A successful overview of the idea formation of literary Pan-Africanism benefits most from a bibliographic essay approach, which reinforces our awareness of the language, critical contexts, revisionist discourses, titles, and debates that sustain the vibrancy of the concept. Scholars have explored literary Pan-Africanism’s possibilities and manifestations in literature, aesthetic movements, literary criticism, literary history, socio-political thought, and historical analysis representing diverse regions of Africa and the Diaspora.

In charting the evolution of literary Pan-Africanism as a twentieth and twenty-first century critical idea, a curiosity is that literary Pan-Africanism received an early mention in the May 1, 1966 edition of *Africa Report*. Ellen Kennedy and Paulette J. Trout prepared a brief report on “The Roots of Negritude” in which they narrate how Pan-African world delegates at the 1963 summit “found themselves debating the merits of negritude as the conceptual key to literary Pan-Africanism and to Negro cultural unity the world over.”¹ However, this archival source is obscure and barely referenced as an original source in any of the literary criticism.

Jamaican historian Robert A. Hill provides the next major phrasing of “literary Pan-Africanism” that has become a noted point of reference. Hill compiled and edited Harlem Renaissance writer George S. Schuyler’s *Ethiopian Stories* (1994), which includes Schuyler’s two novellas—*The Ethiopian Murder Mystery: A Story of Love and International Intrigue* and *Revolt in Ethiopia: A Tale of Black Insurrection Against Italian Imperialism*. In Hill’s narration, the novellas “demonstrate his imaginative ability to describe for a popular audience the deep psychological and ideological investment that African Americans had in the outcome of Ethiopia’s heroic struggle against the Italian invaders.”² Hill’s use of the description “literary Pan-Africanism” bookends the untitled Introduction to *Ethiopian Stories*, with only two references. Early in the Introduction, he observes that the collection “belongs to the genre of literary Pan-Africanism,” and he relies on the ideas of Elisabeth Mudimbe-Boyi for context, associating literary Pan-Africanism with “a literary history, textual analysis, and commentaries that, thus, can keep alive these contexts and topical worlds in different times and contexts.”³ Here, according to Hill, literary Pan-Africanism is a genre that dates back to the Harlem Renaissance period of creative transnational themes. Mudimbe-Boyi does not use the description “literary Pan-Africanism,” but her discourse in the essay “Harlem Renaissance...
and Africa: An Ambiguous Adventure,” within the volume The Surreptitious Speech: Presence Africaine and the Politics of Otherness, 1947–1987 (1992) edited by V. Y. Mudimbe provides a comprehensive view of how Harlem Renaissance writers participated in Pan-African engagements of the era. Hill’s second and final use of the phrasing “literary Pan-Africanism” is an historical reference. He writes, “The literary Pan-Africanism connoted by Schuyler’s Ethiopian Stories finds an interesting parallel in the writings and activities of two of the remarkable Pan-African figures of the thirties: J. A. Rogers and George Padmore” both of whom were Schuyler’s colleagues. Rogers worked with Schuyler for the Pittsburgh Courier and Padmore’s influence was based on his and Schuyler’s common interest in Communism.

Hill’s Introduction to Ethiopian Stories is untitled, but during the same year as the book was published—1994—he reproduced it as a published article in South Asia Bulletin (Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East) as “Ethiopian Stories: George S. Schuyler and Literary Pan-Africanism in the 1930s.” In the repertoire of key works on literary Pan-Africanism, Hill’s essay frames a literary history about how Africa appears in the literature and worldview of writers of the Harlem Renaissance. Also, he links this history to Schuyler’s and Rogers’s journalistic prowess and to Schuyler’s acute literary representation of Ethiopian characters’ voices and perspectives on African American exceptionalism and mutual relationships between African Americans and Ethiopians. Hill credits Schuyler’s “political commitment during the 1930s” as an example of a little-acknowledged literary genre of literary Pan-Africanism during the Harlem Renaissance era.

