practices, morals and values of the "Companions of Ankh" to those that guided the brotherhood in the "House of life"

2.0 Elements of Armah's fiction

2.1 Setting

A close reading of the plots in *Osiris* and *KMT* revealed that the author in both texts fictionally chronicles a historical account of a people - a group of people whose history the narrator in *Osiris Rising* describes as having "the energy of news, with power to shape the future" of its present generation (*Osiris*, p. 1). The researcher, in line with this, identified four strategic ways through which the author artfully manipulated the place and time at which events take place in both texts to enable him to achieve his literary objective of fictionally re-telling the history of Africa in a way that places Africa among notable early civilizations.

First, the sequence of events as presented in both texts do not follow a linear arrangement that can be traced along a timeline stretching directly from Africa's ancient origins to its present. Rather, the author artistically arranged and structured events to unfold in a circumventive way that symbolically foregrounds as well as reinforces the winding path through time along which the audience would be led to travel in both texts. When the researcher, for the purpose of this study, sequentially re-arranged events in a way linear along a parallel time frame, it was observed that much of the events which developed the plots of *Osiris* and *KMT* were triggered by internal and external conflicts which took place in a common pre-colonial and colonial past with ensuring consequences extending into and influencing events in the post-colonial settings in both novels. Thus, the author's choice of narrative technique strategically helps to highlight the unique way through which much of the historical details would be presented.

Moreover, Ama Tete, the traditional African historian at Bara, plainly stated that the story of survival backing the historical record about the "Companions of the Ankh", and by extension all pre-colonial ancestors, dates far back along meandering paths into the past. Her words:

> Our society goes back not centuries but thousands of years into our past. The pattern of its life is not an unbroken line crossing the ages. It has known weakness growing to strength, vigorous life waning to suspension. At times it died. It has known birth and death and rebirth, over and over again (*Osiris*, p. 299).

Her statement, on another hand, is a direct interrogation of the reliability of Hegel's (1956) claim that Africa prior to the arrival of the colonial master was without neither history nor culture. It rather authenticates and validates a native claim to an indigenous pre-colonial African society with a dynamic history and culture.

In emphasizing this claim to an African ancestry, the author sets *Osiris* and *KMT* in an unnamed post-colonial African community whose history and lineage he cleverly weaves together in the tapestry of a popular mythology which belongs to ancient Egyptian culture and civilization. According to Kakraba (2011), existing literature reveals that many of Armah's critics have argued on occasion without number that the story he tells in *Osiris and KMT* does not give a truthful account of Africa's history. This is because geographical locations such as Bara, Yarw, Manda, Boka, Anafo, Kusini, Anee, Lo, Teye, Pale, Pwani and Ingia which were categorically mentioned and linked with several events in both novels are highly fictional and so cannot be linked to any ethnic group or location on the African continent. This obvious 'error' is traceable to the setting of *Two Thousand Seasons,* one of

Armah's early works, from which the thematic orientation for *Osiris* and *KMT* extends into the texts under study.

However, the researcher after a careful consideration of the texts under study observed that as if in response to these criticisms, the author emphasizes the cultural background backing the geographical locations in both texts in the title of his seventh novel *KMT: In the house of life*. The title identifies KMT as "the house of life" from which all the African characters in the novel originate. To confirm, Asa Hilliard in *The Meaning of KMT (Ancient Egyptian) History for Contemporary African American Experience* reveals that KMT (often spelt "Kemet/Kemt/Kempt" but pronounced /km.t/) means "the black land". Rooted in Egyptology, the term KMT which stems from the hieroglyphic descriptive term "kem" (black) was the name of modern day Egypt during the Old Kingdom. Historically, it is believed that the natives of this ancient African space referred to their land (Ta) descriptively as "Kemet" after the black colour of the fertile land they inhabited along the stretch of the Nile Delta. They, in like manner, are also believed to have referred to themselves as 'Kemetu" meaning "black's people". Situated in the inner equatorial regions of the continent, ancient Egypt's indigenous civilization has the oldest record in Africa: a land supposed to have been united, less chaotic and less vulnerable to external attacks before the Arab and European invasions which lead to colonization and imperialism. Culturally, its people possessed patterns which identified them very closely with the rest of ancient Africa. In line with this, Ama Tete pointedly mentioned "Kemt", ancient Egypt, as the center of the 'nameless' pre-colonial African space within which the "Companions of the Ankh" once lived (*Osiris*, p. 301).

By paralleling the way of life among the "Companions of the Ankh" who once lived at Bara with that of the "Companionship of Jehwty, the friendship of Maât" who lived in the "House of life", the author cleverly links the geographical locations that define the pre-colonial setting in *Osiris* and *KMT* to Africa (*KMT*, p. 231). To add, the writer cleverly asserts the existence of this specific pre-colonial African destination by referring to it as the geographical space on which his post-independence African characters such as Kamara, Duma, Lamine Djatta, Dineo Letsie, Kojo Boanye and Moko in Osiris as well as Lindela Imana, Wennefer, Biko, Jengo, Djiely Hor, Astw Konate in KMT freely lived their lives parallel to the United States of America, the land from where Ast journeyed to Africa in search of her roots.

The author further grounds both texts in Egyptology by integrating the ancient Kemetic symbolism and philosophy of the 'Ankh', an ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic symbol of eternal life, into the setting of both texts. He evidenced this by tactfully rooting his work in a well acclaimed African superstitious belief that there is both a physical and spiritual connection between the living and the dead. This explains why Nwt emphasized that the "Ankh" she was passing on to her granddaughter Ast was a symbol of "life" and continuity: one that links her as an African, together with other descendants living in America, to her ancestors who originate from Africa (*Osiris,* p.1). According to Ogede (2000), "Per Ankh" is the name of the cultural and intellectual institutions which ancient Egyptians established for the preservation of their ancestral heritage. The researcher on that account finds Armah's direct reference to the philosophy and symbolism of the Ankh

in *Osiris,* to be a deliberate yet subtle way of rooting his claim in the ancient Egyptian cosmological worldview.

Third, both novels equally highlight a period in African history where the practical examples of customs and social practices cited dignify African traditions and give meaning to the pre-colonial way of life. This is in harmony with Adejumbi's (2000) claim that pre-colonial African societies in their diverse occupations had customs, laws and other social conventions which were used in the enforcement of order. To corroborate this, Ama Tete's narrative revealed that the society of "Companions" was at every point in time headed by a governing body which was tasked with the responsibility of enforcing laws and regulations. She even cited how as part of their efforts to achieve their political objective of resisting colonial rule and fighting against the commercial trading of Africans, the governing body even had to, at one time, "judge and execute any native who traded in slaves, be it with whites or with other natives" as a means of protecting the lives of members of the community (*Osiris*, p. 205).

Similarly, the various aspects on the life of the people who lived in pre-colonial Africa as revealed in the narratives of The Scribes give further insight into Tete's narration. The words of the Scribe Khaty Wsrt in *KMT*, for instance, testifies to the fact the "House of Life" in Kemt once housed a complex society made up of people doing many different tasks and jobs which had relevance to the pre-colonial African way of life. She revealed that many who lived there were skilled craftsmen such as carpenters, weavers, jewelers, leather workers, potters builders, scribes, artists, keepers of the calendar and other practitioners whose stock in trade was verbal eloquence. Her narrative is

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clear on the fact that the "House of life" produced the most inventive astronomers and scientists of their age (*KMT*, *pp.* 254-255). Through the mouths of many such 'eyewitnesses', the narrator cleverly informs readers about the relative social, political and economic stability that the pre-colonial ancestors who lived in the "House of life" enjoyed throughout the period of time during which they lived together as a big family on the their native land. Equally emphasized is the good interpersonal relationship that existed among the people resulting in peaceful intra trading activities and marriage alliances. Thus, the life course and vision of each of these two societal groups in *Osiris* and *KMT* like "The Twenty Initiates" in *TTS* displays an extensive communal commitment towards both the physical and cultural regeneration of their people.

As African griots, the descriptions these Scribes give with regards to the societal way of life among the "Companions of the Ankh" in *Osiris* as well as the brotherhood which inhabited the "House of life" reflects the characteristic way of life, which the historical myth of Anoa in *TTS* prophesied would be lost should the people of "the way" - Africa - ignore or reject their principles to embrace that of their colonizers. It is the very same way of life that the author projects and presents in the text under study as the Ideal to which all present day Africans need to 'return' to. Thus, membership of the Ankh, for instance, is presented as being the exclusive preserve of creative and committed Africans like Asar, Ama Tete and Nwt among others who as individual members of a societal group identify themselves with the fight "for life and creation, against death and destruction" of both the people and their values (*Osiris*, p. 264). On the whole, the researcher finds that the

writer, in strategic ways, highlighted many positive attributes of the pre-colonial way of life.

One, the pre-colonial African society is described as being made up of very sociable and interactive people who as part of their everyday lives never lived in isolation. Two, the nature, character and social interactions associated with members in both the "House of life" and among the "Companions of the Ankh" presents the picture of a well-organized, cultured, strong and progressive African society whose way of life reflect the characteristics which Cassaro (2011) describes as a unique inclination toward brotherly love and admiration. This near perfect picture of a pre-colonial African society affirms Omar Sougou's assertion that Armah often romanticizes about and portrays life in the "prelapsarian" era in Africa's history as being the ideal model - "the way" - to which the contemporary African needs to return. This is because Sougou (2001) like the researcher also identifies and attributes Armah's stance to the fact that Armah as an African writer builds on and develops Anta Diop's proposal that Africans look back to ancient Egyptian civilization as the foundation on which to build their present day identity.

Fourth, strategically set at a place and time on the African continent, *KMT: In the house of life* reveals untold "truths" about the colonial encounter that only a native African can relate to. Thus, the griot, Djeley Hor, with much authority narrated to his audience:

> the story of our people as told by the established keepers such as the griots of Niani.......our origins, of our first homes, of settlements, of towns built along the banks of the longest of them all, of hopes that grew there for a millennia and then died, of the long migrations, six, according to the Dias, seven great movements from oasis to lake bed to oasis across the desert, according to the older traditions, until our final arrival here and on the western coast (*KMT*, pp. 190-192).

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Their final area of settlement after the "seven great movements" of migration, for instance, made it possible for the inhabitants of the "House of life" to come into direct contact with both the "Arab raiders" as well as the "the savior Europeans" who came by sea. This, in the researcher's mind, unveils the author's intention to validate the authenticity and reliability of the accounts given by The Scribes and Ama Tete in *Osiris* on life before the colonial encounter.

As true custodians of traditional history, the collective narrations of these historians represent, to the African, a reliable African version on the how those "invaders" attacked and conquered their people, exploited the natural resources that abounded on their land and finally with the help of some corrupt fellow Africans succeeded in, under the guise of bring salvation and civilization, replacing pre-colonial African religion, ancestry, history, beliefs and practices with their 'better' Islamic and Christian religions, beliefs and practices. In Hor's words:

> The Arabs knew what they wanted from us when they came, but they also knew better than to tell us straight. They said they brought us salvation. The Europeans did the same. They have always known what it is they need to take away from us: our sustenance from land and sea and air, the vitality of our bodies, the consciousness in our spirits. But their song is that they bring us salvation. It is one of the secrets we traditionalists know but are sworn never to utter unless we are ready to die (*KMT,* p. 186).

The perspective from which Hor's gives his narration echoes the historical significance and meaning attached to "the unsigned article, mimeographed on yellowed paper" which in *Osiris* was sent to Ast in the USA. The article reads:

> For centuries now our history has been an avalanche of problems.
>
> We've staggered from disaster to catastrophe, enduring the destruction of Kemt, the scattering of millions ranging the continent in search of refuge, the waste of humanity in the slave

> trade organized by Arabs, Europeans and myopic, crumb-hungry Africans ready to destroy this land for their unthinking profit.
> We have endured the plunder of a land now carved up into fifty idiotic neocolonial states in this age when large nations seek and even fools know that fission is death.
> It may look as if all we ever did was to endure this history of ruin, taking no steps to end this negative slide and begin the positive turn. That impression is false.
> Still, even in defeat the creative ones left vital signs. They left traces of a moral mind path visible to this day, provided we learn again to read pointer to lost ways (*Osiris*, p. 22).

Clearly then, the researcher would not be far from right in concluding the author intentionally set a common historical and geographical stage in both texts on which detailed insight into the cosmological worldview of the African people before their encounter with all 'outsiders' could be expertly given.

On the whole, the researcher identifies the writer's reference to the ancient Kemetic mythology, the symbolical representation of the "Ankh" and its "Companionship" as well as the parallel account of life in the "House of life" as visual lenses through which offer glimpses into the pre-colonial African way of life. This evidently gives significance to and also reinforces the assertion once upon a time, Africans lived together on the continent as a well cultured group of people.

2.2 Plot

Here, the researcher noticed three major ways by which the author in performing his artistic role as an African writer strategically 'Africanized' the plot in *Osiris* and *KMT*. To begin with, as the title of *Osiris Rising* points out, the novel is transposed in the ancient Egyptian Osiris myth. As a result, the role that Asar, Ast and Seth play in the text parallel Osiris, Isis and Set's in the Egyptian myth.

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One, Asar is a young African intellectual who is determined to initiate academic changes to promote African-centered Ideals in the educational curriculum of the University at Manda (Osiris p. 138). These changes, as put by Adjei (2005) were intended to "transform Africa into a continent of visionary people committed to casting away their veil of inferiority" (p. 47). This "revolutionary" role corresponds with the role played by the enlightened mythological hero, Osiris, whose objective was to also "transform" ancient Egypt. This semblance in character role manifests itself in causal incidents which affirm Mensah (1998) and Jackson's (2000) claim that there are undisputable similarities between the ancient Egyptian myth of Isis-Osiris and the fictional world Armah creates.

Two, Ast the African-American graduate who travels from America to Africa in search of her African identity is named as one of the few friends who share in Asar's Pan-African vision. As his wife, she carries Asar's child at the time of his untimely death just as Isis, the mythic wife of Osiris, as at the time her husband was brutally murdered (*Osiris*, p. 319). Also, like Isis, Ast by means of her ancestral background as well as the child she carries serves as the link that connects Africa's past to its fictional present. She, by means of her unborn baby, is a symbol of the physical and spiritual union espoused by the pan-African vision in the second novel *KMT*.

Three, Deputy Director Seth Spenser Soja's actions identify him as the mythical Set who out of jealousy and envy murdered his brother Osiris. The antagonistic feelings Set nursed for his brother reflects itself in the hatred Seth nursed with is heart for within his heart For Asar. Thus, Seth likewise pursued and killed Asar on the river by firing bullets which dismembered his body

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"into fourteen starry fragments…..the pieces plunged into the peaceful water" (*Osiris*, p. 348). In the mythical story, the death of Osiris does not end the struggle. His son Horus later takes up the mantle of leadership and avenges his father.

In the same vein, Asar's death at the end *Osiris* does not mark the end of the struggle for liberation. To ensure ingenuity and continuity, the researcher observed that the author creatively continued his version of the mythical story in *KMT* by assigning the regenerative role which Horus single-handedly played to a group of 'truth seekers' including Biko, Winnefer, Lindela and Prof. Jengo. Significantly, this group's role overlaps with Ast's role in *Osiris*. They, likewise, carefully traced Africa's history from its early days to the present with the intention of bringing up "truths" from the African past which would help to restore dignity to the pre-colonial African way of life. Like Ast, they were able to successfully decode and decipher the encrypted hieroglyphic texts written by "The Scribes" because they could read that ancient language: hieroglyphics. This further connects them to an ancestral heritage which originates from an ancient Egyptian (*KMT*, pp. 215-350). To the researcher, this replication of character roles together with the sequential arrangement of events help to uncover another artistic strategy adopted by the writer to help him to root both plots in Egyptology.

With regards to their structural forms, both texts are novels. However, in order to achieve the literary objective of, the author foregrounds the benefits of cultural hybridity through his style of writing. For one, he did not wholly adopt the Western literary novel together with its unique features and characteristics. He rather borrowed its structure, adjusted it and used it to

present a record on Africa that highlights and upholds the traditional African way of life. This possibility holds because according to Mikhail Bakthin's definition of the novel in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays,* that genre can be shaped and adapted to almost any condition in order to establish a close and direct contact with the contemporary world around it (Bakthin, 1981).

To reflect and maintain this dynamic and adaptive ability of the novel, *Osiris* and *KMT* deviate from the original form of prosaic writing which has been used over and over again by British writers to tell the story of Africa. As a way of challenging predefined European notions on how the story of African should be arranged and told, the writer deliberately 'Africanized' his version of the novel by mixing the formal features of his adopted form with identifiable structural features which belong to the African oral narrative form. Here, the author introduced traditional African storytelling elements such as myths, legends, symbols, rituals and characters into the conventional form of the Western genre. He also tagged each chapter of Osiris with Hieroglyphic labels such as "Nwn", "Nwt", "Rekhit", "Iryt", "Dwat" and "Reswt".

Through this hybridization of structure, Armah tactfully created a unique prose form which bears close semblance to an African narrative. This literary technique of creating a "hybrid" prose form to achieve a desired stylistic effect is undoubtedly what Linda Hutcheon (1988) referred to as "historiographic metafiction" when she used this unique term to describe novels which include as part of their structure a dialogue with colonial narratives of history. In the researcher's mind, Armah's decision to use such a technique to structure the plots in both novels could have been greatly influenced by his desire as an African writer to 'Africanize' his plot so as to

enable him to 'tell' the history of Africa, the African way. Drawing on the features of the African Epic as outlined in Okpewho's *The Epic in Africa: Towards a Poetics of the Oral Performance and* Ruth Finnegan's *Oral literature in Africa*, the researcher identified three key elements of oral performance evident in the plots of both *Osiris Rising* and *KMT: In the house of life*.

One, Armah incorporates into his novels the structure of the traditional African folktale which largely draws on myth and legend as well as the authoritative "voice" of a storyteller. This feature created an appropriate platform for the two fictional African historians, Ama Tete and Djeley Hor, to tell as though an African tale, their different yet remarkably similar versions of Africa's history as it had unfolded from its early stages through to the present fictional era to their audiences.

Two, the stories told by the two 'storytellers' - Ama Tete and Djeley Hor - were directly addressed to an audience which in each instance was actually gathered and seated face to face with them (*Osiris*, pp. 299-308; *KMT*, pp.182-192). In addition, each audience at a point in time during the narration was given the opportunity to participate significantly in the performance by either asking questions, challenging, making inputs or interacting with the performers.

Three, the 'storytellers' are themselves significant members of the African society who commanded an unparalleled firsthand knowledge of the history of Africa and its people. The narrator describes them as unmatched "wisdom seats" who rely mostly on the knowledge stored in their memory. This, according to Djeley Hor was possible due to the fact the training and

"education given to [all] traditional historians is a long and complex affair. It lasts long because of the quantity and quality of the material to be studied: the entirety of a people's history" (*KMT*, p. 182).

The researcher, consequently, finds Armah's strategic introduction of these features of 'orality' into the plots of both texts as a definite structural means aimed at fracturing the conventional novel in order to validate the 'Africanity' of both works so as to differentiate them from other Western novels.

In addition to structurally validating the 'Africanness' of *Osiris* and *KMT*, both plots subtly play down the authenticity and reliability of much of the historical content presented in Western literature. This is evident in the fact that all information provided by the authentic and authoritative voices of each traditional historian consistently debunked all Eurocentric notions echoed in Professor Christine Arendt's paper "Oral Traditions as Historiographical Source" which was presented at a seminar on Historiography in Yarw. In the presentation, the Professor alleged that all of Africa's intellectual existence before the arrival of the Arabs and the Europeans, with their writing systems, was "entirely oral" and of low quality. In her own words, "being entirely oral meant that Africa had no written records, no literature, no philosophy, no science, no methods for computing time, no tradition of formal training in regular institutions, no recognizable curricular (*KMT, p*. 176).

According to her, the reliability of such oral literature was questionable. Thus, she put forward a suggestion that Africans "borrow the historical consciousness of Europe, and march into the future".

In tactfully refuting this allegation, the author intentionally placed much worth and value to the information that the griots and traditional

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historians in the texts under study passed on. Their version on Africa's history, with much authority from the writer's point of view, provided others with a more accurate account of events which belong to periods long before the arrival of all European 'scholars'. Cinque in clear terms confirmed this fact in his speech to Ama Tete. He stated:

> Now I have returned to Africa for confirmation of the truth. I'm told if anyone knows the truth about the accident that cast my ancestor into slavery, that person is you. I'm here to re-establish the contact between me and mine (*Osiris*, p. 297).

Accordingly, all 'Knowledge seekers' in both texts including Ast, Lindela and Prof. Jengo earnestly searched for these traditional historians and carefully listened to their narrations. They also attached great weight and credibility to their oral versions on history as compared to the written pieces of European 'scholars' like Captain Broderick Petty. Although the two African versions 'told' in both texts are oral narratives which had been passed on by word of mouth across generations of oral historians, they were expertly 'massaged' into both texts to enable the writer to achieve his artistic objective of providing an authentic and reliable African version on the history of his people.