Hill’s version of literary Pan-Africanism has influenced several works. Neelam Srivastava has a chapter on “Harlem’s Ethiopia: Literary Pan-Africanism and the Italian Invasion” in his book Italian Colonialism and Resistances to Empire (2018) that features a reading of Hill’s version of literary Pan-Africanism. Srivastava seeks to locate and analyze how Diaspora visionaries and writers such as C. L. R. James in The Black Jacobins (1938), Claude McKay in Amiable With Big Teeth: A Novel of the Love Affair between the Communists and the Poor Black Sheep (1941), and Schuyler in Ethiopian Stories, treat the subjects of African American transnational political mobilization and the Ethiopian-Italian conflict. Christian Høgsbjerg’s essay “Rufus E. Fennell: A Literary Pan-Africanist in Britain” (2014) also relies on Hill’s version of literary Pan-Africanism. Fennell, possibly a Caribbean-American migrant to Britain, was an actor and a contemporary of Paul Robeson and wrote a Haiti-themed screenplay for Robeson, entitled The Prophet. Reference to Hill’s ideation also appears in Christine Matzke’s and Susanne Muehleisen’s Introduction to Postcolonial Postmortems: Crime Fiction from a Transcultural Perspective (2006). Here, they summarize contributor A. B. Christa Schwarz’s chapter in the collection which credits George Schuyler’s novella The Ethiopian Murder Mystery as “his own brand of literary Pan-Africanism which was unlike the romanticized philosophies of ‘shared roots and black global brotherhood’ prevalent at the time.” Schwarz contends that Schuyler’s shift away from earlier radical perspectives that denied commonalities between African American and Africans is, in this novella, a surprising acknowledgment of kinship.7 There is additional speculation about what the discrepancy means.

One of the most intriguing significations on ideas found in Hill’s early approach to literary Pan-Africanism is Ahmad Rahman’s analysis of Schuyler, Kwame Nkrumah, and literary Pan-Africanism in The Regime Change of Kwame Nkrumah: Epic Heroism in Africa and the Diaspora (2017). Rahman makes two salient points. First, he suggests,

The serialized stories of George Schuyler were most directly useful to Nkrumah for the production of what Jones-Quartey described as the national myth of Africa. The
conventional wisdom of most Nkrumah biographers holds that it was Nkrumah’s own studies of Marcus Garvey and the socialist ideology that laid the foundations for his later ideals. Nevertheless, the likely role of George Schuyler’s serialized writings in the Pittsburgh Courier should receive its proper place. At Lincoln, Schuyler’s literary Pan-Africanism must have struck Nkrumah as a godsend.8

Rahman’s deduction is enlightening, but his second feat is reconciling Schuyler’s inconsistency in giving himself a conservative legacy through his autobiography that opposes his 1930s presentation of a literature on African world kinship. Rahman explains that Schuyler’s autobiography, Black and Conservative (1966),

did not mention the Courier series. His autobiography was highly detailed because he, evidently, viewed most moments of his life as significant. One probable reason for his not mentioning his literary Pan-Africanism was that he argued against the very positions he took in “Black Empire” and “The Black Internationale” throughout his autobiography. Hence, it is the conclusion of this writer that Schuyler wrote these two serials purely for profit. Schuyler wrote for a living and had to cater to what was popular in Black America to continue to make a living.9

If Rahman’s contention is true, then an update to Hill’s version of Pan-Africanism, though still reflective of the corpus of Harlem Renaissance work that was attentive to Africa, would exclude Schuyler as one of the most authentic voices whose transnational imaginings support the most sustained early descriptions of literary Pan-Africanism. He concludes, “Schuyler wrote Pan-Africanist serials for his black readers because he was an intellectual entrepreneur. Like a vegetarian selling meat, he peddled what the market demanded, even though he would never personally consume the product he sold.”10 Rahman’s hunch about Schuyler is a blow, while Schwarz has described Schuyler’s change of perspective as a “surprise.”11

The book Literary Pan-Africanism: History, Contexts, and Criticism (2005) by Christel N. Temple presented tools to help decipher how Pan-Africanism appears in creative and stylized literature. The research, explicitly on “literary Pan-Africanism,” appeared in her 1999 dissertation.12 Philosophically, it advances Pan-Africanism and anti-imperialism as foundations to explore tensions and fissures implied by South African Ezekiel Mphahlele’s 1976 contention that Africans have no psychological need to connect with African Americans.13 In surveying the historical, cultural, and literary routes through which Africans learned about the African American worldview sufficiently enough to begin to explore literary characterizations of African Americans in their works, this study revealed that Ghanaian and Nigerian writers had come to terms with the philosophical need to reconcile separation. It seems they processed the subtleties and contradictions inherent in “the African vision of the African American experience” as a literary trope as early as the 1960s, for approximately three decades ranging from the mid-1960s through the mid-1990s.

As a seminal book-length study on the phenomenon, Literary Pan-Africanism acknowledges that there are many frames of reference for multidirectional relationships of cooperation and mutual heritage identification in the African world. The work compares the intersections of African and African American experiences only, however, it is also an invitation, for “African-centered scholars [to] add to this effort by identifying additional texts that belong in this category. For future studies, the format of this inquiry can be applied to comparative analyses of the history and literature of other regions of Africa and the diaspora.”14 Temple covers hundreds of years of possible exposures and exchanges between Africans, Europeans, and
African Americans that suggest a communicative line—whether true, speculative, stereotype, and/or romanticized. In terms of literary criticism, Temple merges worldview markers from the Nzuri model of African aesthetics created by Kariamu Welsh-Asante, Chudi Amuta’s anti-imperialist literary paradigm based on ideas of Amilcar Cabral, and St. Clair Drake’s Pan-African vision. The four key African writers central to the book’s second half on literary criticism—Nigerian Wole Soyinka and Ghanaian Ama Ata Aidoo, Kofi Awoonor, and Ayi Kwei Armah—meet Drake’s expectation that “The postwar return should be the subject of diaspora studies, and African scholars should take on the task of evaluating the impact.”

In terms of firsts, Nobel Literature Laureate (1986) Wole Soyinka offers the earliest sustained treatment of an African American character in African literature with the creation of Joe Golder in The Interpreters (1965). Temple addresses Soyinka’s repertoire with an interest in “Truth or Satire: Wole Soyinka and Black America.” Golder is a mix of unfavorable stereotypes, but Soyinka more thoughtfully expanded his vision of the African American experience in subsequent fiction and non-fiction works. Considering the theme, “‘They Have Forgotten!’ Ama Ata Aidoo Brings Strangers Back Home,” Literary Pan-Africanism’s approach to Aidoo’s play Dilemma of a Ghost (1970) strikes a powerful chord of Pan-African longing and synthesis in this account of a marriage between a West African man and African American woman, followed by the couple’s return migration from the U.S. to the groom’s hometown. Juxtaposed against Aidoo’s other works such as Anowa (1970) and Our Sister Killjoy, or Reflections from a Black-Eyed Squint (1977), readers learn about Aidoo’s healthy sense of Pan-Africanism. In terms of the theme “Recognition and Belonging: Kofi Awoonor and Ayi Kwei Armah’s Pan-African Regeneration,” Literary Pan-Africanism explores both authors’ central Pan-African novels. Awoonor’s Comes the Voyager At Last: A Tale of Return to Africa (1992) is a mystical, ancestrally grounded, and ritualistic summoning of an African American man to West Africa where he fulfills a destiny of ritual participation in a sacred ceremony that heals the separations created by the enslavement trade. Ayi Kwei Armah’s novel Osiris Rising levels distinctions in identity and “African-ness” made between people of African descent on the continent of Africa and in the Diaspora by managing a trope of Pan-African gender complementarity in struggle, cast in the renewed structure of the myth of Osiris. While the first half of Literary Pan-Africanism is an historical study, in the second half, the works of these four authors are the focus of literary Pan-Africanism as literary criticism.

Scholars in the field regard this book as a refreshing methodological inquiry whose bridge chapter between its historical analysis and later literary criticism forged new ground through its content analysis of the African world journal Black Orpheus. As a framework for literary criticism, it models how to invert and redirect the presumptions of the back-to-Africa “return” phenomenon in ways that better historicize the duality that enslavement created not only returnees but also absences or gaps in memory among the Africans who remained on the continent; and (2) with a concern for guiding readers to recognize the clues that demand a regenerative Pan-African discourse that encapsulates the transnational and historical-biographical experiences of the author as well as the critical dimensions of the imaginative texts. Acutely aware of the diversity of Pan-African experience in numerous regions of the African world in transnational contact, this study prioritized the original point of departure—Africa—to account for the losses and their effect on the African homeland, in comparison to a single region of the Diaspora—the United States. Lisa Tomlinson, in The African-Jamaican Aesthetic: Cultural Retention and Transformation Across Borders (2017) notes Literary Pan-Africanism’s “alternative, African-centered knowledges, especially vernacular
traditions in her analysis of black literary production, an attempt, in part, to move away from dominant Euro-Western discourses.  