In this way, not only does Ayi Kwei Armah succeed in subverting European historiography in the novels under study but he also successfully brings to "the newly awakened only the truest of narratives, the entire story of our being and becoming, from our origins to now, told in one unifying, intelligent, intelligible whole" (*KMT*, p. 135). More importantly, he indicates along clear traceable lines that Africa's pre-colonial and colonial history, although presently exists as fragmental representations of a world which no longer exists, is very much alive in the memory of its people.

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2.3 Character

An up-close study of the major African characters in both *Osiris* and *KMT* helped the researcher to identify instances in which the author through his characters asserts the African identity to contrast early European representation of the African as a weak and inferior being. To show, there are many well-educated African characters in *Osiris* and *KMT* who display intellectual characteristics that stand in sharp contrast to that of black characters such as Caliban in Shakespeare's *The tempest*. These include Asar, Ama Tete, Nwt, Wennefer, Biko, Lindela, Hor who, as it were, join the intellectual fight to 'liberate' Africa's history from the hands of its colonial masters. Each one of these, in both texts, gets physically and mentally involved in "digging up" and sharing "hidden" truths about life in pre-colonial Africa.

One, as an emblem of the present day dynamic African intellectual Asar, for instance, took passionate steps to promote a Pan-African agenda aimed at restoring dignity to the African way of life. It is therefore not surprising that Netta in conversation with Ast describes Asar as a strong man of action who "doesn't make a career of analyzing problems. He proceeds to put his conclusions into practice" *(Osiris*, p. 89).

Also, as evidenced in *KMT*, even young ones like Biko Lema, are bold and daring. Biko fearlessly challenged the accuracy of the knowledge his British African history instructor had come to teach to the African students at the "Whitecastle" school. He courageously pointed out to Mr. Bloom that according to Aristotle, a well-known European scholar, whose book he had

come across in the school's library, Egyptians were black people. To quote Biko:

> "What Aristotle says is quite different, sir," Biko said.
> "About what, Mister Biko Lema?"
> "About black people and philosophy."
> "What, if you please, did Aristotle say?"
> "I saw one passage in which he said the Egyptians were philosophers and teachers of philosophers."
> "What if he did? The ancient Egyptians had nothing to do with black people,"
> Mr. Bloom said.
> "Apparently, sir," Biko continued, "Aristotle said the ancient Egyptians were black."
> "Bllllack?"Mr. Bloom asked, his expression dripping disgust, as if Biko had touched him with some unclean object. (*KMT*, p. 49-50)

In addition to these bold males, there are a number of other assertive female characters who play authoritatively significant roles in the novels. Ast, for example, comes across in *Osiris* as an intelligent and focused young African American woman who is decisively clear on what she wants to do with her life. In clear concise words, she communicated the reason for her return to Africa to her friend Netta, the hotelier. She stated, "I want to work in a society I belong to, with friends moving in directions I can live with" (*Osiris*, p. 87).

To add, young Ama Tete represents "the idea of justice, Maet" at Bara (*Osiris*, p. 301). In playing out her role as judge, she confidently sat in judgment and aptly re-delivered the verdict of betrayal on Cinque's forefather Apo without fear or favour. She like Anoa in *Two Thousand Seasons* is very knowledgeable in the history of her people. Thus, her revelation of the historical truth behind Cinque's "broken ankh" rubbished Cinque's claim to an age of royalty in Africa which she claimed had ended ages ago. This, to the researcher, is one vital way through which the two novels celebrate and dignify the intelligence and moral strength of the African.

Other, female characters such as Nwt, and Astw Konate were collectively assigned the prominent role securing detailed family linkages and customs which were to be passed on younger generations. This, as explained by Astw, has always been a vital role women play in the traditional African setup. Hence, Ast's grandmother like Ama Tete's grandmother served as secure links in the chain of custodians who in *Osiris* and *KMT* pass on the history, culture and values of their people by word of mouth from one generation to the next (*Osiris*, p. 1; *KMT* p.153).

The role these women play in *Osiris* and *KMT* is comparable to that of Baako's grandmother Naana who in *Fragments* is the custodian of traditional knowledge during her time. She like Nwt battled odds in order to keep the cultural memory of her people alive. Hence as the narrator in *Osiris* revealed, "Ast found out it was Nwt [who] had resisted the family's desire to name her after some European saint, and had given her the African Ast, most intelligent divinity, as namesake" (*Osiris*, p. 18). In the words of the Scribe Nebt Medw Netcherw, this form of informal education which was characteristic of Africans was intended to as it were,

> infuse the breath of life into memory, so that you the coming generation may not forget that you flow from us. May you remember us as blood, flesh of your flesh, bone of your bone, sinew of your sinew, spirit of your soul. May you know that we, in our time, breathed the same air, drank the same waters, shared the same hopes you will come to find. May you remember our names, knowing that they carry markers of our character. May you keep our names, the youngest descendant being called after the oldest ancestor, so that none of our names is lost. The loss of ancestral names is the loss of our living soul (*KMT*, 215-216).

This principle, obviously founded on the African's desire to preserve the cultural heritage of both the family and the society highlights the existence of a pre-colonial culture. It also reveals the great lengths to which the pre-

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colonial African went to ensure that their descendants would in future remember who they are, and where they come from. This dynamic representation of the African woman counters the marginalization of females in many colonialist discourses where men are placed at the fore of the educational ladder whereas women find their place in the kitchen and are made to play minor 'traditional' roles such as grandmothers, mothers, wives, sisters and daughters of male protagonists.

The researcher also noticed that the author makes no distinction between the intellectual capabilities of the male and female characters in *Osiris* and *KMT*. Male characters such as Asar, Wennefer and Prof. Jengo together with female characters like Ast, Ama Tete and Lindela, for instance, are all cast as intellectuals: graduates who hold university degrees in their respective areas of specialization. This is very much in in line with Busia's (1986) observation that at a point in his writings, especially beginning in *Two Thousand Seasons,* Armah breaks away from the male dominated type of characterization and begins to develop his female characters better. However, the researcher also noted that, in a bid not to usurp the status quo, these women do not become the heads of their societies. Rather, in performing their assigned roles, female characters effectively work alongside their equally strong male counterparts. As evidence, couples such as Asar and Ast, Hor and Astw Konte as well as Lindela and Prof. Jengo work together harmoniously to achieve set goals. This, Ast rightly observed: "there were others, none alone, many in pairs connecting, the clusters coming together, riding storm, wind and breeze" (*Osiris,* p.73).

As a build-up, the Ast/Asar pair at the training college in Manda, enlarged to become a group of African activists with a shared vision. Similarly, the Lindela/Jengo pair also expanded to include Hor and his wife Astw (*KMT*, p. 101). Together, they like the teachers at Manda formed a group of equally intelligent and strong-willed Africans whose aim was to live and work together for their common good. This group identity technique reflects "The Twenty Initiates" in *TTS* as well as the "Companionships of the Ankh and Jehwety which is very much in line with the characteristic communal African way of life.

Another tactic used to extol the African identity in the novels reflects itself in the author's choice of a naming system that is rooted in the African cosmology. First, names such as Nwt, Nwn Ast, Astw and Hor have clear undisputable Egyptian origins and date back through time to ancient Egypt. Additionally, others like Ama Tete, Lamine Djatta, Bantu Rolong, Bai Kamara, Ndeye Kamara and Biko meaningfully give a fair representation to the diverse cultures that exist in the different regions of sub-Saharan Africa. To add, many of the fictional characters have life stories that are identical to historical characters that have made a mark in the revolution record of Africa. According to Ayivor (2005), the character of Biko in *KMT*, for instance, bears a lot of semblance to the person of the famous Black South African activist Bantu Steve Biko who initiated both a physical and intellectual revolution against colonialism. Ayivor further claims that fictional characters such as Prof. Jengo and Lindela Imana also exhibit manifestations and attributes of Cheikh Anta Diop and Mamphela Ramhele. East (2003) in *Africa and Its Significant Others: Forty Years of Intercultural Entanglement* likewise

identifies and parallels the lives of Ras Jomo Cinque Equiano and his ancestor Apo to the historical Senegalese slave Joseph Cinqué (Sengbe Pieh) who after gaining his freedom later became a slave owner.

Clearly, then the Chapter has revealed how in a bid to effectively perform his artistic role of re-telling the African past, Ayi Kwei Armah in *Osiris Rising* and *KMT: In the house of life* creatively manipulated three elements of fiction - plot, setting and character - in ways that help him to uphold the African identity and also emphasize the significant beauty of the pre-colonial African way of life. Chapter four will discuss how he contextualizes his call for a Pan-Africanism that aims at re-uniting all Africans living across the globe.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONTEXTUALIZING AYI KWEI ARMAH'S PAN-AFRICAN RENAISSANCE

Introduction

Chapter four focuses on how *Osiris Rising* and *KMT: In the house of life* present the effects of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade on the cultural identity of the post-colonial African. This is intended to provide textual evidence that indicate that Armah progressively built on the history of Africa he provided in *Two Thousand Seasons* by complicating and expanding his initial Afrocentric objective of affirming Africa's pre-colonial history and culture as discussed in Chapter Three into a global Pan-African call for the physical, intellectual and cultural re-unification of all sons and daughters of Africa.

Here, the researcher will identify and discuss two significant ways through which the writer by means of the thematic continuity that connects both texts demonstrates how a physical "return" centered on the cultural and intellectual re-discovery of the 'African self' would benefit the contemporary African.

The discussion will also highlight the need for the African-American to respectfully work together with other competent Black intellectuals on the continent in the re-making of Africa.

Discussion

Since the fight against the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade had not ended as at the end of Ayi Kwei Armah's fifth novel *TTS*, he, as it were, in the texts under study, takes up and continues to tell the story of its resultant effects on the cultural psyche of the people of "the way" - Africa. In the first part of

Osiris Rising, the author shifts his attention from geological Africa to the African Diaspora and, there, concerns himself with the effects of the Trans-Atlantic on the cultural heritage of the first generation of Africans who crossed over to the other side of the Atlantic. This helped the Armah to reveal the great lengths to which these Africans although far away from Africa went to hold on to their ancestral heritage, thus, their quest to return to their homeland. A close reading of *Osiris* and *KMT* revealed two significant reasons why the writer strategically re-visited the history behind the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade.

The first reason is that the historical background behind the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade is firmly established on the African's claim to a pre-colonial history: it provides a strong and legitimate historical indicator that point to the natal cord that connects all black people, regardless of the part of the globe on which they live today. In line with this thematic orientation of a cultural re-discovery, the writer first of all aptly widened the historical timeline of his fictional Africa from the pre-colonial era into the colonial and post-colonial period.

This strategic sweep through time enabled the writer to present to the reader the journey of the African slaves across in-lands on the sub-region to the coast so as to activate and include the "Middle Passage" through which, according to Gilroy (1993), many unwilling Africans were forced to travel as slaves from their homeland in dehumanizing conditions - with chains on their necks, hands and feet - across the Atlantic Ocean to foreign lands. The incredible inhuman conditions in which these journeys were made are graphically described in the 1788 *Abolitionist's Leaflet*:

> The middle passage was the crossing from Africa to the Americas, which the ships made carrying their 'cargo' of slaves…..the Middle Passage took the enslaved Africans away from their homeland……They were from different countries and ethnic (or cultural) groups…….They had no knowledge of where they were going or what awaited them there…….The slaves were packed below the decks of the ship. The men were usually shackled together in pairs using leg irons, or shackles….They were packed so close that they could not get to the toilet buckets, and so lay in their own filth.

Oludah Equiano's (1989) autobiographical *Narrative* adds to the description. He revealed that the shrieks of the female African slaves aboard those ships coupled with the groans of the sick, weak and dying made the horrific scene aboard those slave ships en route to the West inconceivable. This apt reference to the historical Slave Trade set the stage for the writer's reference to the existence of an African diaspora beyond the shores of the continent.

With reference to the texts under study, this diasporic space was first inhabited by the generation of Africans who were uprooted from their native lands and transported to foreign destinations across the sea. Many of these ones, in the face of stern opposition and ridicule, continued to maintain and uphold their unwavering loyalty to a homeland far away from the host society. They, in direct and subtle ways, continued to preserve and pass on their beliefs, morals and values to their descendants who were born into the diasporic community. To illustrate, when Nwt in a conversation with her granddaughter on the import of the Ankh asked, "Do you know that our people were sold into slavery?", she was first of all grounding the history of all Africans living in the diaspora into the fabric of the colonial encounter and its resultant Slave Trade. In addition, with her use of the plural form of the first person pronoun "our", she genealogically linked her granddaughter to her ancestry: the first generation of Africans who crossed the Atlantic and were

scattered abroad in the diaspora as a result of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. It further unveiled the spiritual connection that binds all Africans together as a people thereby giving meaning to her continued identification with her homeland. Her memories of Africa, though so far away, still remained as "home" and the story behind the symbol of the Ankh as the history of her people.

Though living thousands of miles across the sea from home, this first generation of Africans, represented by the likes of Esi Mansa and Nwt refused to allow memories of their heritage to become a remote and vague foil which in comparison would merely stand to highlight the grandeur of the "new world". The individual experiences of such 'pure' souls, subsumed in the struggles of Esi Mansa in the *Journey to the Source,* encapsulates their desire to against all odds hold on to their ancestral identity of who they are as a people and where they come from. To show, even after her feet had touched the shores of America in the "new world", Esi Mansa's determination to hold on dearly to her distinct African identity is very remarkable. The narrator describes Esi Mansa as a strong-willed soul:

> An African woman, transported to America to slave for European settlers on Amerindian land emptied through genocide, [who] attempted flight six times…In spite of torture after recapture she kept trying…..for her refusal to abandon remembered ways, other captives called her the African reflects the story of the African in America." the refusal of a race to let go of their identity as well as their unsuccessful struggles to 'escape' to the motherland, Africa……the African escaped a seventh time. This time, the slaveowners had her eyes taken out. After her blinding, she tried to escape no more….. The African woman settled down to being another slave in America (*Osiris,* p.2).

However, in the face of gross torture, even the wildest of souls were tamed to accept their new status as worthless slaves in their master's land. Even so,

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although in the new environment many were compelled to adjust to and assimilate the ways of the colonizer to an extent, many others including Nwt refused to let go: they continued to hold on to their native ways.

Interestingly, a parallel account is given in both novels of life on the continent after the slave trade. There, "The Sharers" like the remnant of the true "Companions of the Ankh" who were left behind also refused to accept the colonizer's ways. Even though they were massively overwhelmed on several occasions by the power of the imperial masters and their African cohorts, they resisted the pressure to team up with "royal power" and so refused the offer to "move into the palace, there to enjoy the protection of royal power" (*KMT*, p. 289)..

Even when threatened with death, these ones were determined not to abandon 'remembered ways of old'. Such ones were ever determined to sacrifice whatever they had in order to hold on to the beliefs, practices and values of their ancestors.

As a result, the African's firm stance against the Eurocentric thesis that spurred the fictional Hegelian dialectic of a superior Western civilization during the colonial setting cost many their lives. The scribe Wnt Nefert, for instance, recalled that out of sheer malice on one occasion "three of us were called to the palace, accused of plotting against the gods. There is nothing against the three. They were killed nonetheless". Likewise, Hor was also murdered because even in a postcolonial setting, he boldly resisted the invaders' move to misrepresent his people by distorting their pre-colonial history. The next day, his body was found "suspended from a branch of

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baobab thick as trunk…the body hung from a double rope. Head down" (*KMT* p. 202, 207).

This, in the mind of the researcher, affirms Di Miao's observation that the history backing the formation of the African Diaspora centers on the fact that "its formation does not consist of merely one people, but of several peoples coming from many geographical areas, speaking a variety of languages, praying to different gods, and belonging to diverse cultures" yet trace their history to the Slave Trade era where the slavers assembled many helpless Africans into cargo ships which upon setting sail transported them into "the new world" (Miao, 2000, p. 368).

The term "Diaspora", as defined by Paul Gilroy in the "Black Atlantic", refers to an imaginary geography of widely dispersed communities who share common histories of crossing, migration, exile, travel and exploration spawning hybrid cultures. (Gilroy, 1993) To reflect Gilroy's definition of the "Diaspora" in his works, the author structured the fictional Pan-African community he introduced in *Osiris* to thrive on its linkages with African history and culture. Thus, in *Osiris,* all Black American characters are cast as group of people who trace their lineage to a common African ancestry rooted deep in the Trans-Atlantic slave Trade. Hence, they, like Nwt and Esi Mansa retain a strong sentimental and historical attachment to Africa even though they had been born and raised in a 'foreign' land. In the researcher's mind, although the fictional African-American community created in *Osiris* is identified to be America, it could well represent all specific historical and geographical locations on which all that willingly claim or are compelled to

identify with the Black race and a place called Africa live, no matter where they are located on the globe.

This is because none of the factors that defined membership into the African community in *Osiris* are in any way restricted by geographical, ethnic, class or political variables. Rather, the dreams and aspirations of its citizens inform and reinforce their solidarity as a people because of the common predicaments which hold them together. Thus, he widen the citizenship scope of that geographical space in Osiris to include people of African descent such as Ast, Sheldon Thubman (Ras Jomo Cinque) Wossen and Bailey whose ancestors were dispersed globally through the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade to live in the Diaspora. Without question, each of the African American characters in *Osiris* recognized and accepted the fact that their ancestors were transported as slaves from the African coasts to America. In her conversation with Asar, Ast voiced that fact out in clear words:

> My being born in America doesn't make a lot of difference. It means my great-great-great grandparents were captured and transported over there. Yours weren't. I prefer not to forget several thousand years of our common history because of a few centuries of separation (*Osiris*, p. 102).

This unbroken continuum accounts for the numerous manifestations of parallel cultural representations seen in both texts. For instance, although born and bred in America, Ast like Lindela Immana and Ama Tete is evidenced to be very well grounded in Afro-centric scholarship.

This, as explained by Astw Konate, stems from the fact that in the proto-typical traditional pre-colonial education setup in Africa, the "home was the first place of learning" where traditional matriarchs play their role of tutoring young ones born into the society about the legends, symbols and

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histories of their families and clans even before they start formal education. Hence, even though Ast was raised outside the continent during a postcolonial time frame, the first phase of her schooling, like Ama Tete's, begun at home during the early stages of her life under the guidance of "the first companion of her soul", Nwt, her grandmother. Even at that tender age, the narrator describes each of Ast's several conversations with her grandmother as a "voyage" of re-connection across space and time to meet up with and connect with "ancestral priestesses, companions caring for green fields on Hapi's riverbanks, turning desire into myth, and naming the myth *Sekhet Iarw,* perfect place, ever green fields of the wandering soul returning home" (*Osiris*, pp.18-19).

Consequently, in no time, young Ast possessed a very great wealth of 'authentic' Kemetic knowledge that she could culturally identify with Africa even though she lived thousands of miles away from that land. At school in America, Ast continued to build on the knowledge on Africa. As a result, her knowledge about her homeland reached a very high maturity: Her first degree was in World History and for her second degree, she "shifted closer home" to study Egyptology and hieroglyphics which once upon a time was the language of her ancestors. Her doctorate study was also so focused on "Kemt" that she even wrote her thesis on "Identity and social justice in the philosophy of Ancient Egypt". In spite of all these academic laurels, she was still unsure of the purity of the knowledge she had acquired at school. According to the narrator, she still had "intractable questions" about her ancestral lineage:

> At first she tried to find answers to the questions unsettling the balance of her soul where she was born. Then she grew past hoping answers could be found. She understood……this vast energy was wasted in the same powerlust that had deepened the

destruction of Africa and turned her ancestors into captives in a country crowing freedom. She had to return (*Osiris*, p. 12).

Even though born and raised outside the continent, Ast mentally identified herself more with Africa than with America. Being a cultural hybrid, she had undoubtedly been well groomed and oriented in both the African and European cultures. Yet, she, as it were, could not effectively strike and maintain a meaningful balance between the two cultures. In her own words, she revealed that She felt trapped and mentally caged in the land of her birth. This was because the African way of life appealed to her better than the American way of life. So, she did not mince words in expressing her inner feelings about America to Asar:

> I was born in America. But my mind finds the chain binding me to that condition breakable. Of course I've felt repelled by America. Throughout its short history I see America fighting societies trying to break free of meaningless lives. It's a repulsive legacy. I'm here because I see possibilities of a better life, not to be picked up and consumed, but to be created, lived. I want to work to make life real (*Osiris*, p. 134).

The haunting memory of "home", a familiar yet unknown space, coupled with her desire to re-connect and re-unite with its people influenced her decision embark on a Pan-African travel to the "source" - the very destination from where her ancestors were carried over the Atlantic into slavery. She knew that the journey would enable her to achieve her aim of learning first-hand the history behind the "Ankh' which according to her grandmother was a symbol of "Life" as defined by her people back "home".