Temple revisited literary Pan-Africanism as literary criticism in Transcendence and the Africana Literary Enterprise (2017) in an essay on “A Raisin in the Sun and the Tradition of Literary Pan-Africanism.” In this iteration, there is a combination of literary Pan-Africanism methodology layered with the psychology-based measure of African cognitive identity and worldview advanced by Ezemenari M. Obasi, Lisa Y. Flores, and Linda James Myers. Obasi et al.’s Worldview Analysis Scale (WAS) is a survey tool that reliably measures Africanness in Black and White respondents, and Temple suggests its applicability in deconstructing assumptions about identity in terms of motherland nativity versus legacies of exile-based migration identity (i.e. enslavement). In this reading, the character Joseph Asagai, the Nigerian student who is also a suitor for Beneatha Younger’s hand in marriage, is not necessarily the drama’s central African character. This essay represents an expansion of the earlier literary Pan-Africanism lens’ attention singularly to African writers who created African American characters. Instead, it follows an African American writer’s creation of an African character whose self-assuredness, observations, and continental African cultural symbolism (e.g., gifts of gowns and African music to Beneatha) suggest a hierarchy of Africanness in the play, with his Nigerian identity representing a cultural wholeness that is denied to the Younger family. The Younger family’s dialogue and exchanges introduce their cultural identity as “the sixth generation of our family in this country” which implies that their legacy goes back to another country—an African country prior to their generations’ U.S.-based experience. Literary Pan-Africanism is the critical tool that helps readers mine these types of details that prompt more thoughtful and meditative inquiries into heritage, identity, pre-U.S.-based experience, the population’s African genealogies, and what these genealogies can mean in terms of unity, cooperation, and mutual identification.

Literary Pan-Africanism is part of the corpus of early twenty-first century cultural histories and applied studies that explore the complexities of identity and reconciliation between continental Africans and Diasporans, and the use of the concept as a tool for literary criticism has been influential. Oyeniyi Okunoye’s “Pan-Africanism and Globalized Black Identity in the Poetry of Kofi Anyidoho and Kwadwo Opokwu-Agyemang” (2009) historicizes Temple’s attention to primarily Ghanaian writers. His explanation is that Two major factors explain this orientation in Ghanaian writing. The first is that Ghana has many of the reminders of the traumatic experience of slavery, the single most important assault on the continent, which constantly inspire creative reflection on the experience. In the interest of heritage tourism, These historical sites attract diasporic Africans who are eager to trace their African roots and emotionally recapture the origins of the African Diaspora. The second factor is that Ghanaians have particularly sustained the Pan-Africanist vision and this has come to be associated with the way the Ghanaian nation is imagined. Okunoye’s view also supports Kelly O. Secovnie’s perspective in “Ama Ata Aidoo and Kofi Awoonor: Pan-Africanism Reconstructed” (2009). She interrogates the tendency of three major literary critics identified in Literary Pan-Africanism—Bernth Lindfors, Karen C. Chapman, and Maryse Condé—to give negative evaluations of Aidoo’s works, and she contends that “conceptions of time, gender, and politics play a large role in the ways that Pan-Africanism is understood.” Shingi Mavima grounds “Stories of Struggle: The Intractability of Early African Fiction from Nascent African Nationalism in Rhodesia” (2018) in theorization which he extracted from Serie McDougal’s discussion of Temple’s literary Pan-Africanism as a disciplinary Africana Studies epistemology. He notes that it, “advocates for a paradigmatic shift in the discourse surrounding these works: instead of fictional texts studied primarily for
linguistic, cultural, and artistic purposes, we ought to elevate our analysis thereof to that accorded national histories and critical moments in the political evolution of the space out of which they emerge.”

In Temple’s “Rescuing the Literary” (2006), the original essay to which both Mavima and McDougal refer, she presents literary Pan-Africanism as an example of “historical, creative, and visionary approaches to teaching and analyzing literature using African-centered methodologies and paradigms.” Specifically, literary Pan-Africanism is an effective tool of analysis in literary texts where the author, representing one region of Africa and the diaspora, creates a literary character from a different region of Africa and diaspora. As literature can represent an author’s philosophy and/or location, a study of characterization invokes functional conversations and analyses of Pan-African sensibility, which in an African-centered context is to be promoted and embraced. A critical distinction of this version of literary Pan-Africanism is the critic’s effort to itemize the author’s historical-biographical creative agency, research, and transnational meditation in exploring potential Pan-African allies through characterization.

In the article, “Literary Pan-Africanism,” (2003), originally published in *Thamyris/Intersecting: Place, Sex, and Race*, scholar and critic Anne V. Adams presents literary Pan-Africanism as a “perspective” that helps readers to “re-interrogate issues of Africa with its genealogically significant other, the African Diaspora.” Her primary focus is on narratives on migration or “crossing the Atlantic in both directions” such as those of Guadeloupean writer Maryse Condé and Ghanaian writer Ayi Kwei Armah, the latter whose work is also featured in the book *Literary Pan-Africanism*. Adams’s essay effortlessly merges literary history and summaries of Condé’s and Armah’s key texts that reflect Pan-Africanism and migration. She suggests that the multidirectional encounters between Africa and the Diaspora found in literature can help settle some of the competing debates about the contexts of experiences, roles, and relationships of Africans on the continent and in the Diaspora. These debates have lingered in the broadly conceived field of Black Atlantic Studies (which includes Africana/Black Studies and Diaspora Studies), particularly among the comparative perspectives of Paul Gilroy, Molefi Kete Asante, Anthony Appiah, Joseph Roach, Charles Piot, Manthia Diawara, and Kadiatu Kanneh. The survey of the “affinities” and “intimacies” between Africa and the Diaspora cements Adams’s essay as another central work in the history of literary Pan-Africanism. Adams reproduces the essay in the collection *Reclaiming the Human Sciences and Humanities through African Perspectives, Volume II* (2012), edited by Kofi Anyidoho and Helen Lauer. In the entry on “Anti-Colonial Movements” in *The Encyclopedia of African-American Culture and History* (2006), Jeffrey Kerr-Ritchie’s reference to literary Pan-Africanism is more in line with Adams’s flexible interpretation. Here, he considers Arna Bontemps’s historical novel *Black Thunder* (1936) which “linked slave revolts in Haiti and Virginia” as a form of literary pan-Africanism.