In *Osiris*, the author expertly shortened the length of travel time across the Atlantic from America to Africa for the African American descent, notably making her journey easier and very comfortable. This is because the conditions under which Ast travelled across the Atlantic as compared to that of

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her ancestors were significantly far apart. Here, the writer replaced the slow paced ship which carried the slaves for months on end with a fast moving modern means of transportation: a plane. He also reversed the cruel and inhuman travelling conditions under which that generation of Africans was forced out of their homeland with a luxury that afforded Ast a sound sleep and meals while on her journey. The voice in the novel describes her flight this way:

> In the plane her exhaustion lost its nervous edge and she slept. Twice she awakened for meals. The first time her thoughts turned to the meaning of this crossing…….the second time she was awakened, her mind turned to Asar….Outside the plane, the morning air soothed her. She's filled out the arrival form before landing, and the passport check was quick.
> In a quarter of an hour her suitcase came, and she moved to the customs area where three inspectors stood checking travellers' luggage (*Osiris*, pp. 23- 24).

Ironically, even though Ast has never been to this "source" and did not know anybody there apart from Asar, an African classmate at Emerson University, the narrator refers to her travel to Africa as a "return": Selecting clothes and books to pack, Ast was surprised by a sadness crossing the excitement of the coming journey. It passed as quickly as it had come. The urge to *return* outgrew nostalgia long ago (*Osiris*, p. 21).

The researcher finds this thematic orientation of a "return", an extension of Jauna and Baako's homecoming in *Fragments,* to be very significant to the writer's claim that Africa is the ethnic origin of all Black Americans. Interestingly, Ast is not the only cultural hybrid - African American - who had a burning desire to return to Africa. Other African Americans also embarked on a journey to Africa. However, these ones did not identify themselves with the aim of the author's Pan-African renaissance

which is deeply rooted in the basic need to re-connect with the homeland and its people as a way of bridging the physical, cultural and intellectual gap between Africans on the continent and those in the diaspora.

Among this stock is Earl Johnson, "one of a group of African-Americans come back into the black womb. Mother Africa". Others were Sheldon Tubman (His Highness Cinque Equiano) and Prince Wossen of Ethiopia. Surprisingly, even though this group of hybrids like Ast had traveled a long distance to physically re-connect with Africa, they continued to mentally identify with the American way of life. Even in Africa, they heavily depended on their constant supply of "hot dogs, hamburgers, mayonnaise… even ketchup" from the American Embassy. It is thus, not surprising when their supply is exhausted "after a while they get homesick for America" (*Osiris*, p. 98).

Another character, Prince Wossen the "fake Ethiopian", is a big-time Mafia-type drug dealer in New York. He, when in search of a place to cool off and save his skin after his cartel was busted by the police, decided to travel to Africa. His return, unlike Ast's, was not aimed at a Pan-African renaissance of any sort. Yet, to enable him effectively shroud the selfish motif of his return in Pan-Africanism, he re-named himself Prince Woosen, laying a false claim to Ethiopian royal blood thereby making others believe him to be an Ethiopian prince.

Yet another returnee whose travel motive selfish and in no way related to a Pan-African homecoming was Sheldon Tubman (Ras Jomo Cinque Equiano), "the quintessential African" who believed he was born to liberate the world. In the narrator's words:

> Cinque too….had reversed the crossing. But his concern was not to reverse the slavers' logic that had transported him over the ocean. What he wanted was to change his personal fate. And if his freedom on someone else's enslavement, he was ready (*Osiris*, p.23).

Interestingly, even though all these characters travelled to Africa with different motives, as Cinque mentioned to Ast, it was "the same power that sent us wandering into the furnace of slavery in America [that] has pointed the way back to the cool, fresh waters of our royal home, Africa" (*Osiris*, p. 141).

Thus, in an attempt to meaningfully link Ast and Cinque to their search for their true ancestral identity, the writer epitomized their quests in the mythical context of the Kemetic "Ankh" which is expertly wove into the historical tapestry of the Slave Trade in Africa. This societal background which in the novel is linked to Bara and Yarw provided the author with a historical yet African-centered context against which to scrutinize the authenticity of the kinship and heritage of those two returnees. This reflects Christel Temple's position in *Literary Pan-Africanism* that Armah raises questions about identity, kinship and heritage in order to connect the experiences of Africans and African Americans. Thus, it is Asar, a significant member of the Companionship who took the lead in guiding Ast to Bara. There, she hears the story behind the Ankh in her possession which in turn helped her to identify her real lineage thus, giving relevance to her journey to Africa and consequently putting her at ease in her new surroundings.

At Bara, Tete's historical account on the significance of the symbol of the full Ankh was like a tranquilizing effect on Ast who rightly viewed her physical return to Africa as a step towards her successful re-unification with her ancestral home. It turned out that the full Ankh that had been passed on to

Ast by her grandmother linked her to members of the ancient secret society which during their time had fought to protect and ensure the survival of the positive values that once guided the African society. Empowered by this insight, Ast was initiated into the rebirthed Companionship at Manda. Her experience parallels the account Hor gave about "the companions of Jehwty and Maât who after declining the royal invitation to enter the Great House" sought "new beginnings" by relocating to Yarw, in a bid to preserve their identity (*KMT*, p. 307) .

In contrast to Ast's full Ankh is the broken symbol that Cinque had in his possession which ultimately proved to be the only link he had to his ancestral lineage: to Apo, the disloyal "Companion", who like other greedy African "betrayers" joined the Euro-Arab slavers to "waste our people in pursuit of the blinding white drug, profit" (*Osiris*, pp. 296-308). This, to the researcher, advances the author's Pan-African objective of inviting all people of African origins whose ancestors were separated by the effects of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade to return to their homeland with the right motive for psychological refreshment. This is understandably because, according to Cruse (1984), as a Post-colonial African writer, Armah is noted to be one who uses his literature as a tool for the political, social and cultural healing and progress of all people of African descent. This assertion holds in the texts under study because by their journey, Ast and Cinque, for instance, were able to bridge the historical gap that had formed among the African Americans themselves as well as between diasporic and continental Africans.

Based on his claim that most of the cultural challenges that the Post-colonial African faces is deeply rooted in the destruction of the pre-colonial

African way of life, Armah in his seventh novel, KMT, aptly explores the possibility of a re-generation of the African way of life. This, as outlined by Djeley Hor in *KMT*, is based on the fact that there are several oral and written records that support the claim that ancient Kemt was unquestionably Africa and that its inhabitants were black people (*KMT* 49-53). Thus, a reunification with "the way, our way" is the only solution to the cultural gap that exists among its people. To show, the historical truths that backed the record of life in pre-colonial and colonial Africa as revealed by Ama Tete had a direct bearing on the 'healing' of souls which took place at Bara. Moreover, unlike American born Eulalie Yawson who upon her return to Africa in *The Dilemma of a Ghost* was not immediately accepted and integrated into Ato's family because she was considered to be a descendant of slaves, Ast experienced an acceptance and reconciliation into the very same traditional society from which her ancestors had been carried away. As a result, her successful initiation into "the Companionship of the ankh" which took place at Bara under the tutelage of Tete pointed to the possibility of a smooth re-integration of the African American into the continental African society. This explains why upon her arrival in Africa, Ast found the continent to be a haven. The narrator informs readers:

> Here, she'd found the beginning of an inner peace she'd only imagined, Never experienced in America, under this sky with these stars that seemed to exist not so much above her as around her…she knew she was home (*Osiris*, p. 233).

The power of a physical re-connection with Africa is also displayed in *KMT*. Here, it helped to resolve the identity issues that characters like Biko, Lindela, Wennefer and Prof. Jengo were also grappling with. Hence, Lindela also

experienced a familiar connection with Yarw even on her first visit with Prof.

Jengo. In her own words:

> I could understand the feeling, steady all the way to the junction, that this was familiar territory. I'd been here before. What I could not understand was the persistence of this feeling after Jengo turned the car onto the track to Yarw. We were on our way to a place I'd never seen, yet the further we drove into this landscape, the stronger my impression that I'd been here, too, before (*KMT, p.* 126).

Yarw, like Bara in *Osiris,* is linked to Kemet. Therefore, Lindela's bond with

Yarw is as significant as Ast's travel to Bara in search for her identity. It

identifies those towns with the geographical locations on the continent where

pre-colonial African ancestors including the "Companions" and the

brotherhood of Maât as well as reliable contemporary custodians of African

history like Ama Tete, Djeley Hor and Astw Konate live: it is in effect a

symbolic repository of true African history, values and culture.

In linking Yarw and Bara to Kemet – ancient Egypt - the author in

unveils his effort to contextualize his claim that the "roots" of Blackness all

over the world lie in Africa. It also reveals the extent to which a 'proper'

understanding of the Slave experience could help in the self-identification that

would help all Blacks to accept the realities behind Africa's historical past,

thereby, giving meaning to the African American's desire to "re-cross" the

Atlantic. This helped the researcher to identify the second reason why the

writer re-visited the historic Slave experience: to stage a "re-crossing" of the

Atlantic that will demonstrate the possibility of a post-colonial African re-

formation. Here, the writer's identification with the historic Slave Trade

presents all descents of the once enslaved Africans with an image of strength

and resilience which Cheryl Finley claims "affirms our ability to rise to the

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surface from the depths of our past" (Finely, 2010). This societal 'rebuilding' in *Osiris* and *KMT* which was centered on the hybridization of valuable aspects of the pre-colonial and colonial cultural legacies resulted in the formation of a unique cultural society whose values addressed the needs of the fictional post-colonial African. Its success enabled the author to highlight the unsuitable nature of certain aspects of the colonial education system to the African cosmology.

This advanced the writer's his Pan-African mission further through the demonstration of how, in addition to a physical re-connection, an intellectual re-union Africans would as well help to bridge the knowledge gap that has formed between continental and Diasporian as a result of western education. It also highlighted, from the continental African's point of view, how the return of the diasporian would benefit the continent. In line with this, Lindela and Prof. Jengo, like Ast and Asar, spearheaded a parallel regenerative re-union that allows the author to outline the role that the 'Diasporians' will have to play in the re-making of Africa.

To begin, Ast's travel to partner Asar to teach at the University at Manda, reflected itself in the intellectual partnership which was formed between Doctor Lindela Immana and Professor Sipha Jengo in *KMT*: a partnership which, according to Prof. Jengo, was aimed at "work. Purposeful work. Accurate work….can place the old established lies from Europe, the complex we call our education, with real knowledge" (*KMT*, p. 108). This collaboration paved the way for the author to incorporate into the physical re-union an International 'hands on deck' approach to help solve the many problems in the educational system on the fictional continent. Admirably, both

texts exemplified the extent to which such a successful intellectual collaboration would benefit the continental African mind. For instance, in working together as individuals seeking to attain a common mental goal, Ast and Asar displayed very high levels of mental capabilities that led to the shifting of the focus of the intellectual debate at Manda from a "criticism of the old system to the design and testing of a new one" (*Osiris*, p. 188). They, together with other African teachers, planned a "social change" which resulted in the revision and formulation of course structures, curricula and syllabi to be used to teach in the university.

As part of the intended re-formulation, specific components of the syllabi and curricula in the areas of History, African studies, and Literature which were tagged as irrelevant to the African situation were to be replaced with African-oriented alternatives. This was because as revealed by the voice in the novel, "a search through old history syllabuses revealed a consist set of tacit principles which had in their day been so accepted……the basic principles of colonial scholarship……in their racist Eurocentric ugliness" (*Osiris*, p. 230).

Hence, the new syllabus for history, for instance, was to be based on a "curative principle that cleared the path for innovative curriculum design" with black Africa as its focal point (*Osiris*, p.199). Asar's words clearly express the Pan-African intention backing that structural re-formation:

> One, making Africa the center of our studies.
> Two, shifting from Eurocentric orientations to universalistic approaches as far as the rest of the world is concerned.
> Three, giving our work a serious backing in African history
> (*Osiris*, p.104).

This "new" Center for Black Studies would, thus, give an Africa-centered type of education which would be anchored in the history and best practices of the continent.

This reconstruction, as evidenced in *Osiris*, became necessary because according to the narrator, the central content of the education given in the colonial schools was skewed. It highlighted the superiority of European culture and civilization over all others, especially African culture and civilization. Thus, African Students were taught that non-western societies had no history and only became worthy of study when Europe integrated them:

> The colonial History curriculum was designed to demonstrate the glory of Western antecedents. It assumed that all societies were destined to grow by imitating the West. Hence a key purpose of history teaching in Africa: to supply Africans with suitable European models to imitate. The existence of Ancient Egyptian documents was sidestepped through a circular argument: Ancient Egypt was a high original civilization. Africans were *a priori* incapable of developing civilizations. If it was necessary to indicate a source for Ancient Egyptian civilization, that source was located outside Africa. If that proved awkward, Egypt was isolated as a unique phenomenon connected to no people in its African environment (*Osiris,* p.250).

This observation reveals how basely insignificant the content taught to students in the colonial schools was to the African worldview. It, therefore, created a platform for the writer to communicate his call for a clear cut academic change which manifested itself in the "Proposals for a New Curricula" which was drafted to de-emphasize the importance of European-oriented theories and paradigms with its inherent distortions of Africa's history (*Osiris*, p. 246).

To add, the narrator in *KMT* also underscored the bias and inappropriate pedagogical strategies that were used in the colonial education system. This exposed the orientation and teaching style of Mr. Joel Bloom, the

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Greek teacher whose pedagogical strategies never "stimulated intellectual activity". He, like his compatriots, considered his African students as an 'empty vessel' that needed to be filled with knowledge. The narrator's words:

> Mr. Bloom had come prepared to teach novices. His notes were carefully laid out, starting with a Socratic dialogue in which the teacher asked a rhetorical question, the students gave the expected answer, and the drama of initiation into new knowledge got under way, with the teacher dispensing the gift it was in his power to give: opening the eyes of the blind to the light of new truth" (*KMT*, p.46).

The narrator attributes this attitude to the fact that the colonial education system was not intended to train African minds to be productive: "They would not to be trained for system-making professions. None of them would learn to be manufacturer of industrial goods. The system was neatly structured to habituate the African colonies to the simple and thankless export of raw wealth, not complex and lucrative business of its processing" (*KMT*, p. 67).

This "explanation" is in line with Emenyonu's (1997) claim that the colonial schools only sought to produce individuals who were enlightened to understand the values of the world outside their homes but were not equipped to think inwards for the betterment and salvation of their own immediate society. Hence, Asar, as a counter, demonstrated in his literature class that the African child has intellectual capabilities with which he could be assisted to learn, reason and develop (Bassey, 1999). As a way of contrasting his methodology with colonial stereotypes such as Mr. Bloom, Asar encouraged his African to be innovative and creative as they think outside the box of Shakespearean literary forms in their study of literature. To demonstrate, he tasked them to write down their own literary pieces instead of merely reproducing the works of famous artists. In a similar way, students of the

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architecture department were also assigned to design the plan of their dream houses to show that a teacher's use of appropriate teaching methods during teaching and learning could greatly affect the African students' academic achievement.

Of particular significance to this study is the fact that in *Osiris* and *KMT* the writer, in dramatizing the possibility of a cultural "re-construction", does not suggest a total rejection of the colonial educational institution in favour of the pre-colonial system of education. He rather, through his African and African American characters, demonstrated how a hybridization of both the pre-colonial and colonial cultural orientations in the present post-colonial era would result in the formation of a unique cultural identity with which the contemporary African would identify with. Thus, in the *Osiris*, Asar suggested changes that would result in the 'overhauling' of the content taught in the colonial schools to reflect the peculiar history, traditions, and culture of the African people as passed on by their ancestors. This explains why he recommended that the syllabus that would be used in the planned reformation place a deliberate emphasis on the study of Egyptian history as a matric of African history instead of concentrating on European matrices such as Greece and Rome. In addition, as regards pedagogy, it also gives relevance to his suggestion that the university teachers use practical teaching methods similar to those used in the "loom of knowledge" in order to engineer productivity, innovation and creativity in and among trainees across the country (*KMT, p. 253*). Through the writer's expert use of Mythology, *KMT* provides a glimpse into the way of life of these 'Companions' to highlight details on their system of education which emphasize the fact that native history was a core

component of the knowledge transmitted to all African children as part of both their formal and informal education. It also highlights the competence of their teachers, the student body, the syllabus and course schedule as well as the teaching and learning methodologies used.

The writer further expanded this intellectual re-union to include a rendezvous between the academic scholars and traditional keepers of indigenous African knowledge in both works. This expansion presented an added dimension of strength which proved vital to the fight against the destructive Euro-centric reflexes that had shaped and defined the colonial schools. To show, academic scholars including Asar, Ast, and Lindela worked expertly and harmoniously with the traditional custodians of African history, (Ama Tete, Hor and Astw), to in Lindela's words, clear "new paths to better directions of our own" (*KMT*, p.135).

This was deemed necessary because as voiced by Asar, the Europeanization of Africa's education system was a conscious attempt to dislocate Africans from their root and cultural identity. Consequently, the intellectual fraternity took up the task of researching into and planning towards the intended changes in the curriculum, proposed systemic changes that were aimed at the restoration of the communal African identity - a system that would truly seek to liberate the African mind to work for the benefit of the continent. Their objective was to recover the best out of their African customs, traditions and practices which would then be integrated into the existing curriculum. This, in the words of Bai Kamara, echoes Armah's intention to break into pieces and ultimately crush one of the norms which seem to be thriving very well in post-independent Africa:

> All we Africans have done is to find stuff readymade –syllabuses, curricula, the whole educational system. We haven't created our own system. We have operated within the old system. Sometimes we gamble. We suggest modifications here and there. Low-energy dabbling. What we are facing now is different. High-energy work. Not just attacking something conveniently available. But creating a superior system. Working to replace the old with it (*Osiris*, p.189).

In the researcher's view, the author intentionally qualified that group of intellectuals in *Osiris* and *KMT*, and by extension all others who can identify with them by contrasting them with other equally African elites such as Seth who showed with both words and actions that they had a selfish desire to work for their own good.

This contrastive projection and analysis of character exposes to view the author's intention to define, in both novels, the category of individuals he considers capable of achieving his Pan-African objective. He identified them with creative and visionary ones like Isanusi, Densu, Damfo in the *TTS* and *The Healers* were determined to stay away from Western influences as they sacrificed all they could to help rebuild Africa. He also therein outlines the qualities that all that can be a part of this envisioned change must possess. However, the researcher observed that the author's criteria could easily be tagged as racist because he outrightly categorizes and condemns 'evil' African minds such as Apo, Seth, Cinque and Mamadou Kouyate because of their association with the West but approves of 'good' ones like Asar, Ast and Hor among others whom he presented as Africans who have not been turned into 'puppets' by their White masters. This is evident from the fact that the black characters who, *Osiris* and *KMT,* formed alliances with the West like Koomson in *The Beautyful ones* are portrayed as corrupt individuals who have

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been consumed by the "Cinque Syndome": the fast rhythm of luxury that characterizes modern life in both literary texts.

Evidently, such ones, as the DD bluntly put it in *Osiris*, considered low-paying yet noble occupations such as teaching in comparison to even low esteemed white collar jobs such as dispatch riding or chauffeuring in the Security Service as "a dog's job". The African's crave for Western fashion and culture is reflected in the words of the taxi driver who drove Ast to Hapi. Although a low class member of the society, he like many other elite admired the West so much they yearned to live like westerners:

> Taxi driver: "I like American taxis. Big, wonderful cars."
> Ast: "You've been to America?"
> Taxi driver: "Not yet."
> Ast: "But you know about American taxis."
> Taxi driver: "Films. Me and my friends, we watch all American films, videos. Keita, that's my friend, he watches how the stars dress. To copy the latest. Akwasi, my second friend, he likes music. I watch American cars. Hey you Americans are lucky."
> (*Osiris* p. 63)

This sharply contrasts the viewpoints of characters such as Ast, Ama Tete, Hor, Prof. Jengo, Lindela and the teachers at Manda among others who highly valued the teaching profession and were also bent on identifying themselves with the African way of life. Hence, in both novels, characters Seth, Wossen, Cinque and their likes are not members of the author's 'visionary' group of Africans who work hard to restore dignity to the African way of life.

In sum, Chapter four discussed two ways through which Ayi Kwei Armah grounded *Osiris Rising* and *KMT: In the house of life* in the historical Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in order to set in motion the wheels of the communal Pan-African renaissance which resulted in the socio-cultural re-formation aimed at undoing all Eurocentric distortions in Africa's history and

consequently erasing what Lindela Immana termed as "brightly lit highways of established falsehood" (*KMT, p.* 62).

 The final chapter, Chapter Five presents the conclusion to this study.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

Introduction

As outlined by Ali Mazrui in *European Exploration and Africa's self-Discovery*, one major aim of the colonization mission was to 'civilize' pre-colonial Africa. This was deemed necessary because according to Hegel (1957), before colonialism, there was only darkness in Africa and as darkness is no subject for history, Africa therefore had no history prior to the colonial conquest.