In addition to Adams’s extension of literary Pan-Africanism to Caribbean works, another study infuses literary Pan-Africanism with a revisionist approach to reassessing older Afro-Caribbean works and situating them in a tradition of Black/African heritage discourse. In *Caribbean Middlebrow: Leisure Culture and the Middle Class* (2009), Belinda Edmondson describes this process as a form of literary Pan-Africanism, first noting the shift in valuing the novel *Emmanuel Appadocca* (1854) by Maxwell Philip:

More recently, Trinidadian scholar Selwyn Cudjoe, who has done much to resuscitate interest in the Trinidadian books by reprinting them, justifies so doing by declaring that *Emmanuel Appadocca* and *Rupert Gray* constitute the earliest articulations of literary Pan-
Africanism and African diasporic sensibility, to be read alongside such early black nationalists as Liberian Edward Blyden and Trinidadian Pan-Africanist Sylvester Williams. Emphasizing the nationalist credentials of their authors, these books collectively demonstrate for Cudjoe “that Afro-Trinbagonians were part of a larger diasporic discourse about race and identity”: the novels therefore are the “foundational” texts of Caribbean national literature.\(^{33}\)

Edmondson then points out some of the irregularities between content and categorization, which reveals the complexity of deciphering African-centered versus Eurocentric features of the early West Indian literary tradition. Specifically,

To drive home the African connection, Cudjoe in his Calaloux Publications edition of *Rupert Gray*, features familiar images of African women wearing elaborate head wraps and posing as workers, mothers, and elegant ladies. The viewers are cued to read these African women as Afro-Caribbean women … This image implies that the book we are about to read is a story that reflects the heritage of Afro-Caribbean women. It is they who are the inheritors of its nationalist trajectory, and it is for them that this black nationalist romance is written. Given that *Rupert Gray* is about a black accountant who falls in love with a white creole heiress, this reading is a fairly tall order. Cudjoe’s recuperative strategy seems thus poised between two tantalizing gender discourses: one a masculinist, Pan-Africanist discourse and the other a nationalist discourse that equates modernity with the social progress of Black women.\(^{34}\)

What we find is that there are three core ideations of literary Pan-Africanism. Hill’s view of where Africa fits within Harlem Renaissance era literary history based on writers’, journalists’, historians’, and political activists’ visions of Africa, is the first. Second, the book *Literary Pan-Africanism* frames the phenomenon as an extension of discourses related to African and African American relationships in contexts of Middle Passage and enslavement-era shifts in relocation and worldview. It follows the continuity of heritage memory in Africa, more than in the United States, and critiques forms of reconciliation in terms of literary visions as well as international political visions of the operations of twentieth century Pan-African organization. It also encourages the development of the topic (what Hill would call the *genre*) in future studies that could address cultural experiences beyond the African American Diaspora and in multidirectional routes. Finally, Anne Adams’s essay adds dimensions of migration and ideological synthesis.

There are other manifestations of literary Pan-Africanism in contemporary cultural Pan-Africanist thought. Some offer variations on the three core ideations of literary Pan-Africanism, while other references in the bibliography on literary Pan-Africanism are brief, casual descriptions. Babacar M’Baye considers “Student-Centered Designs of Pan-African Literature Courses” (2010) and describes the concept, generally, as an effort to “expose students to literary Pan-Africanism since they examine the relationship between African Americans and Africans from literary perspectives.”\(^{35}\) In an eclectic set of texts, ranging from Richard Wright’s *Native Son* (1940), Hansberry’s *A Raisin the Sun* (1958), Audre Lorde’s *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* (1982), and John Edgar Wideman’s *Brothers and Keepers* (1984), he features topics such as stereotypes of Africa, transnational relationships, and post-independence paths of African countries. In the chapter, “Critical Departures in the Practice of Pan-Africanism in the New Millennium” by Harry Odamten from the Toyin Falola and Kwame Essien volume on *Pan-Africanism, and the Politics of African Citizenship and Identity*.\(^{393}\)
Ethiopia Unbound: Studies in Race and Emancipation (1911), he describes J. E. Casely Hayford’s *Ethiopia Unbound: Studies in Race and Emancipation* as a “literary Pan-African text.” His primary reference for literary Pan-Africanism is Ghanaian critic and scholar Kofi Anyidoho’s *The Pan-African Ideal in Literatures of the Black World* (1989), which is a faculty lecture that was delivered at the University of Ghana in 1988. Anyidoho has been at the center of discourses on Africa-Diaspora relationships, however, Anyidoho’s best known essay on Pan-African literatures is singularly focused on the differences between African and Diaspora literatures in terms of access to a traditional African language for literary production. It seems that scholars influenced by Anyidoho’s ideas about the “Pan-African Ideal” have incorrectly assumed an interchangeability between descriptions of “Pan African literature” discourses and “literary Pan-Africanism.”

Isabel Hofmeyr uses the description in the essay “African History and Global Studies: A View From South Africa” (2013) to elucidate the value of the magazine *Chimurenga*, founded in 2002 by Ntone Edjabe, a Cameroonian living in Cape Town. Hofmeyr positions the magazine as a publishing phenomenon alongside journals such as *Black Orpheus*, which was Chapter 3’s central case study in Temple’s *Literary Pan-Africanism*. The sub-heading, “*Chimurenga: experiments in literary pan-Africanism in the global south,*” is the essay’s only mention of literary Pan-Africanism, but Hofmeyr’s description provides better context. She writes, “Like many small literary magazines across the continent (*Black Orpheus*, *Transition*), *Chimurenga* is an experimental space, drawing together different regions and traditions from across Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America, South Asia, and China.”

Expanding the scope of Pan-Africanist literary activity to South Asia and China is new. Hofmeyr adds, “In setting writings from different regions in relation to each other, the magazine creates a space in which the idea of the global south can start to assume intellectual, aesthetic, and affective form.” In “Black Writers of the World Unite: Negotiating Pan-African Politics of Cultural Struggle in Afro-Latin America” (2008), Anthony Ratcliffe, also advocating for a broader view of Diaspora, extends Temple’s approach to literary Pan-Africanism to call for a remedy to address the problem that “few scholars have examined the literary production of Afro-Latin Americans from a Pan-African perspective.”

The journal *Black Orpheus* figures as a central topic in Ruth Bush’s discussion of literary Pan-Africanism in “Publishing Francophone African Literature in Translation: Towards a Relational Account of Postcolonial Book History” (2013) in Kathryn Batchelor’s and Claire Bisdorf’s *Intimate Enemies: Translation in Francophone Contexts*. Bush explores the history of the Mbari club, which was established in Ibadan, Nigeria, and was “the first outlet for English translation of Francophone African writing through its associated journal *Black Orpheus* and programme of publications.” She credits *Black Orpheus* with being the “first window for translations of Césaire, Senghor, Tchicaya U Tam’si, Flavian Ranaivo, and Jean-Joseph Rabearivelo, alongside early works by Gabriel Okara, Wole Soyinka, Dennis Brutus, among others.” Bush’s extended discussion of *Black Orpheus* expands on Temple’s featuring of *Black Orpheus* in the only dedicated monograph on the subject of literary Pan-Africanism. In fact, Bush even mentions that Ezekiel Mphahlele was, at one time, an editor of *Black Orpheus*, which establishes another link with how Temple juxtaposes her study against Mphahlele’s 1970s critical reiteration that Africans have no psychological need to identify with African Americans.

In addition to the Pan-Africanism of Du Bois, more concerned with geopolitical issues and the African state, there has also been an African American ‘literary Pan-Africanism’ established by such figures as Langston Hughes, who was one of the first twentieth-century African American literary figures to not only support Pan-Africanism but to actually set foot on the African continent, journeying to West Africa-Ghana, Nigeria, and Angola—in 1923, the same year Du Bois had made his first visit to Africa.43

In a discussion on “Of Exiles and Renaissances,” from Elizabeth Nunez’s and Brenda M. Greene’s collection Defining Ourselves: Black Writers in the 90s (1999), poet Eugene Redmond also highlights Hughes and links literary Pan-Africanism to a history of transnationalism that includes the experiences of many writers in the context of “exile and alienation.”44 He discusses several waves of writers:

Richard Wright explored the multifarious struggles in Africa, America, and the Third World from Paris. His writings helped us access the complexity of concepts and movement like global racism, pan-Africanism, blackness, Négritude, communism, nationalism, integration v. assimilation, existentialism, revolution, self-determination, independence, and “soul.”