In response to this claim, many African writers have through their works come out to condemn the Trans-Atlantic and Trans-Saharan Slave Trade that led to the Euro-Arabian domination. As Soyinka (1976, p. 107) points out, "the quest for and the consequent assertion of the black cultural psyche began as a result of the deliberate propagation of untruths about others, both for racist motives and to disguise their incapacity to penetrate the complex verities of black existence". To show, several of such works highlight the negative impacts of the colonial encounter on Africa's natural and human resources (Fanon 1969; Cesaire 1972; Diop 1978; Rodney 1982, Mazrui 2005). Regarding Africa's colonial experience, Aimé Césaire remarks that every good thing that the African had was destroyed: societies were drained of their essence of life. Cultures were trampled underfoot, institutions undermined, lands confiscated, religions smashed, magnificent artistic creations destroyed and extraordinary possibilities wiped out (Césaire, 1972; 2000). This assertion is strongly echoed by Ngugi in *Decolonising the mind*. He claims*:*

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> In the name of that civilization, they [the colonial masters] destroyed our dances, our languages, our songs, our poetry….then systematically tried to kill the African individual and collective image of self (Ngugi, 1986).

As a result of this, many African writers have and continue to challenge colonial discourses on the history of Africa by re-inscribing the 'African version' of the history of Africa. This has led to the production of theoretical works like *The African Origin of Civilization* by Diop which celebrate the past of the African people and emphasize the need for Africans to rise against 'white' power. These writings, as observed by Bernth Lindfors, are "responses to European racism. . . that assumed Africans to be inferior creatures incapable of high civilization" (Lindfors, 1992 p.54). Thus, in "writing back" African writers often subvert the Euro-American concept of world history "as a way of explicating and defining their culture, history and being" (Mudimbe, 1988 p.184).

By questioning the visions, ideologies, historical claims as well as representations of Africans as propounded by colonialist discourse, African writers have mapped out a new African literature which, according to Boehner (1998), identifies itself with the broad movement of resistance to, and transformation of, colonial societies. As a result of the impact of colonialism on African history and the symbolic impact of its historiography on the African imagination, writers who seek to extort the control of their cultural identities from the metropolitan center of Europe have been faced with the double task of

- challenging European colonialist historiography.
- proposing positive African alternatives through the recovery of an African past that is usable in the construction of a better future.

Ayi Kwei Armah is one of the African writers who have taken a bold stand in favour of the African value system. To him, art is a social dynamic through which Africans can come to terms with their past so as to define their course of action for the future. This is because, as posited by Ogede (2000), his knowledge of the past, as evident in his works, comes from a collective memory: remembered knowledge shared by African communities.

As a post-colonial African writer, Armah's writings are a counter-force against prevailing Western assumptions about Africa. He openly uses as them as subversive tools to oppose the neo-colonial forces that seek to 'control' the destiny of Africa. Hence, the thematic quest for an African identity is vivid in his most of his works which highlight the stability that existed on the continent before the intrusion of the colonizers. In *Why Are we so Blest?* he writes:

> In the world of my people, that most important first act of creation, the re-arrangement without which all attempts at creation are doomed to falseness remains to be done. Europe hurled itself against us - not for creation, but to destroy us, to use us for creating itself. America, a growth out of Europe, now deepens that destruction. In his wreckage there is no creative art outside the destruction of the destroyers. In my people's world, revolution would be the only art, revolutionaries the only creators. All else is part of Africa's destruction (p.231).

This open display of love, affection and approval for the pre-colonial African way of life presents to the post-colonial African a hope of regaining the lost African identity through a systematic return to "the way, our way". This artistic vision is what Palmer highlights in *The Growth of the African Novel*:

> It is a rousing call to Africans to liberate themselves from those entire alien forces-economic, political, spiritual-which initially led to the destruction of African traditional values and are the real cause of the present decadence in the continent. It also urges Africans to make a spiritual and psychological journey back to the origins to rediscover and to re-establish that pure African system unadulterated by alien values. Only in the possibility of such a rediscovery can there be any hope (Palmer, 1979 pp 238 - 239).

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In calling for an assertion of traditional African values, Armah artfully draws on details from the rich storehouse of indigenous folklore such as myths to demonstrate the vitality of the African culture. Even so, Armah's works have gained a lot of critical attention (Amuta, 1992; Fraser, 1980; Larzarus, 1990, Anyidoho, 1992; Gillard, 1992; Lindfors 1992; Zumakpeh, 1992; Wright, 1999; Jackson, 2000; Adjei, 2005; Nartey & Kakraba, 2011).

Those who criticize his use of mythology in fiction argue that within the framework of world history, a fictional presentation on Africa's utopian past, troubled present and future rebuilding is erected on a weak framework: mythology which incorporates historical realism. Such scholars often tag Armah's works as a mythological approach to a Pan-Africanism that promotes cultural insularity rather than cultural hybridity. Others claim that Armah's works are racially oriented because they consistently point to colonialism as the major cause of Africa's problems. In their view, although early affrocentrics like Diop equally attempted to re-position and highlight Africa as the cradle of universal civilization in their works, they did not spend as much time accusing, criticizing or condemning the West as Armah does in his fiction. To add, such critics claim that his writings in strong, aggressive ways, merely advocate a return to an 'ideal' African past: a move which to them does not provide a concrete and practical solution to the dilemma of the contemporary African's search for an African identity.

Observations

After a careful reading of *Osiris rising* and *KMT: In the house of life*, the researcher has made several observations, many of which do not support the claims and assertions made by critics on Armah's works. First, though, the

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researcher observed in the two texts an affirmation of Dan Izevbaye's claim that Armah's novels portray pre-colonial Africa as an imaginary 'Eden': a socialist haven. This is because the narrators in both texts *as well as characters like the Scribes* in each of their "revelations" about Africa's origins sing her praise, portray her values and morals as dignified and glorifying her people and institutions (*KMT*, pp. 215-254). This is undoubtedly a strategy adopted by the author to conscientize his audience for a continuation of his ideological message of a return to "the way, our way". This theme of a 'return', carried down and developed further from early works such as *The Healers* and *Two Thousand Seasons,* clearly shows how Armah draws attention to the fact that pre-colonial African had a form of cultural civilization; one which was uniquely relevant and significant to the African way of life. In *TTS*, the writer highlights the significance of that African "way, our way":

> Our way is reciprocity. The way is wholeness. Our way knows no oppression. Our way destroys oppression. Our way is hospitable to guests. The way repels destroyers. Our way produces before it consumes. The way produces far more than it consumes. Our way creates. The way destroys only destruction *(p.62).*

This claim to the existence of well-organized and stable societies before the de-stabilization of African institutions by Western imperialists affirms Amin's (1972) assertion that Black Africa has never at in any point in time been more culturally backward than the rest of the world. Instead, their "way", in its simplicity, open-mindedness and charity unfeigned, has and still is very relevant to the life of the African.

Granted the fictive nature of the two novels, their relevance of to contemporary social realities in Africa can neither be doubted nor undermined.

In several ways, their fictional representation of an utopian pre-colonial world in contrast to its 'troubled' post-independent Africa reveals many parallels between fiction and reality, thus, presenting Africans with universal principles to guide the constructive criticism of their societies.

Moreover, in contrast to what critics such as Derek Wright claim, the researcher observed that Armah not merely diagnose Africa's 'illnesses': present a cursory view of Africa's predicament in the texts under study. As an African writer, he first of all identified, through the traditional historians in both texts, that the composite root-cause of Africa's modern day woes comprises cultural in-authenticity, abuse of power and irresponsible leadership. Then, he went further to prescribe a healing strategy established on a heightened consciousness of the African self: cultural de-colonization. This cultural renaissance, as evidenced in the texts under study, is one that is intended to reflect positively in the identification and adoption of the appropriate African oriented values and systems needed to liberate the contemporary African mind in order to enable it to work effectively for the benefit of the continent.

This "return" as indicated by Diop (1974) is aimed at re-instituting to Africa what European modernity has stripped off: its position as the cradle of universal civilization. It is also under-laid with a political aim of seeding a long-term social and educational revolution that is intended to re-unite Africans. Hence, Asar in *Osiris* highlighted the practical wisdom in re-designing the educational system in Africa to cater for the cultural needs of its people. One practical solution to Africa's educational problems cited in the proposed African-tailored curriculum in *Osiris*, for instance, was to replace

Colonial History and Literature with the study of African history and culture (*Osiris,* pp 246-257).

In a similar vein, *KMT* highlights the need for social commitment on the part of those taking the lead in the 'restructuring' work. To show, there existed no hierarchical distinctions among the Companions as well as the group that initiated the process of change leading to the "re-making" of Africa in both texts. All the committed Africans worked together on the same level and thus, as a group, collectively shouldered the responsibility of protecting the Africa way of life from destructive neo-colonial Eurocentric influences. As indicated in the report by Captain Petty:

> The society, unlike African societies in general, was ruled by an autocratic chief but by a species of consensus arrived at through open discussion. It had a Chairman or president, if one may allot such an appellation to a native dignitary, who did not inherit his position but was elected by   his savage peers on a rotational basis (Osiris, p. 206).

This sharply stands in contrast to the stereotypical colonialist system of leadership where African leaders served as 'puppets' who lived to serve the interest of the colonial "kings" rather than the interest of their people (*KMT*, p. 270).

Thematically, *Osiris* and *KMT* provide their author with a far-reaching platform on which to establish a viable framework for a continental Pan-Africanism. In the world of both novels, Africans living on the continent as well as all others living in the Diaspora are seen as one people who share a common ancestry rooted in ancient Egypt. Their entwined future and destiny is symbolized and highlighted through the marriage union of Asar and Ast. Consequently, this union by means of their unborn child gives significance and relevance to the joint quest by Ast and Asar, and by extension all

descendants of Africa, to gain knowledge on the true history behind the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade which took plce in Africa during the colonial era. Asar summed the consequence of the colonial scramble for Africa as well as the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade on the identity of the African: the destruction of African culture and values as well as a loss of confidence in Africans themselves, their institutions and their heritage when he stated:

> I don't think being born here makes anyone an African. We were born in colonies. Colonies were slave plantations, right here at home. Now we live in neo-colonies called Nigeria, Botswana, Senegal, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Mozambique. We'll have to work against stiff odds to turn our dismembered continent into a healing society, Africa (*Osiris,* p. 112).

Thus, characters like Asar, Ama Tete, Hor, Prof. Jengo and Lindela among others enacted tangible and practical ways through which all people of African descent could work together to improve the lot of black people.

The two texts are, thus, not a mere attempt at a foul cry against the West. They rather present a realistic description of the African predicament and further provide practical suggestions for the improvement of the cultural well-being of blacks all over the world. As a matter of fact, they suggest a physical, cultural, intellectual and spiritual 'return' to the "the way, our way" as steps towards retrieving and promoting cherished African values and creative life-giving principles.