Other writers and activists, like W. E. B. Du Bois, James Weldon Johnson, Claude McKay, and Langston Hughes also contributed to a literary Pan-Africanism. None of them was the first or the last African derivation to traverse transcontinental shore.45

Redmond broadens literary Pan-Africanism to include the “pre-Columbian African presence” detailed in Ivan Van Sertima’s They Came Before Columbus (1976) as well as a litany of “globe-trotting” Black personas who “embraced banishment, brilliantly, stylistically, dexterously, and prolifically.”46 Redmond’s vision hints that the 1966 use of “literary Pan-Africanism” in Kennedy’s and Trout’s report has had traction, but its routes are not traceable in the archive.

In a survey of ideas about literary Pan-Africanism we discover that definitions are relatively stable, but the terrain of referents, how the texts function, and regional assumptions are extremely diverse and expanding. Aside from a few dissertations and shorter works, most essays that feature literary Pan-Africanism do not cite (if they give a citation for the idea at all) more than one source or core work on the topic or provide a literature review of the history of literary Pan-Africanism. Many scholars, particularly in review essays, use generic phrasing without citations or references, as if they are unaware of its development as an advanced and stylized critical framework. A handful of reviewers and critics describe other scholars’ works as representations of literary Pan-Africanism even though the original works do not utilize the precise term “literary Pan-Africanism.”47 There have been seeds of literary Pan-Africanism planted as early as Kennedy and Trout’s 1966 report, Hill’s key 1994 essay that equates the concept with Harlem Renaissance transnational idea formation, Adams’s 2003 dedicated essay on the phenomenon that places the criticism in the context of the field’s debates about Diaspora identity, and Temple’s 2005 book-length study, that was first published as a 1999 dissertation on the topic. Then, there are Diaspora-oriented views, African-centered perspectives on literary Pan-Africanism as a continental—not diasporic—concern, and works that extend its domain to comparative engagements into Afro-Latino diasporas, South Asia, and China. Translation matters and multidirectional migrations reveal
an even greater depth of theorizations of literary Pan-Africanism that are far from uniform, though they reflect a common concern for transnational cultural and intellectual genealogies.

This survey reveals that there is growing momentum and reflection on what literary Pan-Africanism is and can be. This is most poignant in Mukoma Wa Ngugi’s *The Rise of the African Novel: Politics of Language, Identity, and Ownership* (2018). The author narrates Ngugi Wa Thiong’o’s backward-gazing view from 2013 to 1962 that infuses a deeper philosophical and African continental meaning to literary Pan-Africanism. Mukoma begins with an observation about a 1960s vision that “African literature would become the starting point for postcolonial African students embarking on literary journeys whether as writers or critics, all within a Pan-African literary identity that was decidedly political in nature.”48 Ngugi Wa Thiong’o reinforces this with a memory of the 1962 African Writers of English Expression conference held at Makerere University in Uganda that gathered Ezekiel Mphahlele, Bloke Modisane, Christopher Okibgo, Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe, and James Ngugi. In Ngugi’s remarks, that also mention the passing of Chinua Achebe, he reflectively relates the 1962 moment with the origins of literary Pan-Africanism:

These writers would later give us what’s the nearest thing to a genuine Pan African intellectual article: the book, African literature. When Achebe passed on recently he was mourned all over the continent. His novel, *Things Fall Apart*, the text most discussed at the conference alongside that of Dennis Brutus from South Africa, is read in all Africa. The work of others like Okot p’Bitek and Wole Soyinka, and that of the generations that have followed, Dangarembga, Ngozi Adichie and Doreen Baingana are equally well-received as belonging to Africa. Thus if Makerere was the site and the symbol of an East African intellectual community, it also marked the birth of literary Pan-Africanism.49

This is an interesting announcement in light of the fact that the Diaspora has been functionally theorizing and advancing numerous versions of literary Pan-Africanism that have inspired a significant amount of idea formation and is ever expanding in dissertations and new works of scholarship. In addition, Mukoma features Soyinka’s novel, *The Interpreters*, in his discussion, which revitalizes the value of the novel that Temple featured as a “first” in the Soyinka chapter of *Literary Pan-Africanism*.

Ideas about literary Pan-Africanism have been emerging simultaneously throughout Africa and the Diaspora for over fifty years, and there is a canon of literary texts that benefits from using literary Pan-Africanism as criticism. The utility of the theorizations will continue to bloom when applied to works by contemporary writers such as Nigerian Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Sudanese Leila Aboulela, and many others whose literatures on migration experiences and trans-African and trans-Diasporic experiences can be categorized within the genre of literary Pan-Africanism. Even though this overview is restricted to works that explicitly advance literary Pan-Africanism, there are numerous adjacent studies that also survey “Pan-African” efforts or “Pan-African literature.”50 Thus it is easy to imagine putting “literary” and “Pan-African/ism” together to describe any number of negotiated relationships seen in literature. In the end, the best definitions of literary Pan-Africanism are those that demarcate phenomena in specific terms that defy generalizations. Multiple specificities will continue to grow the framework, and though definitions and applications are not uniform, they will all likely reflect measures of heritage consciousness, awareness of migration, flexibility to account for communication and linguistic differences, and the power of transnational
memory and cyclical storytelling about African people’s journeys and retrievals in collective efforts toward renewal and wholeness. As Wole Soyinka wondered,

What other race, and especially on the African continent, has lost 200 million of its people through forcible uprooting? Elementary curiosity justifies that we seek out those who survived of that number and inquire in what forms have they survived? What have they achieved? What have they contributed to their new environments? What lessons, if any, have their specific genius evolved for those of us who were left behind? The human (and African) habit of celebration, which is an act of recollection, assessment, and rededication validates this impulse.51

Soyinka’s inquiry encapsulates the multidirectional curiosity that prompts literary Pan-Africanism in imaginative and reflective works throughout Africa and the Diaspora.

Notes
4 Ibid., 35.
5 Ibid., 40.
9 Ibid., 218.
10 Ibid.
16 See Temple, Literary Pan-Africanism, in which Chapter 4 is a study of Soyinka’s complete works.
17 See Temple, Literary Pan-Africanism, in which Chapter 5 is a study of Aidoo’s complete works.
18 See Temple, Literary Pan-Africanism, in which Chapter 6 is a joint study of Awoonor’s and Armah’s contemporary Pan-African novels.
19 Temple expands the study of “the return” in a later work that is adjacent to ideas of literary Pan-Africanism. In “Using Sankofa as a Literary Paradigm,” in Afroeuropeans: Cultures and Identities, edited by Marta Sofia Lopez (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2008), 108–125, she explores the multidirectional heritage migration in Afroeuropean fiction and non-fiction.
works representing Germany, France, Guadeloupe, and Russia. She writes, “Literature of the return embodies not only ideas about back-to-Africa but also ideas about the associated voyages people of African descent have made to, from, and between regions of the diaspora in their quest to find home or make significant contributions to their African identities” (110–111).


24 Ibid.


27 Ibid., 151.


29 Ibid., 781.


31 Ibid., 144.


34 Ibid., 53.


38 Ibid., 345.

39 Ibid.


42 Ibid.


46 Ibid.

47 These types of references include critics’ descriptions of traces of “literary Pan-Africanism” in specific works or conceptual approaches of scholars such as Selwyn Cudjoe and Ode Ogede, yet the concept of “literary Pan-Africanism” does not explicitly appear in Cudjoe’s and Ogede’s texts. This suggests that literary and cultural critics are aware of the categorization and are naturally compelled to
associate certain writers’ work (especially if it relates to some aspect of Pan-Africanism) with the larger project of literary Pan-Africanism.


49 Qtd. in Ibid., 138–139. See also the original citation from Mukoma’s citation—Ngugi Wa Thiong’o, “Makerere Dreams: Language and New Frontiers of Knowledge.” University of East Africa 50th Anniversary Celebration. Makerere University, Kampala. 29 June 2013. Makerere University. Web. 24 June 2014.

50 See A. J. Chennells, “Marxist and Pan-Africanist Literary Theories and a Sociology of Zimbabwean Literature” in Zambezia 20.2 (1993): 109–129. While this essay does not precisely represent literary Pan-Africanism, it demonstrates an adjacent type of discussion wherein there is easy pairing of phrasing such as “Pan-Africanist literary theories.” Like Christel N. Temple’s comprehensive study, Literary Pan-Africanism: History, Contexts, and Criticism, Chennells also relies on Chidi Amuta’s literary criticism from The Theory of African Literature: Implications for Practical Criticism (London: Institute for African Alternatives/Zed Books, 1989) to reinforce Pan-Africanist perspectives in literary criticism. See also the work of Kofi Anyidoho, whose essays such as “Language and the Development Strategy in Pan-African Literatures” 23.1 (1992): 45–63, uses the phrasing of “Pan-African Literature,” which is different from theorizations of Literary Pan-Africanism, though some scholars conflate the two.


Bibliography