However, although the texts imply that the solution to Africa's problems lies in a "return" to the principles which governed the African way of life before the colonial encounter, the researcher also observed that the envisioned resurgence which resulted in the unification of Asar and Ast did not stem from a total return to the primitive African way of life. Even though Ama Tete in *Osiris* pointedly sings the praises of pre-colonial Africa, she

acknowledges and humbly accepts that the history of the pre-colonial African has not always been smooth. The story behind the friendship of the Ankh, for instance, revealed that time and time again, in each of its re-formations, only the best of African values were preserved to guide the lives of the members in the 'House of Life'. She boldly mentioned:

> We know the society goes back not centuries but thousands of years into our past. The pattern of its life is not an unbroken line crossing the ages. It has known weakness growing to strength, vigorous life waning to suspension. At times it died. It has known birth and death and re-birth, over and again. (p. 260)

Thus, betrayers like Apo, together with others who proved disloyal to the objectives of the 'Companionship' at every point in time, were left out in each "re-birth". This clearly indicates to the post-colonial African that in a future re-making of Africa, there will equally be the need to distinguish and choose values, practices and morals that will be worth salvaging from the past with the intention of integrating them into the contemporary system. The author aptly demonstrated this restricted selection process in *Osiris* by judiciously selecting and putting together only 'good' characters from both cultural settings while leaving out 'evil' ones like Deputy Director Seth Spencer Soja (DD) who because of his neocolonial leadership maintains the view that a unified Africa "never will be" as well as all others with "The Cinque syndrome" in the fictional re-making of Africa (*Osiris*, pp. 78, 85).

Although the DD heads the post-independence security service, he comes across as a dark and sinister character. His attempt to rape Ast as well as his move to kill Ast presents him allegorically as a representation of all African intellectuals from whom no positive action can be expected by the people. He is described among other things as "useless", "parasitic" and "a

real poison" (*Osiris Rising*, p. 67). On the hand, even though some of the 'Companions of the Ankh' equally proved disloyal, there were others who exhibited through their strict adherence to their society's moral code showed that they were exemplary models of selfless love and self-sacrifice. These ones did not merely take a positive stand against all that is false, absurd and valueless but they also took concise steps to put their goals and aspirations into action.In a similar vein, Asar, Ast, Lindela, Hor and Prof. Jengo like The Man, Densu, Damfo and Isanusi in the author's early works equally displayed fine qualities such as faith, dedication, honesty, and sacrifice: qualities which proved vital for the planned social change in *Osiris* and *KMT*. In pitching Asar against Seth and highlighting Ast over other African Americans characters like Cinque and Wossen, for instance, the author again evidenced, as though in response to his critics, that the novels under study do not totally reject and condemn everything White just because they seek to assert the Black identity. This is because even among the Blacks in the novels, only the morally upright characters were chosen to work together as torchbearers leading the search for the African identity.

Another observation is that Asar's character in *Osiris* parallels Baako in *Fragments* whose life account Larzarus (1990) claims is an autobiography of Ayi Kwei Armah. It is noteworthy that Asar like Baako together with others such as Seth, Biko, Lindela and Ama Tete were all educated in colonial schools which according to the narrator in *KMT* were set up on the continent and structured to produce African elite who would perpetually serve the interest of the colonial masters. In the narrator's words, the colonial "Whitecastle" school, for instance, was "implanted" on the African coast " to

ensure that whatever was valued on this [African] continent would be funneled out to ensure the needs of a Europe clawing its way up from a rocky, needy, resource poor outcrop of the world into a storehouse of international wealth" (*KMT*, p. 68). However, this same Western education which alienated Baako in *Fragments* from his indigenous folks proved to be the platform which allowed Asar, Biko, Wennefer and Ama Tete in the novels under study to gain access into the Western presentation of world history as coded in Western literature: Introduction to World History…."world history meant the history of the European nations up to the time of the European conquest of Africa, Asia, Australia and the Americas. After that it became modern history: the story of other people's incorporation into European culture" (Osiris, p. 194).

Interestingly, Ayi Kwei Armah was himself a student at Achimota College, a colonial educational institution and like Asar and Baako, he also spent a long period after his secondary education studying at a University abroad. In addition, his Western education, allowed him, access to the Western cosmology together with its literary resources. Likewise, by virtue of his African background Armah is also privy to much local history and culture 'from the inside. This, in the researcher's view, equally presents the author of these texts as an African writer with a hybrid identity. However, unlike Baako whose hybrid identity alienated him from his indigenous folks, like Asar, Armah's knowledge of both European and indigenous traditions presented him with a 'revolutional' opportunity which he has artistically used to project his art in two significant ways. *Osiris* and *KMT,* reflect the author's hybrid identity as well as his well-resourced knowledge of Africa's history which proved insightful in his challenge and subsequent response to the Hegelian

insistence on Africa's lack of 'native' history and culture in clear and significant ways.

First, his hybrid background put at his disposal elements of literary resources from both the oral traditional African and the written Western modes of storytelling. These he aptly combined both the written and oral narrative modes in *Osiris* and *KMT* to create a unique form of prose which, in the researcher's view, effectively communicate both his assertion of the African identity and his Pan-African sentiments. He adopted and used an African myth which although ancient, can only be properly utilized and contextually understood by Africans and infused it into a Western prose form to 'tell' his story. This expert use of the Osiris-Isis mythology underscores the rich yet complex makeup of African cultures before the 'penetration' of the White man into the continent. It confirms Frye's (1971) claim:

> Before time began, many mythologies tell us, the right way of life, in a body of laws, doctrines or ritual duties, was given by gods or ancestors to their willful and disobedient children, who forgot or corrupted it. All disaster and bad luck follows from departing from that way, all prosperity from returning to it (p.38).

The researcher, likewise, noticed that by drawing on the traditional resource of folklore which includes stories, proverbs, myths and songs, preserved primarily through oral retellings, Armah subtly infused the authenticating 'voice' of his people into his work. He masterfully set up an opposition between writing and 'orality' as perceived in the African cosmology in order to downplay the weight of Africa's history as presented in Western literature. In this light, Armah expertly adds his voice to Brathwaite's (1971) argument that in the eyes of the African, voice and orality are more authentic: they give weight to the written language.

Additionally, the author's hybrid background informed his successful use of the English language to communicate his ideological message to the intended International audience. Since the Pan-African calls in both novels envision a physical, intellectual and cultural return to Africa, the writer suggests ways through which black people living in the Diaspora could re-unite with African antiquity. He hence advocates a hybridization of the native African and African American cultural orientations in a setting where the Slave experience together with the cultural history of past generation of Africans would become valuable literary material for the next generation.

Conclusion

This thesis adds to the existing literature on the works of Ayi Kwei Armah that argue that, as post-colonial works, Armah's sixth and seventh novels attempt to 'redeem' the image of Africa's history and culture from the Hegelian argument that Africa before colonization was without history nor culture.

First of all, it argues that in an attempt to dispel this Eurocentric assumption, *Osiris Rising* and *KMT: In the house of life* present fictional evidence that point to the fact that ancient Egyptian civilization - the oldest in world history - with all of its many great achievements has African origins. Textual evidence from the fictional contexts of the texts under study stand to show how the author creatively 'excavated' and masterfully used details from an indigenous African tradition - the ancient Egyptian myth of Osiris-Isis - to define his artistic vision of de-colonizing the minds of his people, affirming their history, demonstrating the vitality and richness of their culture, celebrating blackness and advocating a resistance to neo-colonialism. This is

because the afrocentric ideology which backs both novels is not bias. It merely projects the notion that "Africa and persons of African descent must be seen as proactive subjects within history, rather than passive objects of Western history…. Afrocentrism means re-establishing Africa and its descendants as centers of value, without in any way demeaning other people and their historical contributions to world civilization" (Felder, 1993-1994 as cited in Kouamé, 2012).

Thus, instances cited in both texts do not condemn the West. It only reveals how insightful and relevant the epistemic models offered by Africa's pre-colonial history, politics and culture proved to be for the African way of life in comparison to those offered by the West during the colonial era.

Second, it also asserts that in line with the assertion made by notable African writers such as Diop, Soyinka, Achebe and Ngugi in their works, *Osiris* and *KMT* point to colonialism as the main reason for Africa's under-development. This, as indicated based on evidence from the novels, was as a result of the dislocation of the indigenous social formations that existed before the Euro-Arabian imperialism: a dislocation that has accentuated Africa's crises of under development even after it gained independence. Hence, the study urges Africans to go back into their history and culture to subsequently retrieve and live by the communitarian and egalitarian principles of pre-colonial Africa which rooted individual aspirations in the collective interest of the society: a social formation that would promote partnership and co-operation that will result in the re-building of Africa

However, this work strongly argues that contrary to Andrea levy's *Small Island*, *Osiris* and *KMT* do not attribute all of Africa's problems to the

Euro-Arab colonization and imperialism. This is because although the author, in both texts, presents a picture of an ideal utopian African past, he does not fail to acknowledge and admit the shortcomings of the pre-colonial societies. Characters like Nwt, The traditionalists at Bara and The Scribes, for instance, are cast as foils to reveal the negativities represented by other selfish and disloyal ones like Apo, Mamadou Kouyate among others who in both novels show an upfront disregard for the societal norms and values that guided their people. Consequently, 'good' characters like Ast, Asar, Ama Tete, Djeley Hor, Prof. Jengo and Lindela in their 're-formation' did not include 'evil' ones like Seth and Cinque neither did they totally reject all of the colonizer's legacy. They rather considered modifying and effecting cultural and academic changes in existing colonial institutions to benefit the African: blending the good values in the pre-colonial African culture with the best from the colonial heritage. This is based on Tete's declaration that the friendship of the Ankh itself struggled to consciously preserve only the best of their values since not all African values have over time proved worthy of "saving" (*Osiris*, p. 299).

Hence, this study posits that by suggesting that the contemporary African adopt aspects of European culture, Ayi Kwei Armah in *Osiris Rising* and *KMT: in the house of life* acknowledges that globalization and hybridity, as agents of cultural change, are natural conditions that enhance the process of cultural evolution by means of structural reorganizations which eventually produce a form or structure that is often qualitatively different from the ancestral form (Korotayev, 2004). In light of this, the researcher implores Africans as a people neither be ashamed of their present hybridized cultural status nor retain any inferiority complexes for speaking in the colonizer's

language knowing full well that the colonizer might also have 'integrated' items from other nations in the course of their cultural growth.

To end the study, based on the success of the African protagonists in addressing Africa's needs through a constructive engagement with and not a destructive displacement of the African past, this research urges Africans to rise up above the psycho-cultural effects of the colonial encounter and work together as a people to create a solid African future for posterity.

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